



Mining Accident News No.1002

16 to 31 January 2010

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Saturday 16 January 2010

Four trapped in N China colliery flooding

Extract from Xinhua, China

TAIYUAN -- Four miners were still trapped in a flooded coal mine in Shanxi, a major coal-

producing province in north China, local authorities said Saturday.

The accident occurred at about 4:30 p.m. Friday in a coal pit run by the Lingshi Coal Mine Co., Ltd. in Lingshi County when six miners were working underground, the county government said. Two managed to escape.

More than 60 rescue workers have been pumping out the water and trying to reach the trapped workers.

Investigation into the cause of the flooding was under way.

The ill-fated mine is undergoing output upgrading since August of last year to raise its annual production capacity to 900,000 tonnes.

Sunday 17 January 2010

USA: Operator cited in May 2009 flood that trapped 7 miners

Extract from The Charleston Gazette, USA

Federal investigators have just announced that they cited Cobra Resources LLC for violations that contributed to an underground mine flood that trapped 7 workers for nearly 24 hours last May in Mingo County, W.Va at the Mountaineer Alma A underground mine.



Seven men trapped underground for 24 hours are greeted by family members as they emerge from the mine.

NOTE: Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of Industry & Investment NSW.

Editor: Mark Freeman

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According to a U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration news release, inspectors cited Cobra (a subsidiary of Alpha Natural Resources) with two violations:

In the first violation, the mine operator did not regularly monitor and properly maintain the mine's system of diversion ditches, designed to route storm runoff surface water away from the mine portals and into ponds constructed to handle runoff. Consequently, the operator failed to adequately protect the surface openings at the main portal areas to prevent flood water from entering the mine, in that flood waters from the surface entered the mine and inundated the escapeways, making those escapeways impassable.

The second violation was issued for the operator's failure to maintain the two separate and distinct escapeways in safe condition. The flood waters entered the mine and inundated a low area at the main portal in all 10 entries, preventing the seven miners from exiting the mine. The depth of the water ranged from 0 feet to approximately 9 feet deep and was roofed in most areas.



An MSHA photo shows culverts at the mine portal.

In its investigation report, MSHA outlined these conclusions:

The accident occurred because storm runoff water entered the mine portals after being diverted when culverts underneath the portals were blocked by debris, mud, and rock, caused by scouring and erosion from a mud slide. The slide prevented water flow through the culverts,

which caused the water to back up and enter the mine. Another factor that contributed to the accident was the inability of the mine's system of diversion ditches to handle the storm water flow, as designed. The diversion ditches were not maintained or kept cleared of sediment, rocks, or vegetation, such as trees and underbrush. This allowed the runoff water to overtop the diversion ditches, flooding surface areas above the mine portals. The mine's escapeways were blocked when the surface water entered the mine, preventing seven miners from exiting the mine and entrapping them for approximately 24 hours.

MSHA listed two "root causes" for this near-disaster:

– *The mine operator did not regularly monitor and properly maintain the mine's system of diversion ditches, designed to route storm runoff surface water away from the mine portals and into ponds constructed to handle runoff.*

– *The mine operator failed to monitor the portals of the underground mine where storm runoff surface water entered the portals, accumulated in a low area in the mine and blocked the primary and alternate escapeways.*

MSHA chief Joe Main said:

These miners had the wherewithal to move to higher ground. Their actions, along with the expertise of federal and state mining officials and mine management, resulted in a positive outcome. Nevertheless, the mine operator's failure to properly maintain underground diversion systems and escapeways could just as easily have ended in tragedy.

This accident underscores the need for mine operators to always maintain escapeways so they are available for use by miners when they need them.

MSHA has also posted a video about this event (<http://www.msha.gov>).

S.Africa: Family sues Chambishi Mine over relative's death

Extract from The Post, Zambia

THE family of a workman who died at Chambishi Mine following an accident has sued the mine claiming damages amounting to K120,776,000.

Enos Banda, who is suing as administrator of the estate of the late Enos Banda, explained in a writ of summons filed in the Lusaka High Court that the late Enos at the time of his death was aged 37 and had a basic salary of K670,000.

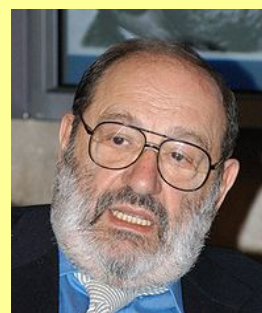
Banda further explained that the deceased was survived by a wife and three children. He revealed that on the fateful day, October 6, 2009, the deceased was assigned by his supervisor to clean the vibrator feeder for SC 01 Conveyor at Sunfat Conveyor number one tail pulley at Chambishi Mine of NFC Africa Mining PLC.

Banda disclosed that while Enos was attending to the assignment given by his supervisor, another workmate was sent by the same supervisor to check on him but found him lying down next to the tail pulley of the conveyor with his right arm amputated from the body.

Banda disclosed that Enos was pronounced dead upon arrival at Sino-Zam Hospital in Kitwe. Banda observed that the supervisor assigned Enos to clean the conveyor belt while in motion and the fatal accident was as a result of negligence on the part of the employer.

Another worker, Joseph Zimba has sued NFC Africa Mining claiming K128,066,000 in damages as a result of an accident where a rock dislodged from the roof when they were transporting explosives and fractured his right upper arm and his left thigh. Zimba disclosed that he had a basic salary of K335,000 and two children.

Quote of the week



"The real hero is always a hero by mistake; he dreams of being an honest coward like everybody else."

Umberto Eco, (Italian novelist, 1932-)

Monday 18 January 2010

Indonesia: Newmont Suspended Mining At Batu Hijau After Fatal Accident

Extract from CNNMoney.com

JAKARTA - Newmont Mining Corp.'s (NEM) Indonesian unit has halted mining operations at the Batu Hijau copper and gold mine in eastern Indonesia following a fatal accident involving a mine worker, PT Newmont Nusa Tenggara, or PTNNT, said Monday.

In the statement, General Manager Operations of PT Newmont Nusa Tenggara Darren Hall said Johanis Dawir, 41, a bulldozer operator who had worked for 11 years for the mining company, was buried under the collapsing materials.

Johanis was recovered from the collapsed materials but pronounced dead at 2:55 pm local time (+8GMT). "The company will provide the necessary help for the family of Mr Johanis."

"All mine operations in the pit have stopped, pending investigations by the Department of Energy and Mineral Resources and PTNNT," the company said in a statement, adding that government regulators and local police were notified about the accident, and the investigation is under way.

PTNNT didn't specify when operations would resume at Batu Hijau.

This week in mining accident history

16 January 1862

Hartley Colliery

Northumberland, England, UK

Underground Coal Mine

Suffocation

204 dead

Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org> & www.dmm2.org.uk

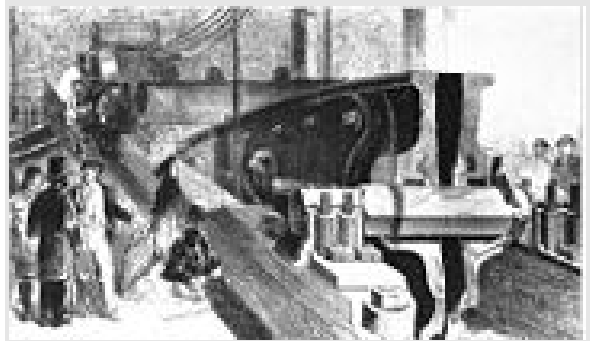
A part of the Coal Mines Act of 1872 (England) states that no person should be employed in a mine unless there are at least two shafts in communication with each seam being worked; i.e. separate means for both ingress and egress must be employed.

As is the case with most rules and regulations this particular dictate in the Coal Mines Act came about through the bitter lessons learnt through past events, most notably in this case being the catastrophe which befell the New Hartley Colliery in Northumberland on 16 January 1862. For many years prior to this disaster, which even today is unique in mining history, the miners of the Great Northern Coalfield pleaded with the coal owners for greater safety standards. Paramount in their requests was the prohibition of single shaft mines. However, it took the loss of 204 men and boys to provide the impetus for the government and coal owners to introduce such legislation.

In an age when methane or coal dust and firedamp explosions were common, the tragedy at Hartley Colliery was different because it was caused by fracture of a steam engine beam. The accident happened on 16 January 1862 when the huge beam used to de-water the mine suddenly broke, and one end plunged into the shaft of the pit. The colliery was worked by a single shaft, divided into two halves vertically by a brattice consisting of a wooden, airtight partition so that ventilation air could be drawn down one side and exhaled up the other. When the broken half of the beam fell, it demolished

the brattice, and created a pile of debris towards the base of the shaft. It entombed 204 men and boys, who could not be rescued, and so suffocated and died.

The loss of life was extreme, even by Victorian era coal mining standards, and remains one of the worst mining accidents in England. The cause of the fracture in the beam was attributed at the time to overload from the pump rod system to which one of the beam was attached. However, it was well known at the time that cast iron was susceptible to sudden brittle failure, often from internal defects like blowholes. Several are visible in the fracture surfaces shown in the engravings below. It was also susceptible to metal fatigue where repeated loading was involved.



The fractured cast-iron beam



Close-up of the fractured beam

A further contributing factor may have been through accidental impact damage to the beam when it fell from its supporting jacks during replacement of the main bearings only days before the accident. Of those that died the youngest was George North, 10 years old, with the oldest being 71 years old William Gledson,

and the average age was 27. Many families lost fathers, sons, brothers, uncles and cousins. The Liddle families suffered the greatest loss with nine members killed. Many of those killed were father and son, or brothers.

The tragedy led to a direct change in the law to demand that all collieries be worked by two shafts.

From an eye witness account by Mr John Chapman, colliery deputy, The Science and Art of Mining, T. Mason 1911.

Tuesday 19 January 2010

Alpha CEO gives details on 2009 flood in W.Va.

Extract from Tricities.com, USA

From Letters to the (TriCities) Editor

Kevin S. Crutchfield
Abingdon, Va.

Crutchfield is CEO of Alpha Natural Resources, Inc.

The lead story in the Jan. 15 Bristol Herald Courier indicated that the Mine Safety and Health Administration issued two citations to Alpha Natural Resources (actually, it was our Callaway Natural Resources subsidiary), related to a May 9, 2009, surface water runoff incident at the Mountaineer Alma A underground mine.

I wanted to set the facts straight as to what happened and how our rescue personnel worked swiftly and deliberately to free the seven individuals who were trapped underground by floodwaters.

Rainfall exceeded 4.5 inches over a 14-hour period as measured by the nearest National Weather Service station, with more than half falling during a three-hour time period. This type of rainfall event would be expected to occur once every 10 to 25 years. The resulting floodwaters decimated the entire region, scouring the hillsides and causing rock and mud slides that destroyed homes, covered roads with

debris and clogged drainage structures throughout the area.

The most important outcome was that none of the miners trapped by the flooding was injured. All seven remained dry for the more than 24 hours it took to free them, had fresh air and sufficient food and water, and were able to speak regularly with their families. In recognition of our rescue teams, Alpha subsequently received a letter of commendation from the secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor, which oversees MSHA, along with a letter from the governor of West Virginia thanking Callaway for dedicating its manpower and equipment toward rendering aid to the local communities and the cleanup effort following the flood.

You can go to the MSHA website (<http://www.msha.gov>) to watch MSHA's own video about this natural disaster ("Seven: An Inundation Experience"). In this video the miners speak with confidence about their company and their fellow miners as our above-ground personnel worked relentlessly to secure their freedom.

The miners understand the causes of the water inundation and the efforts made on their behalf to ensure their safe exit from the mine. During the incident, they had the option to escape via an emergency hoist that had been set up, but unanimously decided that it would be safer to stay put and wait for the water to be pumped out, which it was. All the while they were kept abreast of the progress of pumping operations by the emergency response team.

Alpha Natural Resources maintains a comprehensive and progressive safety program for all of our affiliated mining operations along with emergency response plans. Last year, those operations won nearly 40 state and federal awards for their outstanding safety performance. The Mountaineer Alma A mine itself where the flooding occurred completed last year with not a single employee lost-time accident.

Miner safety is our most important goal and is the foundation of our commitment to Running Right. We expect each one of them to return home to their families from each shift safe and sound. There is absolutely nothing more important than this.

Comment: Whilst a 1 in 10 to 25 year flood may be an unusual event, mines should conduct adequate risk assessment for such foreseeable events (a wise operator would plan for a 1 in 100 year rainfall or flooding event) and have in place appropriate controls to ensure there is no inrush of water into underground or surface workings that can affect the health and safety of people at the mine. **-Ed.**

Wednesday 20 January 2010

Drop in China mine deaths, accidents for 2009

BEIJING -- The number of deaths in China's mining industry, the world's deadliest, fell 20 percent last year as more dangerous smaller mines were closed, a safety official said.

Zhao Tiechui, the head of the State Administration of Coal Mine Safety, said accidents caused 2,631 deaths - a decline of 22 percent, or 584 deaths, from the previous year, the official Xinhua News Agency reported Wednesday.

That works out to 7.2 deaths a day from 8.8 in 2008. The number of accidents also declined.

The number of fatalities is the lowest in years and a result of China's strenuous efforts to police its mining industry, Zhao told a national workplace safety conference in Beijing. China has closed or absorbed hundreds of smaller, often illegal private mines into state-owned operations, which are generally safer.

Zhao said small coal mines, which produce 35 percent of the country's coal, were responsible for 70 percent of the fatalities. A total of 1,088 small coal mines were closed last year, Xinhua reported.

Lax safety methods, a lack of training and equipment, and a rush to feed China's insatiable demand for coal to fuel its booming economy are behind the accidents. In November, 108 miners were killed in a coal mine blast in northeast China. It was the country's deadliest mining accident in two years.

NT: Mine worker wins compo for going fishing

Extract from ABC Online, Aus

Paul Clarke was heading towards one of the Northern Territory's top fishing spots when his mini-van skidded off the road in the dark and smashed into trees.

The 2005 accident, which happened during the diesel fitter's 24-hour shift break from the Ranger Uranium Mine, left him with a broken leg and hip.



Paul Clarke was on his way to a popular fishing spot when the accident happened. [File image]. (www.flickr.com/photos/robstephaustralia/, file photo)

The question was: was Mr Clarke's midnight expedition to the crocodile-infested waters of the East Alligator River a work-related trip, or simply a recreational journey?

Today, the Northern Territory Court of Appeal found that Mr Clarke's fishing trip was indeed work-related and he should continue to receive workers' compensation.

The mine's owner, ERA, instructed workers to stay awake late into the night if they were switching from a day shift one day to a night shift the next so that their bodies could better adjust.

In order to stay awake, it was "common practice" for workers to go fishing at night, even though ERA did not explicitly tell them to undertake such activities.

In the case of Mr Clarke, his supervisor invited him to go fishing after his day shift had ended at 6pm.

Mr Clarke agreed, and the pair, along with another worker, set off after midnight towards Cahill's Crossing on the East Alligator River - a popular fishing spot, known also for its large crocodiles.

They took off in a work mini-van, with the supervisor at the wheel.

"The worker was injured when [the supervisor] lost control of the vehicle and it ran off the road and collided with some trees near Magella Creek," today's judgement said.

But Mr Clarke's battle to win compensation has taken several years.

His first attempt failed when the Work Health Court found that his injuries did not happen as a result of his employer's direction for staff to stay awake late into the night.

However, he successfully appealed to the Supreme Court, which found that there was a direct link between ERA's direction and his action of going fishing late at night.

It ordered his employer, Waylexson Pty Ltd, which had subcontracted him to ERA, to pay weekly compensation.

Waylexson challenged that decision, but the Appeal Court today dismissed it, ruling that the Supreme Court's verdict that the fishing trip accident warranted workers' compensation was correct.

"Whilst ERA may not have been aware of this particular fishing excursion it was aware of the general practice and, by its acceptance of that practice, induced or encouraged workers to engage in such excursions during shift changes," its judgement said.

Mr Clarke told the ABC he was pleased with the decision.

"Feeling pretty happy," he said.

"It's been a long road to get here but finally here and it's a good decision."

He said there was little else to do between shifts at the mine at the time of the accident.

"Still to this day that's one of the selling points of working out at Jabiru, is to go fishing.

"And at that stage there was nothing else for the workers to do at a shift change - either go to a pub.

"You weren't allowed to make noise around the camp so they encouraged you to go out and go fishing to move away from the campsite, which is what a lot of the time most of us did."

Thursday 21 January 2010

Ireland: Mining company fined over employee death

Extract from RTÉ News, Dublin, Ireland

A mining company in County Kilkenny has been fined €100,000 following the death of an employee nearly three years ago.

44-year-old Michael Joyce, from Clonmore, Templemore, County Tipperary, was injured after falling from a height while working underground on a crusher at Galmoy Mines in February 2007.

He subsequently died of his injuries, and today, Galmoy Mines was fined €100,000 for serious breaches of health and safety legislation.

The company had pleaded guilty to one charge while two other charges were struck out.

The case was heard before Judge Buttimer in Kilkenny Circuit Criminal Court sitting in Carlow.

The accident occurred when Mr Joyce was sent to look at the condition of the primary crusher of the lead and zinc mine following a blockage which had occurred earlier in the day.

He had been surveying the crusher on the manway gantry platform. While Mr Joyce was on the platform, the top guardrail gave way and Mr Joyce fell onto the concrete floor pad beneath the crusher. He sustained serious injuries which resulted in his death.

Health and Safety Authority Chief Executive Martin O'Halloran said that each year a significant number of workplace deaths occur after falls from a height.

'There were 43 workplace deaths reported last year, 8 of which were as a result of falls from a height. These accidents are avoidable and where the correct precautions are in place the dangers can be eliminated.'

'I would urge all employers to constantly review any work activity that takes place at a height and ensure that all workers are aware of the dangers and that the proper safety precautions are in place.'

USA: Three miners found after underground fire

Extract from KFVS, Missouri, USA

VIBRUNUM, MO (KFVS) - Crews have reached three miners that were trapped after an underground equipment fire at The Doe Run Company's No. 29 lead mine near Viburnum.

A truck fire broke out about 11 a.m. Thursday and blocked the exit from the mine for three employees. Rescue crews reached the miners about 3 p.m.

All miners were immediately evacuated except for three which waited in an underground refuge chamber waiting for the mine rescue teams to reach them, according to The Doe Run Company.

The miners will be checked out by medical professionals when they reach the surface, according to Bob Roscoe, vice president of mining at The Doe Run Company's Southeast Missouri Mining and Milling Division (SEMO).

"The response to this incident has been swift and sure," said U.S. Rep. Jo Ann Emerson (R). "I want to congratulate everyone who participated in the rescue response on a successful effort. The quality of the rescue workers on site is unsurpassed; they are extremely well-trained and they performed perfectly in this situation." Emerson says her father-in-law was a miner there for 49 years.

Friday 22 January 2010

Five dead in west China colliery flooding

Extract from Xinhua, China

YINCHUAN: Five miners have died after a coal mine flooding in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Friday morning, the regional coal mine safety administration said Friday.

The accident occurred at about 9 am in Longneng Coal Mining Co in the Taiyangshan Development Zone in Wuzhong City when 13 miners were working underground. Five managed to escape.

One miner was rescued and two more were still trapped underground.

The rescue operation, which involves more than 100 rescuers and medical staff, is still going on.

Further details are not immediately known.

UPDATE: 24 Jan 2010 (Xinhua) – seven people were confirmed dead in a coal mine flooding in northwest China's Ningxia Hui Autonomous Region Sunday morning, local authorities said.

Rescuers recovered all the bodies by 2:45 am Sunday, and relatives of each victim received 300,000 yuan (US\$44,000) in compensation, said the Xiao Lei, head of the Wuzhou City Work Safety Bureau.

Police had held the mine owner for investigation, Xiao said. Work safety and police officials are investigating the cause of the accident.

First Ky. Mine Fatality In 2010

Extract from wjz.com, Virginia, USA

HYDEN, Ky. — A coal miner has been killed in an underground collapse at a mine in south-eastern Kentucky in the state's first mining fatality of the year.

State officials say 29-year-old Travis G. Brock worked for Bledsoe Coal Co. at the Abner Branch mine in southern Leslie County.

The state's Energy and Environment Cabinet says a pillar supporting the mine roof gave way, known as a rib-roll, Friday morning around 9:15 a.m. EST. Brock, of Helton, was struck by debris and suffered fatal injuries.

Bledsoe Coal is a subsidiary of Richmond, Va.-based James River Coal Company.

The Kentucky Office of Mine Safety and Licensing is investigating the incident. Officials say the mine will be closed until a site investigation and interviews are finished.

There were four mine-related fatalities in Kentucky in 2009.

Sunday 24 January 2010

Six wounded in attack on Papua mine workers

Extract from ABC News Online, Aus

Unidentified gunmen have fired at two vehicles carrying employees of US miner Freeport McMoran Copper and Gold Inc's in Indonesia's Papua province, wounding six people, police said.

The latest violence did not affect production at the Grasberg mine, which accounts for nearly 40 per cent of Freeport's total copper reserves and boasts the world's largest reserves, said company spokesman Mindo Pangaribuan.

The mine in insurgency-affected Papua has been a source of friction over its environmental impact and the share of revenues going to Papua.

Three employees of Freeport and three security guards employed by the firm were wounded in the firing on a highway leading to the mine, said Mochammad Sagi, the local police chief. One of the staff was an American who got hit by glass shrapnel near his eye.

"The attack happened around 6.30 [local time] in the morning. The investigation is underway," Police Chief Sagi said.

A series of shootings by unidentified gunmen have taken place near the mine in recent months and at least two people have been killed.

The resource-rich province of Papua has suffered a low-level separatist insurgency for decades. The Grasberg mine is about 3,350 kilometres east of Indonesia's capital Jakarta.

Monday 25 January 2010

USA: Remembering the Knox disaster

Wilkes Barre Times-Leader, by RALPH NARDONE

SCRANTON – Fifty-one years ago 12 miners lost their lives in icy waters that flooded the Knox Mine in Jenkins Township. The men were remembered on Sunday at the Anthracite Heritage Museum.

William Hastie gave intimate descriptions of the event, which he witnessed first hand working at the ill-fated coal mining operation that January 22, 1959. Hastie painted detailed portraits of the lives of the men and detailed descriptions of how they died.

About 100 people sat and listened as Hastie told them about how the Knox Coal Company was "cross-cutting" unnecessarily and digging too close to the Susquehanna River. That mistake caused the river to pour an estimated 10 billion gallons into the mine with a "shuddering roar like Niagara Falls." He said the river looked like a giant whirlpool as it cascaded into the mine.

Hearing Hastie talk about each miner caused the audience to sigh sympathetically.

He talked about three men who died in the deepest part of the mine speculating they probably died "battling a long time trying to find an escape."

Deaths happened because of a decision that caused victims to be in the wrong place at the wrong time, Hastie said. Three "rockmen" died because they decided to skip lunch, he said.

One miner, Samuel Altieri, turned back to alert other miners below and was never seen again. Another one, Herman Zelonis, stopped to change his clothes and lost his life, and another one, Dominick Kaveliskie, was taken by the ice water, Hastie said.

Hastie said 69 miners escaped that day. He described the difficult climb Amadeo Pancetti made with his bare hands up the 57-foot air shaft that led to the rescue of 32 men. Pancetti was awarded the Carnegie Medal for his heroism.

Chester Kulesa, administrator of the Anthracite Museum, showed photographs taken during the disaster by Stephen and William Lukasik. The photos included one picture of miner Joe Stella just after emerging from the mine, another of family members anxiously waiting to see if their loved ones were going to be found and the large "whirlpool" where the river entered the mine.

A large embroidery made by Audrey Baloga Calvey in memory of her father, John Baloga, one of the miners who never returned home, was displayed. The Baloga family, owners of the Baloga Funeral Home, is spearheading further historic preservation of the Knox Mine disaster in memory of all who died, he said.

The disaster ended deep mining in Northeast Pennsylvania and resulted in numerous lawsuits against the United Mine Workers and Pennsylvania Coal Company, Hastie said.

Tuesday 26 January 2010

6 die in colliery collapse cover-up in N. China

Extract from China Daily

TAIYUAN: Six miners have died in a coal mine shaft collapse in North China's Shanxi province three weeks ago, local authorities said Tuesday.

The accident occurred on January 5 in the Wanli pit of Taiyang Coal Mine owned by Lanhua Group, the Jincheng municipal government said in a statement.

The government launched an investigation into the cover-up on January 12 after it received a tip-off.

Police have arrested three coal pit managers, the engineer-in-chief, the mine worker captain, and also four work safety inspectors from Lanhua Group.

Investigation into the cause of the accident is under way.

Thursday 28 January 2010

USA: Asarco faulted in crash that killed driver

Extract from the Arizona Daily Star, USA

Federal inspectors concluded Asarco should have done more to ensure that a truck driver killed in an accident last year was wearing his seat belt - a finding Asarco strongly disputes.

The U.S. Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration, or MSHA, reported that Asarco "management policies, procedures, and controls did not ensure the truck driver wore his seat belt when operating the haul truck." The report did not elaborate on that finding.

Robert Christopher Stewart, 29, of Globe, was killed at Ray Mines when he drove his haul truck into a berm while making a left turn the morning of Sept. 27. The truck flipped and he was pronounced dead at the scene.

The federal report, dated Jan. 19, says the accident occurred because the driver failed to maintain control of the truck.

The truck's seat belt was operational and conformed to all safety specifications, and the

driver's failure to wear it added to his injuries, the report finds.

Company disputes US report it didn't do enough to ensure seat belt was worn

Asarco released a statement Wednesday saying the company has a policy mandating that seat belts be worn by all employees, contractors and visitors on site.

"This seat belt policy is prominently featured in bold lettering on billboard signage at key locations around the mine, and is emphasized in daily safety meetings and other regularly conducted safety training courses," Asarco Corporate Safety Manager Kim Bradshaw said in the written statement.

Stewart had two years and 32 weeks of mining experience, the MSHA report says. He had worked as a haul truck driver for two years and eight weeks.

His was the one mining-related death in Arizona in 2009, MSHA says.

Representatives of the federal agency were not available for comment Wednesday afternoon.

Asarco officials would not comment beyond their written statement.

Philippines: Miner dies in accident in Quezon

Extract from ABS-CBN News, Philippines

MANILA, Philippines - A 40-year-old miner died reportedly in an accident at La Suerte Small Scale Mining Gold Mining Industry in Barangay Bulo in Buenavista in Quezon province on Tuesday.

Buenavista police said Virgilio Caagbay was inside the mining site, 50-feet below the ground, and was about to take his lunch when the accident happened.

A co-worker, a ladder operator, tried to pull him up using an electronic device. After removing his safety strap and stepping forward, Caagbay reportedly slipped and fell out of the tunnel. He

was immediately retrieved but died while being treated at Lopez Hospital.

Police though are still investigating Caagbay's death.

USA: Eastern Ky. coal mine operator indicted in federal court

Extract from Lexington Herald-Leader, Ky. USA

The operator of an underground coal mine near Jenkins on the Pike and Letcher county line was indicted in federal court Thursday after a Mine Safety and Health Administration investigation.

Alger B. Jent, 57, of Kite in Knott County is accused of violating MSHA safety mandates by installing roof bolts that were too weak, too short and too far apart in the CSA Mining No. 2 mine near Jenkins, according to the indictment. The roof bolts were found by MSHA special investigators from Pikeville in June 2008, according to a news release from the office of the U.S. attorney for the Eastern District of Kentucky.

If convicted, Jent could be sentenced to a year in prison and fined up to \$250,000. No attorney was listed for Jent in federal court files, and his next court date was not determined.

It was unclear whether the MSHA investigation stemmed from an accident or a routine inspection.

Mining dictionary

A guide to common mining terminology

S

stamper die

An iron block, usually octagonal in shape, set into the base of the mortar box, onto which the stamper shoe falls to crush the ore. Worn stamper dies are sometimes found around battery sites.

-Ed