



# Mining Accident News No.1217

1 to 13 August 2012

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Wednesday 1 August 2012

## Driller admits lapses in New Zealand mine disaster

*Extract from [www.canadianbusiness.com](http://www.canadianbusiness.com)*

WELLINGTON, New Zealand — An Australian drilling company pleaded guilty Tuesday to three safety violations in connection with a 2010 coal

mine disaster in New Zealand that killed 29 miners.

VLI Drilling pleaded guilty in a New Zealand court to charges that it failed to keep its workers safe at the Pike River coal mine. The company faces a maximum fine of 750,000 New Zealand dollars (\$607,000). VLI, a contractor at the mine, employed three of the men who died.

Nine safety and health charges also are pending against the main mine operator, Pike River Coal Ltd., which employed the rest of the victims. The receivers for the bankrupt company elected Tuesday not to contest those charges in court. A court is scheduled in October to determine the company's culpability.

Pike River Coal's former chief executive, Peter Whittall, also faces 12 charges, which he has vowed to fight.

Bernie Monk, father of a Pike River Coal employee killed in the disaster and a spokesman for all of the victims' families, said VLI has been able to walk away without facing any meaningful consequences.

"For me it's only a slap on the wrist," Monk said. "It's very hard to defend."

The men died after a series of methane-fuelled explosions. The Labour Department said in a statement of facts about the case that it's not known if VLI's drill rig was running at the time of the first explosion. However, the department says VLI's methane detector on the rig was faulty and needed replacing, and hadn't been inspected as required.

Brett Lynch, the chief executive of parent company Hunter Valley drilling contractor- Valley Longwall International, emphasized that the charges didn't relate to the explosion itself and instead relate to its failure to have a procedure in place to verify that Pike River Coal (PRC) had conducted its inspections of its drill rig. He said he regretted VLI not having in place proper

**NOTE:** Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual sender, and are not necessarily the views of the NSW Department of Trade and Investment, Regional Infrastructure and Services  
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procedures to ensure inspections were carried out.

The statement of facts says it is unclear if the drill rig was even operating at the time of the explosion or if the power supply to the rig was in place.

"We regard the safety and wellbeing of our people as an absolute priority," Lynch said in a statement.

He said the company had provided "ongoing financial and practical support" to the families of the three dead miners, adding it would be inappropriate to disclose details.

At a government inquiry into the disaster, experts testified that the mine didn't have adequate escape routes or ventilation, and that Pike River Coal was cutting corners due to financial pressure. The inquiry is scheduled to issue its findings in September.

But Monk, whose 23-year-old son Michael died in the accident, said the failure thus far by New Zealand authorities to hold anybody accountable in a meaningful way or to implement better safety procedures was deeply frustrating. He said he and other victims' relatives will continue to push for both legal and mine safety reforms.

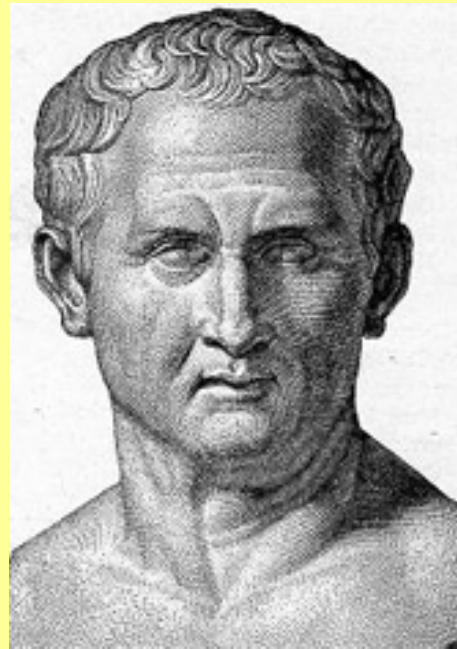
"We've had to fight every inch of the way to be heard," he said.

Monk said the families would consider civil litigation once the government inquiry is concluded.

Lynch said he didn't expect civil litigation to be brought against his company because the safety charges didn't relate to the explosion.

The Labour Department said in an email that any fines collected from VLI would go to the government rather than to the victims' families.

### Quote of the week



"While there's life, there's hope."

Marcus Tullius Cicero,  
Roman author, orator, lawyer & politician  
(106BC – 43BC)

### QLD: Box Flat miners 'live on' in safety laws

*Extract from The Brisbane times, Qld, Aus*

The spirits of the men who died in one of Queensland's worst mining accidents live on through the safety laws protecting miners today, a union says.

Hundreds of relatives, mates and rescue workers gathered in Ipswich today to mark the anniversary of the Box Flat Mine Disaster of July 31, 1972.

Forty years ago, a wave of gas explosions ripped through the mine as workers were rushing to put out an underground fire.

Seventeen men were killed instantly and another died from his injuries 18 months later.

Advertisement

The mine was sealed after the accident and the bodies were never retrieved.

Many of the dead were members of the Construction Forestry Mining Energy Union and spokesman Greg Dalliston said the tragedy led to Queensland implementing some of the best mine safety legislation in the world.

"The new idea was don't try to save the mine, save the workers," he said.

"The spirits of those men who died underground live on through the protections miners get today from mine safety laws."

Ipswich Mayor Paul Pisasale said it was the city's darkest day.

"We're a city built on rail and mining," he said.

"When a city gets hit by a natural disaster like floods or fires you move on, but with something like this you can't.

"It feels like yesterday. There's a lot of tears there, a lot of pain."

## **Mudslide buries 28 in China mine**

*Extract from Independent Online*

A mudslide caused by heavy rain buried 28 people on Tuesday at an iron mine in China's far western region of Xinjiang.

Rescuers recovered seven bodies and were using excavators and sniffer dogs to search for 21 people still missing in thousands of cubic metres of mud and debris, state media said.

The mudslide struck in the middle of the night and engulfed buildings at the mine in Araltobe township in Yili prefecture, close to China's border with Kazakhstan.

The mud and debris covered an area about 500 metres long and 60 metres wide with the mud up to 6 metres deep, local officials told the official Xinhua news agency.

Torrential rain has caused floods and landslides that killed scores of people in several areas of China over the past two weeks, including at least 77 in Beijing.

## **USA: Beckley miner killed at Arch Coal mine**

*Extract from the Charleston Gazette, USA*

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- A Beckley man was killed Tuesday at an Arch Coal underground mine in Raleigh County, becoming the 13th miner nationwide and the fourth in West Virginia to die on the job in 2012.

Gregory A. Byers, 43, died from injuries he received in an accident at Arch subsidiary ICG Beckley's Beckley Pocahontas Mine near Eccles, according to the state Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.

Byers was struck by a battery-powdered coal scoop in an incident that occurred at about 12:45 p.m., according to Amy Louviere, a spokeswoman for the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration.

Preliminary information from MSHA said Byers was near a scoop at an underground charging station, when a second scoop hit the first, causing it to slide into Byers.

Byers was first transported to a Beckley hospital and later taken to CAMC, where he died late Tuesday afternoon, officials said.

The incident is the second fatal mining accident in West Virginia in less than a week.

Last Friday, Johnny Mack Bryant II, 35, of Lenore, was crushed to death when he became pinned between a mine wall and the boom of a continuing mining machine. That incident occurred at Coal River Mining LLC's Fork Creek No. 10 Mine, near the intersection of Boone, Kanawha, and Lincoln counties south of Charleston.

The 13 coal miners to die on the job so far this year is ahead of last year's pace of 10 mining fatalities at the end of July, according to MSHA's official count.

Last year, the Beckley Pocahontas Mine produced about 1.1 million tons of coal with 268 workers. The mine is among the operations Arch

Coal acquired with its purchase of International Coal Group last year.

## Coal mine flooding traps 12 in China

*Extract from New York Times*

Twelve people were trapped after a coal mine got flooded Wednesday in China's northern province of Shanxi, the China Daily reported.

The accident occurred in a pit under construction in Hongtong county, it said. Twenty-two people escaped from the flooded shaft. The mine has a designed annual production capacity of 1.2 million tonnes.

## WA: Internet drug buyers gambling with life - inquest

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

The Perth Coroner's Court has been told people are effectively doing human drug trials on themselves by consuming unknown chemicals purchased over the internet.

The comments were made at the inquest into the death of mine worker Mark Dahlenburg, 41.

The court heard he purchased a stimulant powder referred to as DMAA online for \$29.

He consumed half a teaspoon and suffered a cerebral haemorrhage.

It is understood fellow workers introduced him to the substance because they believed it would not be detected in routine drug testing.

The court heard chemists know little about the substance and are playing catch up.

The coroner said it appeared DMAA caused all of the bad effects of amphetamines with none of the effects recreational drug takers seek.

The Therapeutic Goods Administration is expected to make a decision on DMAA shortly.

Thursday 2 August 2012

## Banned chemical killed WA mine worker

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

A West Australian coroner has ruled a chemical used in sports supplements caused the death of a mine worker at Bunbury last year. The Therapeutic Goods Administration has today banned the chemical, which is known as DMAA, due to its deadly side effects.

## This week in mining accident history

**2 August 1895**

**Auchenharvie Colliery**

**Stevenston, Ayrshire, Scotland, UK**

**Underground coal mine**

**9 killed, outburst of water**

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

leaves 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 cousie 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 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, cousie 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.



Cairn to fallen miners, Stevenston golf course – middle of putting practice area

The event has been immortalised in the poem "The Star of Young McGhee".

Saturday 4 August 2012

## Mine accident in China, eight killed

*Extract from ZeeNews.com, India*

Beijing: At least eight miners trapped in a flooded coal mine in north China's Shanxi province were found dead on Saturday.

Bodies of the mine workers in Hongtong county have been retrieved this morning, the rescue headquarters said.

Four workers, who were pulled out alive yesterday, were receiving treatment at a local hospital.

Twenty-two out of 34 people who were working underground at the time of the incident on Wednesday escaped from the shaft, while the rest were trapped underground.

## Zambian miners kill Chinese supervisor over pay

*Extract from Reuters*

Zambian miners killed a Chinese supervisor and seriously wounded another on Saturday in a pay dispute at the Collum coal mine, labour minister Fackson Shamenda said on Sunday.

Chinese companies have invested more than \$1 billion in copper-rich Zambia but animosity

towards them is growing as Zambian workers accuse firms of abuses and underpaying.

Workers at the Collum mine, situated 325km (200 miles) south of the capital, attacked the Chinese men demanding wage rises in line with those stipulated by the government in July.

Zambia last month raised minimum wages to 522,000 kwacha (\$110) for maids and household servants, and to 1.1 million kwacha (\$220) for shop workers without unions.

"We are yet to establish the exact circumstances but the report I have is that one Chinese was killed and another injured as the workers demanded the new minimum wage," Shamenda told Reuters on Sunday.

Two years ago, Zambian police charged two Chinese supervisors at the Collum coal mine with attempted murder following the shooting of 13 miners in a pay dispute.

Resource-hungry China is investing heavily in Africa, a supplier of oil and raw materials like copper and uranium, but critics have warned that its companies are importing their poor track record on workers' rights.

In July, Chinese President Hu Jintao offered \$20 billion in loans to African countries over the next three years, double the amount it pledged for the previous three-year period in 2009.

Sunday 5 August 2012

## Mexico: 5 Workers Trapped Inside Coal Mine

*Extract from The Huffington Post, USA*

PIEDRAS NEGRAS, Mexico — Emergency crews located the bodies of six workers who were trapped underground Friday in a coal mine collapse in northern Mexico.

The accident, which took place in the northern state of Coahuila at 10:15am local time, was reportedly caused by a gas blast that caused a cave-in and 100 tons of coal to collapse onto the miners.

One miner was rescued alive earlier after the accident at site near another coal mine where seven miners died in an explosion last week.

Federico Mendez Pacheco, representative of the Coahuila state civil defense office in the coal-mining region, said the six dead men apparently were crushed when tons of coal fell on them.



The mine's owner, Grupo Acerero del Norte, had initially reported five miners were trapped.

The company said the mine is in Nueva Rosita, a town in Coahuila state, which borders Texas. Mexico's Labor Department said Labor Secretary Rosalinda Velez had traveled to the scene to help with recovery efforts.

About 200 people were working in the mine at the time of the incident. Most were quickly evacuated.

The company running the mine, Altos Hornos de Mexico, said the men were trapped when 100 tons of coal and rock collapsed. It further noted that the rock fall had been caused by "a pocket of methane gas," and not an explosion.

"Seven were trapped, one of them was rescued alive but unfortunately six were buried under the coal," Francisco Orduna, representative of the Coahuila state civil defense office in the coal-mining region, told the AP.

The rescued miner has been hospitalized and is in stable condition.

Unfortunately the recent coal mining accident isn't the first in Mexico

Seven miners were killed last week in an apparent methane gas explosion inside a coal mine not far from Nueva Rosita. The explosion

was at the El Progreso mine, about 90 miles (150 kilometers) southwest of the border city of Eagle Pass, Texas.

## Chile Celebrates Second Anniversary since Rescuing 33 Miners

*Extract from Fox News*

It's been two years since Chilean authorities rescued a group of 33 miners who grabbed the world's attention when they became trapped a half-mile below the Atacama desert for 69 days.

President Sebastian Pinera is in the northern city of Copiapo to join the miners Sunday at the mouth of the San Jose copper mine that nearly became their rocky grave. They will unveil a five-meter cross as part of a monument known as the "The 33 miners of Atacama: The miracle of life."

Before anyone knew that they had survived the collapse, the 33 stretched their meager store of emergency food for 17 days, eating tiny capsules of tuna and sips of expired milk.

The desperate workers even discussed the possibility of cannibalism in the first days of the ordeal.

"It was kind of who died first, that's where we were, he who died first ... the rest will go there, like the little animals," Samuel Avalos said in a documentary aired on Chile's TVN public television network

The miners were received as heroes after their globally televised rescue mesmerized millions worldwide. But many still suffer from health and psychological problems, and some have struggled to make ends meet despite becoming famous.

Omar Reygadas, 57, told The AP last year that nightmares still keep him up.

"I try to read, to tire myself out so that I can sleep well," Reygadas said. "But if I'm alone in a closed space, it still makes me anxious — I have

to get out and find someone to talk with or distract myself with something."

## **USA: Crandall Canyon Mine disaster five years later**

*Extract from Fox 13 Now - Salt Lake City*

SALT LAKE CITY – Five years ago Monday, the Crandall Canyon Mine collapsed, trapping six miners. A 10-day rescue operation was halted when three rescuers were killed and six more injured in another collapse. In the five years since the collapse, memorials have been built for the nine lives lost, the University of Utah has opened a new educational facility about mining and the mining company pleaded guilty to criminal charges.

But for the families of the victims, not much has changed. They're still trying to come to terms with the tragedy.

"It's almost hard to believe that it's been five years because it just seems like it happened in some ways," said Ed Havas, the attorney representing the victims' families. "And I've spoken to them as the anniversary approaches and in many ways not much has changed. They still feel it very deeply. It's still very hurtful. They are still coming to terms with the tragedy and dealing with it. It's strange how time goes by so quickly but it doesn't seem like time has gone by at all."

The six miners were deep inside the mine when it imploded on them just before 3 a.m. on Aug. 6, trapping them inside. It is unclear whether they survived the collapse.

Rescuers worked for 10 days in an attempt to reach the miners, but a second collapse on Aug. 16 that killed three rescuers and injured six others halted that effort.

"And it wasn't just a story this happened and now it's over with. It was an ongoing... 'Are they alive? Can we get to them?' There's some hope the hope is dashed. We don't know. And then the follow-on tragedy for the rescuers started it all over again," said Havas.

Earlier this year, Murray Energy Corporation, the mining company, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor charge. The company was fined \$500,000.

"The families were disappointed that more wasn't done. More wasn't able to be done," said Havas.

The victims' families believe the tragedy could have been avoided. Havas says the families are happy to see safety changes that have been made since the disaster, including a new mining education center at the University of Utah.

The Bureau of Land Management said earlier this week that there is still an active lease on the Crandall Canyon Mine and there has been speculation that Murray Energy Corp. may start mining in the area again, but in a statement to FOX 13, Murray Energy and its subsidiary UtahAmerican Energy Inc. denied those claims.

"UtahAmerican has no plans, whatsoever, to reopen the mine," the statement read.

Tuesday 7 August 2012

## **QLD: Accidents with fatigued miners**

*Extract from The Morning Bulletin, Rockhampton, Qld, Aus*

CENTRAL Queensland miners driving home from stints out west are creating extra work for the Royal Flying Doctor Service, a spokesperson says.

The service's Rockhampton manager Patricia Short last week said fatigued miners were contributing to an increasing number of accidents on Central Queensland highways.

In the 2010-11 financial year RFDS carried out 2170 patient transports from the Rockhampton base.

While the service was unable to provide a breakdown of the number of incidents involving miners, Queensland RFDS director Dick Conder said in many instances miners from the Rockhampton region working in the Bowen



Basin were wanting to get home fast after finishing long shifts.

"They just get in their car and go," he said.

"These incidents play a significant impact on retrieval services ... we do a lot of flights from Blackwater and Emerald."

Rockhampton police traffic branch officer-in-charge Senior Sergeant Ewan Findlater yesterday reminded miners they were responsible for their actions.

"With the mining boom there is an increase in traffic flow in this region," Snr Sgt Findlater said.

"These miners need to rest."

He said he couldn't recall a car accident involving a miner in the past three months.

## Philippines: Miner trapped underground for 4 days found alive

*Extract from Sun.Star, Philippines*

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet -- A lone pocket miner in Bokod town was found alive after being trapped underground since August 2. Rescue operations for Felipe Pilmaco, 33, are ongoing.

"He is alive and we hope to get him out soon," Governor Nestor Fongwan said.

Pilmaco was trapped inside a private small-scale mine in Coros, Bila, Bokod. He was mining in the area despite orders to halt small-scale mining amid Typhoon Gener that ravaged the province.

Fongwan said the Pilmaco should have heeded the warning not to go underground during the typhoon.

Last week, Fongwan implored all small-scale mining activities to halt, banning miners not to enter tunnels during the period of suspension.

Nevertheless, he said all efforts are underway to save the trapped miner.

A pipe has been installed in the tunnel to give Pilmaco food and is used to communicate to him.

The method used in the rescue operation was patterned after the successful rescue of 33 Chilean miners who were trapped years ago six hundred meters under a collapsed copper-gold site in Copiapo, Chile for 69 nine days.

The Philex rescue team is now on the site to offer assistance to Pilmaco. The team is composed of miners from Philex's Padcal mine in Benguet.

The same team was in Real Quezon doing similar rescue operations when tragedy struck the area and was able to rescue survivors after seven days underground.

## Czech: Fatality for New World Resources

*Extract from interactive investor, UK*

FTSE 250 miner New World Resources (NWR) has reported a fatality at the Paskov mine of OKD, its Czech subsidiary.

The accident happened on Monday when a 46-year-old miner was fatally injured approximately 1,100 metres underground.

The company said the incident had no impact on production.



Miners underground, Paskov mine of OKD

An investigative committee comprising members of the District Mining Authority in Ostrava, management, the OKD trade unions and the police in the Czech Republic is now conducting an inquiry into the accident.

Wednesday 8 August 2012

## Accidents in China mines covered up in July

*Extract from Xinhua*

Four coal mine accidents in July, three of them fatal, were covered up, a State report released on Tuesday said.

The State Administration of Work Safety report on Tuesday said that on July 4, flooding at the Qielichong Coal Mine in Leiyang, Hunan province, trapped 16 miners. The owner concealed the accident and fled, delaying the rescue for 12 hours. Eight people died.

Thirteen days later, a gas blast that killed three people at Puxijing Coal Mine in Chenzhou, also in Hunan, went unreported.

On July 25, a shaft collapse at Anlilai Coal Mine in Pu'an county, Guizhou province, trapped five miners. Bosses failed to report the accident to authorities and attempted to organize a rescue on their own, but a second collapse then trapped 53 rescuers.

Victims of both collapses were saved after local residents called emergency services, the report said.

On July 26, a gas explosion at a coal mine in Yangquan, Shanxi province, killed seven miners and injured 30 others. The owner concealed the accident and, after being reported by residents, still withheld the number of casualties.

Wu Yanyun, deputy director of the administration's policy and regulations department, said the punishment of offenders in the accidents is unknown, but they will receive maximum penalties.

According to the Criminal Law, anyone who conceals an industrial accident gets a three-year sentence. Those involved in accidents under "serious circumstances" get up to seven years in prison.

So far this year, six coal mine accidents that killed 46 people were concealed, information from the administration indicates.

## China coal mine blast kills 7

*Extract from AFP*

BEIJING - A gas blast at a coal mine in China's central province of Hunan killed seven people on Sunday, state media said, the latest in a string of accidents in the country's dangerous mining industry.

The explosion killed the miners on Sunday morning at the mine in Lianyuan city, though 39 others escaped, the official Xinhua news agency said, quoting the local government.

Accidents in China's mines occur frequently.

However, tighter safety standards appear to have been effective according to the latest official figures, which say 1,973 people died in coal mining accidents in 2011, down 19 per cent on the previous year.

Labour rights groups say the actual death toll is likely much higher, partly due to under-reporting of accidents as mine bosses seek to limit their economic losses and avoid punishment.

China is the world's biggest consumer of coal, relying on the fossil fuel for 70 per cent of its growing energy needs.

## Philippines: Pigs offered for life of trapped miner

*Extract from Sun.Star, Philippines*

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet – Bokod folk are trying to appease mountain gods in exchange for the life of trapped miner Felipe Pilmaco.

A native pig and chicken were butchered on site Wednesday as an "atang" (offering) to guardians of the mountains in hopes Pilmaco will finally be set free by the spirits.

Bokod Police Chief Manuel Tan said old folks have swayed search and rescue teams to accede to the native ritual of offering the swine and fowl.

Tan said Pilmaco is a mere meter away from the exit point of the tunnel. "He was even able to reach out his hand Tuesday to us.

Bokod Mayor Mauricio Macay also advised to follow the elder's belief and perform the ritual.

Now on his sixth day underground, Pilmaco has been kept alive by a pipe installed to ferry food and serve as passage of air for him.

Tan said the Bokod Municipal doctor has been on site since last week supervising food being given Pilmaco through the pipe. "We have given him, eggs, sugar, water, rice, viands and bananas since last week. We also give him Yakult to keep him strong."

Police Intelligence chief Mario Mayames said rescue by Bokod cops is ongoing augmented by the Philex rescue team sent days ago.

The mountain that Pilmaco tunneled into eroded due to heavy rains last week. Gravel falling from the mountain prevented the extraction of Pilmaco.

Pilmaco is the lone pocket miner from Bokod trapped underground since August 2. He went inside despite orders of Governor Nestor Fongwan to halt small scale mining operations due to the inclement weather.

The order to halt all small scale mining activities still stands today banning miners to enter tunnels during the period of suspension.

Thursday 9 August 2012

## **Canada: Injured miner has his leg amputated**

*Extract from NorthernLife.ca*

### **Brian Dusick's daughter organizes fundraiser**

Levack resident Brian Dusick, 32, had his leg amputated July 31 following an accident at Vale's Stobie Mine last month.

Dusick was working for the contracting company Plateau Mining at the 2,400-foot level of the mine on July 20 at around 9 a.m. that day when

the accident occurred. He was standing in between a forklift and a scoop tram, when a second scoop tram struck the forklift, causing the miner to be pinned between the forklift and the first scoop tram.

"He broke his leg very badly," Brian's mother, Linda Dusick, told Northern Life. "He had a compound fracture on the femur, and the bottom was broken, too ... They tried to save it, and they couldn't."

Brian, who was in severe pain after his accident, developed an infection in his broken right leg. The leg was amputated at Health Sciences North July 31, Linda said. As she spoke to Northern Life Aug. 9, she learned her son was in the process of being released from hospital.

Now, a barbecue and car wash fundraiser is being held this weekend with proceeds going to help with building a wheelchair ramp, transportation to and from rehabilitation and any other need he might have after returning home.

The fundraiser came about at the request of Brian's nine-year-old daughter, Alyssa Pond-Dusick. The event will take place from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Aug. 11 at Deziel Repairs on Regional Road 8 in Onaping.

Alyssa's mother and Brian's ex-wife, Duska Pond, said she's "unbelievably proud" of her daughter for wanting to help her father out like this.

"It chokes me up even to think about it," she said.

Pond said she hasn't set a fundraising goal for the barbecue and car wash, because she doesn't want Alyssa to be disappointed if they don't meet it.

"I know there's a potential to make more than \$100, that's for sure," she said. "But we'll be proud of her no matter what she makes."

Linda said she's also very proud of her granddaughter. She said Brian was initially embarrassed there was a fundraiser for him, as he doesn't want to rely on other people. But he

changed his mind once he learned it was Alyssa's initiative.

The little girl is looking forward to the event, Linda said.

"I was just talking to her a few minutes ago," she said. "I said 'Wash lots of cars,' and she just giggled."

Complicating matters is the fact that Brian's girlfriend, Renée Garneau, is due to give birth to his second child in a month's time.

"Actually he's looking forward to it," Linda said. "That's what he said to his girlfriend — 'You just leave me the baby, and I'll take care of it.'"

Now that his leg has been amputated and he's no longer in severe pain, Brian is in good spirits, and adjusting well to his new physical situation, she said. She said he plans to be fitted for a prosthetic leg as soon as his stump heals.

"When we went in yesterday, he just hopped out of bed, got his walker, went over to the wheelchair and sat down, and took off," Linda said. "He was way ahead of me. It's not going to hold him down. That's the attitude he's got."

Monday 13 August 2012

## NSW: Investigations into Hunter mine accident

*Extract from 1233 ABC Newcastle, Aus*

An investigation is underway at an Upper Hunter Mine where a worker was critically injured in an accident yesterday.

The 26 year old contractor was carrying out gas drainage drilling at Ashton Coal's longwall operation near Camberwell when the accident happened at 2 pm (AEST) yesterday.

It is understood during a flushing process a steel pipe became disconnected under pressure and blew off hitting the man with force.

He suffered critical injuries and was flown to Sydney's Royal North Shore Hospital.

The site is being inspected today by officers from NSW Trade and Investment and the union district check inspector.

They have been speaking to a co-worker who was with him to determine what happened.

The men were working under contract for Port Macquarie based firm Silver City Drilling.

The company has refused to comment on the incident.

## 4 killed, 17 trapped in NE China coal mine accident

*Extract from Xinhua*

Four people were killed and 17 others trapped in a coal mine accident in northeast China's Jilin Province on Monday, local authorities said.

The accident, believed to be triggered by gas, happened around 6 a.m. at Jisheng Coal Mine in the city of Baishan, according to the authorities.

A total of 116 miners were working underground when the accident occurred, and 95 of them were lifted out of the mine safely.

Rescue work for the trapped miners is underway.

The Jilin provincial government has ordered a thorough work safety check in the province.

## Mining dictionary

### A guide to coal mining terminology

#### B

#### **Blasting circuit**

Electric circuits used to fire electric detonators or to ignite an igniter cord by means of an electric starter.

-Ed