Blocked Bitumen Tank Vent Pipes

WHAT HAPPENED

Two incidents have occurred involving blocked vent pipes.

1. During a CONVENTIONAL pressurised discharge, air was unable to vent from the storage tank causing bitumen to be forced out of the lid of the tank. It was fortunate that the bitumen sprayed away from the delivery driver.

2. At an asphalt plant equipped with a GROUND-BASED PUMP, normal production pumping of bitumen from tank to mixer created a vacuum due to a blocked vent pipe preventing airflow into the tank. The result was an inward collapse of the tank.

LEARNING POINTS / ACTIONS TAKEN

Both these incidents illustrate the importance of ensuring that bitumen storage tanks are ADEQUATELY VENTED at all times.

Have you seen/read the RBA-QPA Guidance on Safe Bitumen Tank Managment? Click on "Hot Topics" and type "bitumen tank" in the Keyword Search box.

LOCATION:	**ASPHALT/COATING PLANT**	**ALERT STATUS:**	**Normal**
ACTIVITY:	**PRODUCTION AND PROCESSING**	**DATE ISSUED:**	**19/10/2007**
SUB ACTIVITY:	**ASPHALT & COATED STONE**	**INCIDENT No:**	**00136**