



Mining Accident News No.1105

8 to 14 February 2011

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Tuesday 8 February 2011

USA: Mine superintendent sentenced in federal court

Extract from McAlester News Capital

McALESTER, OK — A Red Oak man has been sentenced to 12 months of federal probation for violating mining laws.

The U.S. Attorney’s Office for the Eastern District of Oklahoma said Gregory Bryce, 50, a mine superintendent for Farrell-Cooper Mining Company, was sentenced to 12 months

supervised release for failure to provide new miner training.

He was also ordered to surrender his Mine Safety and Health Administration instructor’s license.

Charges arose from an investigation by the District 9 MSHA.

The information alleges that from in or about November 2007, Bryce knowingly allowed miners to work without first receiving the required number of hours of introductory training.

U.S. District Magistrate Judge Steven P. Shreder presided over the sentencing hearing held in the Eastern District of Oklahoma court in Muskogee Jan. 26.

Assistant U.S. Attorney Ryan Roberts represented the United States in the case.

Armenia: Deno Gold Mining worker killed in accident

Extract from Arka News Agency, Armenia

YEREVAN, Deno Gold Mining company said today a 34 year-old worker, Armen Yeghiazarian, was killed in an accident at 5 am today morning at Shahumian mine in southern Armenian province of Syunik.



Deno Gold Mining main entrance in Kapan, Armenia (Photo: Vladlena Martsynkevych, May 2009)

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

In a press release the company said Armen Yeghiazarian was rushed to the Medical Center in Kapan by the rapid reaction squad, but he died on the way. The section of the mine where the accident occurred has been closed and is being watched by the rapid reaction squad.

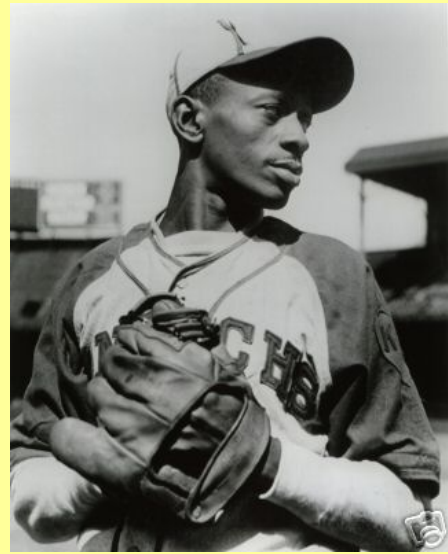


The accident was reported to the National Centre for Technical Safety, which has started an inquiry.

'The company's management shares the grief of the killed man's beloved ones and friends and expresses condolences to them and all personnel of the company,' the press release said.

Deno Gold Mining Company is a subsidiary of Canada-registered Dundee Precious Metals. Its operations are situated in the town of Kapan, approximately 320 kilometres south east of Yerevan. Deno Gold's principal underground mining operation is located on the Shahumian concession. The complex includes two primary crushing stations, a processing plant and various infrastructure facilities that were built to support the operation. The processing plant produces two concentrates, a copper, gold, silver concentrate and a zinc concentrate, by staged flotation. Both concentrates are transported by road to the town of Ararat (60 kilometres south of Yerevan) where they are offloaded onto a rail system for transport to the Black Sea via Georgia

Quote of the week



"Age is a case of mind over matter. If you don't mind, it don't matter."

Satchel Paige
(American baseball pitcher, 1906-1982)

Wednesday 9 February 2011

USA: Feds ID bulldozer driver killed at W.Va. mine

Extract from The Times Leader, USA

Federal regulators have released the name of a bulldozer driver killed in a coal-mining accident Feb. 3.

Mine Safety and Health Administration spokeswoman Amy Louviere says the victim was 49-year-old Kevin Campbell. Campbell worked for an Eighty Four, Pa.-based company called 18 Karat.

Campbell was pinned between the bulldozer and a water truck on the surface at Consol Energy's McElroy Mine in Marshall County.

Investigators believe Campbell was attaching a tow chain to the truck when the bulldozer rolled and pinned him. Campbell was alive when freed, but died before he could be flown to a hospital.

Campbell is the second person to die at a U.S. coal mine in 2011.

US Wins Dismissal of Suit over Massey Mine Deaths

Extract from Bloomberg

The U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration won dismissal of a lawsuit brought by the widows of two men killed in a 2006 fire at a coal mine run by Massey Energy Co.'s Aracoma unit in West Virginia.

U.S. District Judge John T. Copenhaver Jr. in Charleston, West Virginia, dismissed the lawsuit yesterday, finding the mine inspectors and the government couldn't be held liable for the fire under law. The widows claimed that improper inspections were linked to the deaths and the agency breached a duty to protect the miners.

"The court declines to impose a legal duty upon MSHA inasmuch as the imposition of such a duty would directly conflict with Congress's decision to place the primary responsibility for mine safety on mine operators," the judge wrote.

The lawsuit was filed by the widows of Don Bragg, 33, and Ellery "Elvis" Hatfield, 46, who were suffocated by smoke after a fire broke out on Jan. 19, 2006, at Aracoma's Alma No. 1 mine in Melville, West Virginia. Their widows, Delorice Bragg and Freda Hatfield, previously sued Massey and Aracoma. The case was settled on confidential terms during a trial in 2008.

Massey, based in Richmond, Virginia, wasn't a defendant in the suit against the mine safety agency.

Later Mine Disaster

Bragg and Hatfield sued the government last year about three weeks after 29 miners were killed in a separate incident, an explosion at Massey's Upper Big Branch mine in Montcoal, West Virginia. The April blast was the worst U.S. mining explosion in 40 years.

Bruce E. Stanley, the widows' attorney, said today they hadn't decided whether to appeal. "We'll have to assess whether there is the prospect of an appeal, but generally, the legal deck is stacked in favour of the government

when it comes to these types of claims," he said in an e-mail.

"The widows have done just about all that is within their power to shed light upon and hold accountable those responsible for the mindless greed and dereliction of duty that got their husbands killed," he said. "If there is no liability to the families of the dead miners in Aracoma, where the government has basically flat out admitted it did not do its job, there is little likelihood that they will ever be called to account."

The women alleged in the lawsuit that in a post-incident review, "MSHA found at least 20 specific safety violations that contributed to the accident that killed Mr. Bragg and Mr. Hatfield."

"For almost every violation, MSHA determined that its inspectors were at fault for failing to identify or rectify grave and obvious violations during its numerous inspections of the Alma Mine prior to the fire," according to the complaint.

The case is Bragg v. U.S., 2:10-cv-00683, U.S. District Court, Southern District of West Virginia (Charleston).

Thursday 10 February 2011

USA: Two Injured in Fayette Mining Accident

Extract from WSAZ.com, USA

FAYETTE COUNTY, W.Va. (WSAZ) -- Two coal miners were injured in a mining accident in Fayette County early Thursday morning.

West Virginia Mine Safety Communications Director, Leslie Fitzwater tells WSAZ.com it happened at the Mammoth Alloy Powelton Mine near Alloy.

Fitzwater says two miners were injured, but they were alert and talking before they were taken to the hospital.

No other details are being released at this time.

Friday 11 February 2011

Jakarta: One killed in sand mining accident

Extract from The Jakarta Post

JAKARTA: A local resident was killed during a mining accident at an illegal sand quarry in Cisauk, Tangerang, on Thursday.

Cisauk Police chief Insp. Wempy Santoso said that the victim, Wanto, 35, died after a hole in the quarry caved in due to heavy downpours.

Police said that there could be more victims buried in the mine.

"We have just evacuated the body of this victim and we are still looking for other possible victims," he said.

Wempy said that his personnel received an alert from locals about the mining accident, soon after it rained.

Police, however, could not confirm if the sand quarry, where most locals were employed, was indeed illegal.

"Let's see, if the sand mining sites are illegal, then we will certainly shut them down," he said.

Wempy said he was unaware about any bylaws regulating sand mining activities in the area.

Turkey: Nine workers missing after a coal mine explosion

Extract from News.az

Nine workers are missing after a coal mine explosion in the Turkish southern province of Kahramanmarash on Thursday morning.

While five workers were rescued from the mine by search and rescue teams, no contact was established with the other miners.

While officials did not mention the exact number of workers who are missing, reports said nine are missing. The missing people include two engineers, three machine operators and four workers who were reportedly working on the construction of belt tracking in the area. The

same mine was the scene of an explosion earlier this month on Feb. 6, which claimed the life of one worker and injured 10 others.

Family members of the mine workers rushed to the site after they heard about the mine blast. Since officials fear other explosions in the same vicinity, a large area was cordoned off and people were prevented from entering the area. Other mine workers in the area asked the officials to quicken search and rescue efforts, saying there are more workers under the ground.

Helicopters were sent to the region from Malatya and Kayseri to join the search and rescue teams there. One civilian and two military helicopters have been flying over the region since the explosion.

The rescued workers were taken to hospital for treatment. While they were found to have gone into shock due to the explosion, they were said to be in good condition.

Saturday 12 February 2011

USA: Fatal accident at CF Industries

Extract from www.businesswire.com/news

DEERFIELD, III.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--CF Industries Holdings, Inc. (NYSE:CF) indicated that the accident that occurred at its Hardee Phosphate Complex in Hardee County, Florida this morning involving earth moving equipment resulted in a fatal injury to a construction contractor's employee. The Hardee County Sheriff's office has confirmed the fatality and that the family has been notified.



Phosphate mine in Hardee County in central Florida.

"We are saddened to learn that the accident occurred and resulted in a fatality," said Nick Katzaras, General Manager of the mine. "Our thoughts and prayers continue to be with the family of the deceased."

Company personnel are cooperating with officials and have begun a full investigation.

Trapped Chilean miners talked of cannibalism, suicide

Extract from Mid-Day

The trapped 33 Chilean miners have now revealed that their mental faculties were stretched to the limit, and have admitted that there were thoughts of death and cannibalism.

They also had doubts over whether they would ever see daylight or their loved ones again, even as they lived out one of the most astonishing stories of human endurance ever.

The miners were trapped for 69 days last year in cramped and uncomfortably hot conditions.

According to the Daily Mail, both suicide and even cannibalism were considered as the men struggled to contend with the idea that they may never be freed.

The men said that they rationed the inadequate emergency food supply, down to one can of tuna and eating just one teaspoon each every 48 hours.

In an upcoming book by Jonathan Franklin entitled 'Los 33' ('33 Men'), he recalls one of the survivors joking tone when he suggested that if he died in his sleep, he would be 'breakfast, lunch and dinner.'

It was no joke, there was no more food. But how long before cannibalism became a very realistic option?

Many of the miners are now on heavy medication.

One of the miners, Victor Zamora, aged just 31, said after his rescue: 'I said to a friend, "Well, if we are going to continue suffering, it would be better for us to all go to the refuge, start an

engine and with the carbon monoxide, just let ourselves go."

One of the survivors, Edison Pena, has since run the New York Marathon to prove just how much he wanted to live.

Others are struggling to rebuild the relationships they once had with friends and family members. One man is constructing a wall around his home.

All this is a stark contrast to the stories of special appearances at functions across the globe. Some have coped better than others.

A large contingent has been guests of honour at both Manchester United and Real Madrid matches. One appeared at the National Television Awards.

Sunday 13 February 2011

Pakistan: Two Chinese engineers killed in mine collapse

Extract from Deccan Herald

Islamabad – Two Chinese engineers were killed when a chromite mine collapsed in Balochistan province of southwest Pakistan today, officials said. The incident occurred at Bagha Wala in Qila Saifullah district, 200 km from provincial capital Quetta. The Chinese engineers were working inside the mine, Assistant Commissioner Hamidullah Khan Nasar said.

Heavy rain and snowfall in the region over the past three days caused landslides and the collapse of several mines, officials said. The bodies of the Chinese engineers were taken to Quetta.

A Chinese firm is operating chromite mines in northern Balochistan.

Chile: The 33 had pornography and marijuana, says miner

Extract from First Post

One of the 33 Chileans caught up in the San Jose mining accident last year has revealed his fellow miners had access to marijuana – but nobody offered him a toke during his 69 days trapped 700 metres underground fearing for his life.

"When you saw five of them headed up to the bathroom, you knew what they were doing," says Samuel Avalos. "We knew they smoked marijuana [but] they never even offered me a toke.

"They were peeling away from the group in small cliques, wandering towards the bathroom. We looked everywhere for a colilla [stub of a joint]."

The drugs appeared in the mine after Chilean authorities relaxed their previously strict control of the letters sent down below by relatives of the 33 men in the final few weeks leading up to the rescue.

The families took advantage of this to send cigarettes, medicine and illicit drugs to their loved ones. Once the miners were busted, however, the Chilean government were so worried they even discussed using a sniffer dog at the minehead.

Avalos (above) makes the revelation in a new book by New York Times reporter, Jonathan Franklin, which also reveals the men were given pornography after an offer to donate 10 sex dolls was deemed inadequate.

Incredibly, the miners had worked out a system with a separate room for 'conjugal visits' to the plastic women they hoped to receive, using condoms for hygiene. But the authorities couldn't stomach this, concerned that having to share the dolls would lead to jealousies.

The doctor who assessed the men's health needs from the surface during their ordeal, Dr Jean Romagnoli, explains: "There was a guy

who offered inflatable dolls for the guys but he only had 10.

"I said 33 or none. Otherwise they would be fighting for inflatable dolls: whose turn is it? Who was seen with whose fiancée? You are flirting with my inflatable doll."

Instead, the men – including the spliff-starved Avalos – received a supply of pornography to satisfy their needs.

But perhaps the most startling revelation in Franklin's book is the news that the supposedly live feed of the rescue, watched by a billion people around the world, actually contained two pre-recorded sequences, used to cover up embarrassing incidents.

When a landslip inside the mine cut the cable bringing pictures to the surface, earlier footage from the bottom of the rescue shaft was spliced in until it could be repaired. In a separate incident, a fierce argument between the rescuers was also covered up with old footage.

This week in mining accident history

14 February 1844

Garden Pit

Landshipping, Pembrokeshire, Wales, UK

Underground coal mine

40 killed, inrush of sea water

Source: www.welshcoalmines.co.uk

Coal mining activities played a big part in the commerce of this small Pembrokeshire village as far back as the mid eighteenth century, with most of the anthracite coal being exported.

Garden Pit was re-established in 1788, after it had been closed for some time. The shaft was 67 yards deep and much of the workings run beneath the estuarial waters of the Cleddau and Daucleddau rivers.

In around 1800 it became one of the first collieries to use the modern technology, when a steam engine was installed for haulage and pumping. This machinery greatly increased

productivity and the output reached over 10,000 tons per year.

Forty men, women and children were killed on St Valentine's Day in 1844 when the roof of the mine collapsed and water from the Cleddau River flooded the shafts.

On the 14th of February 1844, miners were at their work, when the usual water seepage, which was encountered at this mine suddenly, began to increase in volume. This concerned the miners in so much that they left the mine only to be sent back after being reassured that all was well. One hour later the sea broke into the workings in such a deluge that 40 miners were drowned unable to escape the torrent.

Blame was placed on an unusually high tide putting extra weight on the shallow workings

The Victims as shown on the Memorial Plaque, which was erected by local people in 2002 (two names are missing from the 40 remembered victims – Ed)

Victim	Age	Victim	Age
Thomas Gray	-	Benjamin Picton	16
Benjamin Hart	-	Richard Cole	16
William Llewellyn	30	William Hughes	15
John Llewellyn	12	James Jenkins	14
Thomas Llewellyn	45	William Hitchings	13
William Llewellyn	58	John Nowfield	18
Benjamin Jones	25	Thomas Day	11
Joseph Picton	40	John Cole	16
James Picton	15	Thomas Cole	14
Mark Picton	13	Richard Jones	-
Joseph Picton	11	Miner Wilkins	-
John Cole	25	Miner Hart	-
John Hitchings	-	Miner Llewellyn	-
John Richards	-	Miner John	Child
Isaac Owen	23	Miner Davies	-
Josua Davies	22	John Butland	16
Thomas John	20	Thomas Butland	9
Edward John	13	Miner Thomas	-
Joseph Picton	11	Unknown Miner	-

It is thought that some, if not all, of the names listed "Miner" were probably women, this shows that the exploitation of women and children working in the mines was still happening even though an act of Parliament banning women from working underground, as were boys under the age of ten was past just two years earlier.

Accidents such as these were a national problem and generated a national response: from the 1840s onwards, the government started to enact legislation that slowly brought the apparent recklessness of proprietors and managers under control.

From the Carmarthen Journal, 1844

Awful Catastrophe- Forty Lives Lost

Haverfordwest, Feb. 14th. This neighbourhood has just become the scene of an awful visitation, as tremendous in its effects as it is happily rare in its extent. Late last evening, a messenger arrived from Landshipping, a colliery, about five miles from this town, with the intelligence, that an accident had happened in one of the pits, by which no less than 40 individuals were hurried into eternity.

On ascertaining the truth of the report, we hastened as early yesterday morning as possible to the spot, where we gathered the following particulars, which doubtless, your readers will receive with painful interest.

It appears, that in one of the most extensive pits, called the Garden Pit, which has been worked for the last two years, and the ways of which had been carried a great distance under the tide, at the conjunction of the rivers Cleddy and Daugleddy.

About 60 persons have been employed for the last few days, after a cessation of a month.

Nothing appeared to indicate any danger, until the moment of the catastrophe, when the whole affair seems to have taken place with the suddenness of a dream,- a few moments of horror, and all was over, as far as regarded the sufferings, whose first intimation of danger must have been the single stroke of the king of terrors.

About half-past three or four o'clock, in the afternoon of Wednesday, when there were 58 persons at work down below; the parties at the

mouth of the pit became aware of some accident having occurred, by a powerful current of air making up the pit, so strong, to use the language of one of the bystanders, as to bear up a hand when held unresistingly over it; and the same instant, the water at a little distance from the shore, became much agitated, eddies being visible to a considerable extent. Shortly afterwards, several persons rushed out into the shaft of the pit shrieking wildly for assistance. The man at the whim immediately put the horses to the gallop, and succeeded in rescuing 4 men and 14 boys, when the water rushing with tremendous force up towards the mouth of the pit, which filled at the rate of 7 fathoms in a minute, rendered all further exertions unavailing.

From the mouth of one of the survivors we received the following account:- He and another man were alarmed by a rushing wind, stronger than any storm he had ever witnessed, which completely carried them off their legs, and at the same time extinguished their lights. He called to his companion to stand still, as he thought it was occasioned by the explosion of fire damp in same part of the works; but having discovered his mistake, he at once saw that their only chance was to fly to the mouth of the pit; in his way thither, his companion appears to have lost his footing, as he heard him exclaim, "O Lord, have mercy on my soul." He himself was overtaken by the water, which almost prevented his progress, dashing him several times against the sides of the pit; when he got into the light, he rushed past another man who was about to get into the bucket, and was hauled up in safety, the water following him so closely, that the next and last man was only saved by climbing up the side of the pit, until the bucket, which descended to the other was raised, reached him. The water appears to have broken in at a comparatively small distance from the shore, and 33 persons being at work a good way farther in, their retreat was instantly cut off, the water pouring down in a body between them and the entrance of the pit; the remaining seven who were at work nearer

out, must have been overtaken in their endeavours to escape.

A very violent explosion took place yesterday morning in the middle of the river, occasioned by the pressure of the water on the air confined in the recesses of the pit, large pieces of timber being thrown up to the height of from thirty to forty feet.

The following are a few of the distressing bereavements occasioned by the above melancholy occurrence; we sincerely trust a subscription will be immediately set on foot for the benefit of the survivors; Joseph Picton, with three sons, drowned, leaving a widow and five children; James Davies and one son drowned, leaving a widow and five children; five other men have left widows, with 18 children between them.

Mining dictionary

A guide to coal mining terminology

A

Always accessible

Empowers the charterer to send the vessel to ports where the vessel can be reached for the purpose of handling cargo or carrying out activities with the shore as required.



Bulk coal ships loading at Carrington Terminal, Newcastle NSW

-Ed