The Mining Equipment Prospector

## FAN HANDLER

Removing hazards from the workplace in an underground environment to eliminate disabling injuries is the goal of any management safety system. The innovation and introduction of new technology to assist with this goal is an ongoing process of improvement. Commitment and patience are required to achieve successful implementation.

At INCO's Coleman - McCreedy East Mine, the development of a device to safely install and remove large ventilation fans was required following a workplace accident which had resulted in a serious injury. Hence the introduction of a method of removing worker exposure from what can be a complicated and sometimes hazardous operation.

Known as the "Fan Handler", the combination of a boom truck frame and an adapted boom function with a fine controlled manipulator arm has provided the Operations Department with a machine that can install or remove 28" to 54" diameter fans in a much reduced time span. This machine is capable of lifting fans weighing up to 4,000 lbs within a 18' reach. A 320 degree rotation manipulator arm allows precision reach into confined or tight working areas and the fine fan positioning adjustments allows the worker to perform the most difficult fan changes.

The Fan Handler

To date the full extent of the benefits of this device have not been totally realized. An aggressive training and mentoring program has promoted the Fan Handler use for many different fan changes, each in almost its own unique setting. It has engaged the workforce into believing that this is truly a big step forward in the elimination of exposure to workplace hazards and injuries.

For further information on the progress at INCO Coleman Mine, please contact Steve Ball (sball@inco.com) or Joe Bourque (jbourque@inco.com). For information on the Fan Handler Boom, please contact Duncan Hutchison or Sandy Baril at Marcotte Mining Machinery Services Inc.

Marcotte

**Marcotte Mining Machinery Services Inc.**
2291 Lasalle Blvd., Sudbury, Ontario P3A 2A9
Telephone: 705-566-5030 or 1-800-461-5955
E-Mail: dhutchison@mar-inc.com or sbaril@mar-inc.com
Visit our website at www.marcottemining.com to view a video clip on the Fan Handler.

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