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PROGRAM INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. P11-05

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SUBJECT: Reissue of P06-10 - Hazards When Transporting Off-Track  
Equipment

**Who needs this information?**

Operators of surface and underground coal mines, independent contractors, miner's representatives, Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) enforcement personnel, state mining agencies, mine equipment manufacturers, and other interested parties need this information.

**What is the purpose of this Program Information Bulletin?**

This Program Information Bulletin (PIB) informs the mining industry of best practices for reducing the hazards associated with transporting equipment within a coal mine and the established safety precautions that should be used when moving such equipment.

**What safety precautions are needed to reduce hazards when equipment is moved?**

The position of the equipment operator is critical when transporting heavy off-track equipment and longwall shields, or when operating equipment used to assist in loading such equipment onto a low-boy carrier, flatcar, dolly or skid prior to movement. The following best practices can prevent accidents, injuries and fatalities when loading and transporting equipment:

- Plan and oversee work, emphasizing adherence to safe work practices, including safe work positions to avoid being struck by falls of equipment or recoil from breaking attachments;
- Secure the load and make connections to prevent equipment from tipping or falling when attempting to pull equipment using chains or slings;
- Regularly inspect slings or chains to ensure they are not damaged and are properly sized for the load and rigging arrangement;

- Ensure that shields, equipment or other materials loaded for transporting do not project into roadways or beyond the side or end of the lowboy rail car, flatcar, dolly or skid;
- Place an empty supply car or an appropriate draw bar between the locomotives and the load;
- Never transport equipment with the operator's cab of a locomotive adjacent to the load;
- Provide protective cabs, canopies, or vertical intrusion shielding on mobile equipment where clearance permits;
- Use trip lights when a trailing locomotive is not used;
- Always look in the direction of movement and exercise caution when approaching parked equipment;
- Load capacities of materials hauled should be consistent with the capabilities of the equipment being operated. In making this determination, consideration should be given to the grades to be encountered;
- Operate the haulage equipment at a safe speed as determined by the condition of the track haulage system and the haulage equipment; and
- Engage both the automatic and manual braking systems when the locomotive is stopped for any reason.

#### **What is the background for this PIB?**

The transportation of heavy, off-track equipment has been a significant cause of fatal accidents in underground coal mines. Since 1995, there have been five fatal accidents and one permanently disabling, crushing or pinning accident associated with the positioning, loading and transporting of heavy off-track equipment and longwall shields. Two miners were fatally injured when the mobile equipment they were operating struck the tips of shields being stored or transported near mine portals on the surface. In May of 2005, a miner received permanently disabling injuries while unloading a longwall shield from an underground service elevator. The locomotive operator was attempting to pull a shield off the elevator when the shield slipped off the dollies and fell forward, striking the operator.

More recently, on February 17, 2006, an underground miner was fatally injured when he was crushed between the frame on the operator end of the locomotive he was operating and the top of a longwall shield that was being transported on a low-boy carrier. Two other miners were fatally injured when they were struck by wire ropes that broke while being used to position or load equipment. These accidents could have been prevented by using the safe work practices recommended above.

#### **Who is the contact person for this bulletin?**

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**What is MSHA's authority for this PIB?**

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, 30 C.F.R. 75.1404-1.

**Is this information bulletin on the Internet?**

This information bulletin may be viewed on the World Wide Web by accessing the [MSHA home page](#), then choosing "Compliance Info" and "Program Information Bulletins."

**Who will receive this bulletin?**

MSHA Program Policy Manual Holders  
Underground Mine Operators  
Mine Equipment Manufacturers  
Miners' Representatives  
Special Interest Groups