

SIGNIFICANT INCIDENT REPORT

SECURITY-SENSITIVE DANGEROUS SUBSTANCES



SSDS No.1
4 MAY 2007

Explosives Stolen From Magazine

A significant quantity of blasting explosives was recently stolen from an approved explosive storage magazine located in southern Tasmania.

Details of Incident

Between Friday 27 to Monday 30 April 2007, several men broke into an explosive magazine storage facility. Access into the permanent and fixed magazine was achieved by cutting the lock (shrouded) on a vehicle entrance boom-gate, and forcing entry into the small magazine building by removing a heavy metal vent cover and masonry bricks.

Approximately 500kgs of commercial explosives (Class 1.1D) was taken, including:

- ANFO – 10 kilogram bags packaged and marked to AE Code (pink dye)
- 25mm Powergel and 55mm Powergel Buster cartridges/sticks
- Detonating cord (Redcord).

The theft was reported to Tasmania Police and Workplace Standards Tasmania on Monday 30 April 2007. Five people were subsequently charged on Tuesday 1 and Wednesday 2 May 2007 with several offences including burglary, stealing, and committing a nuisance. The criminal investigation is continuing.

Contributing Factors

The magazine was approved and built in 1985 and is of substantial construction: it has a concrete roof and floor, concrete filled blockwork, and a steel-door with internal locking specifications to AS 2187.1-1998 *Explosives: Storage transport and use: storage*. Initial examination by Tasmania Police and Workplace Standards of the incident site found that the point of entry used by the thieves was the weakest security aspect of the facility.

These aspects included:

- fixing points for vent covers
- lack of reinforcement within the masonry walls
- no security fencing directly around the magazine.

It was acknowledged that the perpetrators were well equipped with heavy equipment to perform the break-in, and that additional security measures may not have prevented the theft.

Recommendations

In the light of this recent incident, it is recommended that people and organisations involved with explosives, including shot-firers and magazine keepers/operators, *immediately*:

- check structural integrity and security of all explosive magazines/containers/compounds.
- check for any unauthorised entry (or attempted entry)
- do a stock take to confirm that inventory aligns to current stocks

- Be wary of people trading or offering cheap explosives, particularly of the type stolen and described above

- report any suspicious activity to Workplace Standards Tasmania or Tasmania Police.
- report any stolen or unaccounted stock to Workplace Standards Tasmania or Tasmania Police immediately.

It is vital for public safety that accurate records of existing stocks are held (including the recording of all transactions). This is particularly important during the subsequent search to recover missing explosives, to ensure all products have been accounted for.

Authorised people storing explosives (shot-firers/holders of a 'keeper's license') are reminded of the obligations under the *Dangerous Goods (General) Regulations 1998* to store in accordance with AS2187.1. Clause 4.7 regarding record keeping is also important (see below)

Note: Penalties apply for failing to meet obligations prescribed under *Dangerous Goods (General) Regulations 1998* and AS 2187.1.

Extract from AS2187.1, Clause 4.7 - Records

A person who stores explosives shall keep a record, for a period of not less than five years, of all explosives sold or transferred to another person or issued by the magazine operator.

The magazine operator should record the following information immediately after explosives are sold, transferred or issued:

- (a) The description including commercial name and quantity of each item received, sold, transferred or issued.*
- (b) Date and time of each transaction.*
- (c) Name and address of the person to whom any explosives were sold or transferred.*
- (d) Number of the licence or permit by which such person received the explosives.*
- (e) Quantities of each product remaining in stock after each transaction.*

Delegate of the Competent Authority



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