

OHS ALERT



Incident /Hazard	Battery Vapour Ignition
	Occurred at Another Organisation
Injuries	None Reported

What happened?

A lead-acid battery connected to the fire-fighting pump switchboard in a terminal ignited, resulting in a detached plastic cover and splashed acid. The control for the battery only involved a voltage check of the battery, which was done prior to the incident. At the same time, two workers were in the fire fighting room working with a jockey pump, with a valid PTW document, a few meters away from the battery. They were using a grinder machine to cut a stuck bolt of the jockey pump. No one was injured in the incident.

The vapour, which was generated by battery charging, ignited due to a build up of hydrogen vapour and then a spark caused by the grinder machine.

The people involved were not aware of the risks associated with hydrogen vapour generated by the battery, combined with a spark.

Actions for your work unit

(hydrogen), and should be conducted in hazardous area classification and in well ventilated area away of sources of ignition.

PTW should review all terminal operations during the time of activity, not in isolation.

Maintain clear instructions to charge, discharge and operate the batteries in your terminal. Evaluate if chang-

lem.