



Mining Accident News No.0925

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In this issue

NZ: Man in stable condition after mining accident	1
Five trapped in northwest China colliery blast..	1
S.Africa: AngloGold worker dies at TauTona mine	1
Nine workers die in Colombian coal mine explosion	2
USA: Man injured in mining accident.....	2
USA: NIOHS Study shows Coal dust exposure linked to emphysema severity	2
This week in mining accident history (1)	2
Quote of the week	3
Two bodies recovered from northwest China colliery blast	3
WA: New Zealand man killed in Kalgoorlie mine accident	3
Two Dead in Mexico mining accident	4
This week in mining accident history (2)	4
Mining dictionary	5

Tuesday 4 August 2009

NZ: Man in stable condition after mining accident

Extract from 3news.co.nz

An investigation has begun at the Stockton Mine, an open-cast coal mine, on the West Coast near Greymouth, after a worker was crushed between two containers.

The man, in his 40s, is understood to have been working as a sub-contractor on Solid Energy's new coal processing site at the mine, near Westport.

The man was taken by road to the nearby Granity Fire Station where he was airlifted to Grey Base Hospital, and is in a stable condition.

Thursday 6 August 2009

Five trapped in northwest China colliery blast

Extract from Xinhua, Beijing, China

URUMQI, - Five miners have been trapped underground after a gas blast Thursday ripped through a colliery in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region.

The accident occurred at 12:30 p.m. in the Futong coal mine in the Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture, as 10 miners were fixing ventilation and water pipes underground. Five of them managed to escape.

Rescue work is under way and the cause of the accident is being investigated by regional work safety supervision authorities.

S.Africa: AngloGold worker dies at TauTona mine

Extract from Mining Weekly.com

JOHANNESBURG – South African gold producer AngloGold Ashanti on Thursday confirmed that a fatal accident at its TauTona mine, in the North West province, had claimed the life of a miner.

Spokesperson Joanne Jones told *Mining Weekly Online* that production had not been halted at the operation, but that an investigation into the accident was currently under way. The worker was killed by a cable bracket in the main shaft cage while travelling to surface.

The fatality at TauTona followed a day after a worker was killed, and five other injured, at the Vametco vanadium mine, also in the North West province.

An estimated 108 mineworkers have been killed in South Africa's mines this year alone.

NOTE: Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of the NSW Department of Primary Industries.

Editor: Mark Freeman

Friday 7 August 2009

Nine workers die in Colombian coal mine explosion

Extract from Americas News

Bogota/Mexico City - At least nine miners died and one was injured in an underground explosion Thursday in Amaga in the north-western Colombian province of Antioquia.

Authorities said the accident happened in El Bloque, in the Nechi mining region between the towns of Amaga and Fredonia.

The blast was apparently due to an accumulation of gas in the mine, about 1 kilometre below the surface. The resulting collapse trapped the victims, local authorities in Amaga said.

USA: Man injured in mining accident

Extract from wymtnews.com

A mine foreman injured in an accident at a Letcher County mine is recovering tonight.

Officials tell Mountain News the accident happened about 10:30 Thursday night at the North Fork Mine Five-Two.

We're told a portion of a coal rib fell, hitting the miner in the side.

He was flown to Holston Valley Medical Center in Tennessee with broken ribs and a punctured lung.

No word on his name or condition.

The Office of Mine Safety and Licensing is investigating.

USA: NIOHS Study shows Coal dust exposure linked to emphysema severity

THE NATIONAL Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) says coal mine dust exposure is a significant predictor of emphysema severity.

NIOSH Dr Kuempel and colleagues compared lung autopsy results from 722 individuals, including 616 coal miners from West Virginia and 106 non-miners from West Virginia and Vermont.

The researchers found that cumulative exposure to respirable coal mine dust was a highly significant predictor of emphysema severity after accounting for cigarette smoking, age at death, and race.

Miners tended to be older at death than non-miners due to a higher proportion of accidental or other sudden deaths among the non-miners. Miners also smoked less on average, though differences were non-significant.

However, emphysema in miners was significantly more severe than in non-miners among both smokers and never-smokers.

Unsurprisingly, emphysema was also more severe among smokers than never smokers in both miners and non-miners.

This week in mining accident history (1)

7 August 1994

Moura No.2 Mine, Queensland

Underground Coal Mine

Gas explosion, 11 killed

Source: www.savive.com.au

The Moura district in Queensland had a number of mining disasters over the period of 1975 through 1994. Between the explosions in the Kiangra No. 1, Moura No. 2, and Moura No. 4 mines, there were 36 fatalities.

Upon exposure to air, coal has a tendency to generate heat and increase in temperature unless it is well ventilated. If the temperature reached the ignition point of methane, spontaneous combustion will occur if sufficient methane is present.

Prior to the explosion in Moura No. 2, miners had warned of the signs of heating occurring, which include high levels of carbon monoxide and a tarry smell. The day before the explosion, one panel was sealed off as a result of a suspected heating, allowing methane levels to increase within that panel.

21 miners were underground when the first explosion occurred at 11:35pm on 7 August 1994 . Only 10 miners managed to return to the surface in the next half hour. Another larger explosion occurred approximately a day later, upon which the rescue attempt was abandoned and the mine was sealed at the surface.

Quote of the week



"Honest differences are often a healthy sign of progress."

Mahatma Gandhi (Indian 1869-1948)

Two bodies recovered from northwest China colliery blast

Extract from Xinhua, China

URUMQI, - Rescuers have recovered two bodies as of 5 p.m. Friday following a gas blast Thursday in a coal mine in northwest China's Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region, local authorities said Friday.

As underground channels are seriously damaged and contain dangerously high levels of carbon monoxide, rescuers said survival chances for three remaining trapped miners were slim.

The accident occurred at 12:30 p.m. Thursday in the Futong coal mine in Changji Hui Autonomous Prefecture, as 10 miners were fixing ventilation and water pipes. Five managed to escape.

The cause of the accident has not yet been determined.

Saturday 8 August 2009

WA: New Zealand man killed in Kalgoorlie mine accident

Extract from perth now, Aus

THE Australian Workers Union is calling for a parliamentary inquiry into mine safety after another worker died in WA's worst stretch of mining tragedies in more than a decade.

A 26-year-old New Zealand man, Daniel Williams, died while working at the Kanowna Belle gold mine about 20km east of Kalgoorlie.

It was the fourth fatality in the industry this year and the eighth in the past 14 months.

WA Police spokesman Greg Lambert said the Kalgoorlie man fell from an ore path at the mine about 1.40am.

He died at the scene.

"A male worker has fallen on a piece of equipment out there and when mine rescue teams got to him he was deceased," he said.

A government safety watchdog is investigating the accident.

The latest death comes after BHP Billiton's head of iron ore Ian Ashby labeled his group's safety record -- which includes five fatalities in the past 12 months -- "abysmal" during this week's Diggers and Dealers conference in Kalgoorlie-Boulder.

Mr Ashby warned about widespread complacency in the mining industry.

AWU branch secretary Stephen Price called for a parliamentary inquiry into mine safety.

"There has been a tragically high number of fatalities in that industry in the past 12-18 months," Mr Price said.

"It needs to be an inquiry from the ground up. It must involve the workers and let them be open and honest without any fear of retribution."

Unions WA secretary Simone McGurk said there were too few safety inspectors scrutinising WA mine sites. National laws are being drafted.

Last week mine-safety campaigner Helen Fitzroy demanded an independent support agency for families of miners killed at work.

Mrs Fitzroy, 52, was widowed 18 years ago when her husband, Steve, was killed at a Norseman gold mine.

Sunday 9 August 2009

Two Dead in Mexico mining accident

Extract from Latin American, herald Tribune

MONTERREY, Mexico – Two workers were killed and a number of others injured Thursday in an accident at a coal mine in the northern Mexican state of Coahuila, authorities said.

An internal wall collapsed before dawn at the mine in Escobedo, state police officer Victor Manuel Martinez told the press, identifying the dead miners as Rogelio Soto, 45, and Alfredo Rios Martinez, 32.

First responders and civil defence personnel went to the mine to assist the injured.

Coahuila contains Mexico's primary coal-producing region and mining accidents are frequent in the state. The worst in recent times was a February 2006 explosion at the Pasta de Conchos mine that left 65 dead

This week in mining accident history (2)

2 August 1895

Auchenharvie Colliery, Stevenston, Ayrshire, Scotland, UK

Underground Coal Mine

Water outburst, 9 killed

Source: www.threetowners.com

The colliery was the property of the Glengarnock Iron and Steel Company Limited with Mr. R.

Main as agent and Mr. John Marshall as the manager. There were two shafts at the colliery Nos. 1 and 4 which were sunk to the Main Coal, No. 1 at 75 fathoms and No.4 at 73 fathoms. The rise workings extended for 600 yards to the north of the No.4 Pit. They were reached by two self-acting inclines or 'cousies'. The first of these extended from the to pit bottom for about 230 yards at an inclination of one in six and the second, 330 yards at an inclination of one in nine. The second was made in the strata above the coal with twelve feet of solid strata between it and the waste workings underneath. The dook which led to the dip workings extended to the south of the shaft for about 750 yards and dipped at one in six in the upper part and one in eight in the lower part. The colliery was bounded on the east side by a well known whin dyke or 'gaw' called the Capon Graig Gaw which formed the boundary between the Auchenharvie Colliery and the abandoned workings of the Stevenson Colliery. This 'gaw' was supposed never to have been cut from either side and the mineral tenants on both sides were prohibited by their leases from penetrating it, even so there was serious outburst of water from the old workings which claimed the lives of nine men.

At about 3 p.m. on the 2nd August an outburst of water suddenly took place in the working place of a miner, William Jackson, who, with his two sons, worked in the extreme rise of the pit. It rushed in with great velocity and force down the drawing roads and the inclines to the shaft and from there down the dook. All the people employed in the rise workings succeeded in escaping down the cousies to the No.4 Pit or by another rout to the No. 1 Pit with the exception of five, one boy, John McGhee, worked at the top of the cousie appeared to have run past the No.4 Pit bottom and down the dook. At the time it was believed that was where his body was located. The men workings in the dook workings all escaped with the exception of eight.

Efforts were, made to locate the missing men but for a long time, the rush of water prevented access either down the dook or up the cousies

from the No. 1 Pit or by the communication roads from the No. 1 Pit. By midnight the rush of water had abated and several explorers were able to get to a point in the couise where they met an impenetrable blockage which evidently dammed back a large volume of water. As it was dangerous to attempt to clear this, dynamite charges with long fuses were set. Two shots were fired without any visible effect.

By noon of the 3rd. August the water behind the dam was pined off' and relays of men started to redd their way through the obstruction. They found that it had been caused by a race of hutches round which stones and silt had collected. By 11 a.m. on the 4th. the barrier was penetrated for 30 yards without any signs of the top being reached when the knocking of imprisoned men was heard. About 1 p.m. a passage was made and five men crawled through. Renewed efforts were made to find any of the men missing in the dook but after every accessible place had been searched, all hope of them being alive was abandoned.

Those who died were;-

John Clauchan aged 35 years, miner
 William Glauchan aged 56 years, miner.
 James Clauchan aged 21 years, miner.
 Henry Clauchan aged 18 years, miner.
 Duncan Gallacher-aged 31 years, miner.
 James Mullen aged 19 years, miner.
 Peter Mullen aged 14 years, miner.
 Robert McConn aged 18 years, miner.
 John McGhee aged 14 years, couise attendant.

On the 5th. August, Mr. Mottram, the Inspector, arrived at the colliery and with the manager and Mr. Ronaldson managed to reach the point where the water broke in. they did this with great difficulty and found an opening ten feet wide and four feet high into an old stoop and room workings but owing to a fall of roof, they were unable to go any further.

On the cast side of the Capon Graig Gaw, abut 800 yards from this point there was an old pit called Deep Shank, sunk 30 fathoms to the Main

Coal. Before the accident, water frequently ran from the mouth of this shaft but after the disaster the level began to sink until it was down eleven and half fathoms from the surface. Several fresh 'sits' of the surface close to the shaft took pace shortly after the outburst occurred.

This was taken as conclusive proof that the Capon Graig Gaw must have been breached some time in the past. The gaw had never been laid bare on the west side and it was improbable that a large volume of water could cross it through natural fissures. There was an old pit near by but there was nothing on the surface to indicate its presence. An old surface plan showed the existence of shaft but did not indicate its depth. Another old pit was opened by the manager three years before. This was found to be fifteen fathoms deep to the Ladyha' scam and was free from water. No one seemed to have had the slightest suspicion that there were any old workings near the point where the water broke out.

References Mines Inspectors Report 1894, Mr. Ronaldson.

Trivia: The event has been immortalized in the poem "The Star of Young McGhee".

Mining dictionary

A guide to common mining terminology

S

sets Timber frames used in coal and metal mines for propping the sides and roofs of drives, drifts and stopes. In the simplest form they consist of props, cap and laths.



- Ed.