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IMPORTANT SAFETY NOTICE
INFORMATION BULLETIN NO. 130

TO: ALL OWNERS OF FLETCHER® ROOF DRILLS

**FROM: J.H. FLETCHER & CO.
RISK MANAGEMENT DEPARTMENT**

DATE: April 25, 2018

**SUBJECT: Maximum recommended operating height for
Man-in-position Roof Drills/Bolters**

This Safety Notice outlines J.H. Fletcher & Co.'s ("Fletcher's") recommendations for maximum operating height for Man-in-position Roof Drills/Bolters.

Fletcher's recommendation for maximum machine operating height is 8' (2.4 meters) above the operator's feet. If the machine is equipped with an operator platform, then the maximum machine operating height is the distance from the mine floor to the top of the platform where the operator is standing at its highest point plus 8' (2.4 meters). For example: if a lifting boom roof bolter raises the operator's feet 2' (0.6 meters), off the ground, the machine's maximum operating height would be 10' (3 meters).

Nearly all Roof Drills have Automated Temporary Roof Support ("ATRS") systems that reach (extend) higher than the maximum machine operating height. The ATRS reach is *not* the same as the maximum recommended operating height. In all circumstances the ATRS must sit firmly against the roof. If the ATRS does not reach the roof, contact Fletcher concerning an Original Equipment Manufacture ("OEM") ATRS extension.

If mining conditions require the machine to be used in any area where the roof height is above (exceeds) the recommended maximum operating height, then the machine may only be used if the mine has reviewed and mitigated the following hazards:

- 1) Risk for buckling, bending and/or whipping drill steel: Greater unsupported column length of drill steel, steel extension, (See Fletcher Bulletin 122), wrench, bolt, and combinations of these increases the potential for buckling, bending, and whipping.
- 2) Man-out-of-position: The operator stepping out from under canopy protection to increase reach or improve line of sight to where the hole is being drilled or support

installed.

- 3) Man-out-of-position: The operator climbing on the machine outside of the confines of the operating station to increase vertical reach.
- 4) Environmental changes and adverse conditions: Greater exposure to lateral rib and brow hazards on machines that position the operator between the rib and the machine (outside controls).
- 5) Visibility constraints: Reduced visibility because the roof height is higher than the machine lighting system is designed to illuminate.
- 6) Environmental changes and adverse conditions: The ATRS system does not reach or make proper contact with the roof.
- 7) Man-out-of-position: The operator canopy does not travel high enough to allow the operator to comfortably work under the canopy.

Every mine has unique conditions which can change at any time; therefore, other hazards or risks than those listed above may be present or develop at any given time. Fletcher cannot and does not have the opportunity to be informed when those changed or changing conditions exist, or when a mine may encounter increased mining heights.

Before utilizing any machine in conditions that exceed the maximum machine operating parameters, the machine operator must perform a visual inspection of the area to assess and determine all hazards present or which may develop, and address the existing hazards before proceeding to position the roof bolter. Additionally, mine management must instruct operators about changing and hazardous conditions.

All operators that utilize this machine must be trained on how to properly operate the machine and about what additional precautions against safety risks need to be taken at any point in time. For example, additional roof support may need to be installed or supplemental support with jacks, posts or cribs may be necessary. Operators must be skilled and trained in the assessment of and response to hazards that may develop or exist. All training and the training program must be documented and must include attention to risks and hazards, such as those outlined above, as well as those determined by the mine to exist or which develop at any point in time. The training program must also include safety reminders regarding roof bolting machine operation including but not limited to always using hands-off drilling practices.

Fletcher is available to assist in reviewing any supplemental training materials concerning roof bolting machine operation, should the mine request its expertise.

Additionally, Fletcher offers some modifications for machines (such as ATRS extensions, canopy post extensions, or removable platforms) and tools (such as resin inserters) that can be utilized to mitigate against some of the risks outlined in this document. However, in some situations a different roof bolting machine altogether may be required to do the task of roof bolting safely.

Because Fletcher cannot identify all hazards that occur or may develop, it does not recommend use of a machine when mining conditions exceed maximum machine operating parameters. Each operator must follow safe procedures documented in a full risk assessment conducted on-site and in accordance with the MSHA-approved roof