



# Mining Accident News No.1222

25 September to 12 October 2012

## In this issue:

20 die in China coal-mine plunge .....	1
USA: Perry Co. Mining Accident Considered "Minor" .....	2
S.Africa: Fatality at AngloGold's Mponeng mine	2
USA: NIOSH to study "cognitive load" placed on miners.....	2
China: Five detained after fatal Gansu mine accident .....	3
USA: Mine safety foundation to meet in W.Va. Oct. 10-11.....	3
<b>Quote of the week</b> .....	4
USA: Harlan man killed in Tennessee mine accident .....	4
USA: California Fatality is Third in 5 Days in Mining .....	5
USA: Fitzsimmons Law Firm Files "Deliberate Intention" Claim Against Mine Operator On Behalf of Miner Killed in Coal Mining Accident. 5	
Canada: Trapped Saskatchewan Miners Rescued.....	6
17 Chinese trapped in 2 coal mine accidents....	7
5 killed in gold mine fire in NW China .....	8
Slim chances of survival for miners trapped in NE China pit.....	8
Canada: Momentum builds for mining inquiry..	8
Collapse at Guyana gold mine.....	10
<b>This week in mining accident history</b> .....	10
WA: BHP miners evacuated after rock fall.....	10
WA: Spotlight falls on mine safety .....	11
USA: Men Rescued from Mine .....	11
3 dead, 1 missing in SW China colliery collapse	12
5 dead in E China colliery gas accident.....	12
USA: Feds say more mine explosion charges coming soon.....	12
Qld: Collinsville to remember mine blast victims	12
Tas: Mine disaster remembered .....	13
<b>Mining dictionary</b> .....	14

Tuesday 25 September 2012

## 20 die in China coal-mine plunge

*Extract from Google News*

BEIJING — A coal mining accident in northern China Tuesday left 20 miners dead and 14 injured, state media said, in the latest incident to hit the industry.

The cable of a rail carriage taking workers into the mine in Gansu province snapped, sending the 34 miners plummeting into the pit, Xinhua news agency reported.

The injured have been transported to hospital, including three who were in a serious condition, it said.

Officials at the Baiyin city work safety administration, which oversees the Qusheng mine, refused to comment when contacted by AFP.

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

But its mines are among the deadliest in the world because of lax regulation, corruption and inefficiency. Accidents are common because safety is often neglected by bosses seeking quick profits.

Tuesday's accident followed a gas explosion at a colliery in the southwest Sichuan province last month which killed 43 miners.

According to the latest official figures, 1,973 people died in coal mining accidents in China in 2011, a 19 percent fall on the previous year.

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

## USA: Perry Co. Mining Accident Considered "Minor"

*Extract from WOUB Public Media, USA*

Glouster, OHIO: US Department of Labor Mine Safety and Health Administration officials say there will not be a formal investigation into the coal mining accident that sent five workers to the hospital last week.

A spokeswoman for the department tells WOUB News the accident was considered minor.

All five of the miners hurt in the accident have been released from the hospital.

The accident happened Sept. 19 at the Buckingham Coal Company's number 7 mine in Perry County.

According to federal records, this underground mine has 81 citations for the year and more than \$10,000 in proposed penalties.

But John Ziants, a mine safety supervisor with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, says workers have nothing to worry about.

"I wouldn't be afraid to work there, and I wouldn't be afraid to advise any body else who wanted to get a job there to work there. As I said, I think our underground operations are as safe as any in the country," said Ziants.

A preliminary report pinned the accident on dispatcher error, saying that a dispatcher allowed a larger track vehicle into the mine before confirming a smaller track vehicle was out of the way.

## S.Africa: Fatality at AngloGold's Mponeng mine

*Extract from www.iol.co.za*

Gold miner AngloGold Ashanti (ANG) has reported the death of an employee in an accident on Tuesday at its Mponeng Mine near Carletonville.

The employee, a shaft timberman with 33 years' service in the company, was inundated by a mud

rush while clearing a hang-up on 121 belt level at about 3am, the company said in a statement.

Management has contacted the employee's family in Fochville, and is working with them to assist them through this tragic time, the statement said.

Rock hoisting operations at Mponeng have been halted pending the arrival of a team from the DMR inspectorate for an in loco inspection later on Tuesday

Wednesday 26 September 2012

## USA: NIOSH to study "cognitive load" placed on miners

*Extract from www.statejournal.com, WV, USA*

Coal miners going underground with more equipment designed to protect their safety obviously are under more physical stress, but a federal agency wants to know if they also face additional mental stress.

The MINER Act of 2006, as well as other safety campaigns, the National Institute of Occupational Health said in a proposal published in the Federal Register, has mandated increased safety devices to be carried by miners.

"These devices offer attractive health and safety benefits — improved tracking and communication, real time monitoring of respirable dust levels, and the prevention of accidental crushing by large mobile machinery," the introduction to the proposal states. "However, while the benefits of such wearable devices are easy to understand within their own context, they inevitably increase both the physical and cognitive burden placed on the mine worker who must carry, interact with, and ultimately make decisions with each one of the devices."

According to the proposal, which was published Monday and is available for public comment, the additional physical and cognitive load placed on modern miners is not currently known. The

agency seeks to conduct a research project that will ask the miners their perspective on the issue.

The three-phase research project will begin by observing 10 to 20 miners while they perform their jobs and determine which tasks are most challenging. The second part of phase one will include a task/cognitive task analysis.

Phase two of the project is a questionnaire distributed to no more than 150 underground coal miners to research "situational awareness," specifically the information miners believe they need to safely complete their job.

Phase three would consist of experimental research to test usability, changes in cognitive workload and situation awareness at the NIOSH Bruce ton, Penn. Facility.

"The information collected from miners and NIOSH employees to answer these key questions will facilitate the development of mining specific HSI guidelines which are necessary for the planning, development and testing of products to be used by miners," the proposal states.

The full proposal is available in the US Government Federal Register at:

<https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2012/09/24/2012-23191/proposed-data-collections-submitted-for-public-comment-and-recommendations>

## **China: Five detained after fatal Gansu mine accident**

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

LANZHOU -- Five people have been detained in northwest China's Gansu Province for their alleged involvement in a mine carriage crash in which 20 miners were killed on Tuesday, local public security authorities announced on Wednesday.

The names of the five, who are suspected of being accountable for the accident, were not given by the public security bureau of Baiyin City's Pingchuan District in Gansu.

It did reveal, however, that one of them is the head of the coal mine.

Twenty people were killed in Qusheng pit in Baiyin early on Tuesday, when a steel cable pulling a locomotive loaded with 34 miners in two carriages snapped.

The carriages slipped and overturned, sending all the workers aboard plummeting into the pit.

An initial investigation suggested the carriages were overloaded

The mine, run by Qusheng Coal Mining Co., was operating illegally, as it was one of 55 mines safety authorities had ordered to halt production for an industrial reshuffle.

Four of the 14 survivors were seriously injured. But a hospital official told media on Wednesday that they are all in a stable condition after medical treatment.

The pit began operating in 2003 and has a designated annual output of 90,000 tonnes.

In the wake of the accident, the provincial government of Gansu has demanded a temporary shutdown of all mines with annual output below 300,000 tonnes for a safety overhaul.

## **USA: Mine safety foundation to meet in W.Va. Oct. 10-11**

*Extract from newsok.com, USA*

CHARLESTON, W.Va. — A coal mine health and safety panel created by Alpha Natural Resources' settlement with the federal government after the Upper Big Branch Mine disaster will hold its first stakeholder meeting next month in Charleston.

The Alpha Foundation for the Improvement of Mine Safety and Health convenes Oct. 10-11 at the Embassy Suites, and the event is open to the public.

The panel includes professors Michael Karmis of Virginia Tech and Keith Heasley of West Virginia University, and professor emeritus David

Wegman from the University of Massachusetts at Lowell. They want to gather input on what their priorities should be for \$48 million that's available to the foundation.

Officials with the Mine Safety and Health Administration, National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, National Mining Association, United Mine Workers of America and United Steel Workers have been invited to participate, along with West Virginia officials.

The sessions will focus on four areas: disaster prevention and response; acute and chronic disease; human systems; and design and technology for prevention.

The foundation was created in April under a \$210 million settlement with Virginia-based Alpha that spared the company criminal prosecution in the worst U.S. mine disaster in four decades. The agreement also requires Alpha to spend \$80 million to improve safety at all of its mines with the latest technology.

The April 2010 explosion at Upper Big Branch near Montcoal killed 29 men and has spawned two criminal prosecutions so far.

The panel was chosen by Alpha and approved by the U.S. attorney's office for West Virginia's southern district.

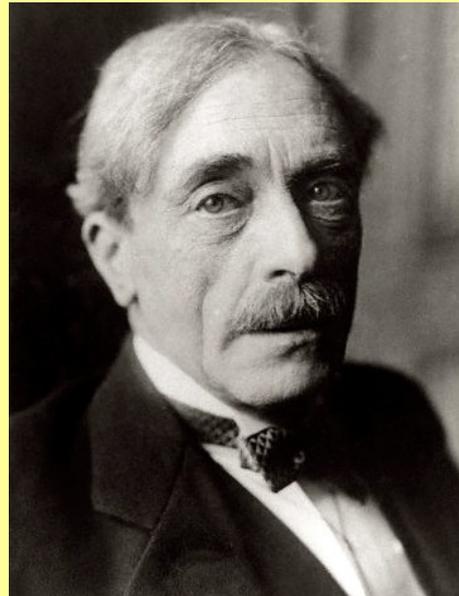
Heasley's research interests include numerical modeling, computer applications in mining, multiple-seam mine design and ground control. Karmis has worked on communications and tracking systems, and Wegman, an epidemiologist, has expertise in occupational health and safety.

Karmis has previously said the foundation doesn't want to duplicate past efforts but instead focus on new initiatives.

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Online: <http://www.alpha-foundation.org/>

### Quote of the week



"The trouble with our times is that the future is not what it used to be."

Ambroise-Paul-Toussaint-Jules Valéry  
French poet, essayist, philosopher (1871-1945)

Thursday 27 September 2012

### USA: Harlan man killed in Tennessee mine accident

*Extract from harlandaily.com*

A mining accident in Tennessee early Wednesday claimed the life of a Harlan County man.

Jeremy Perkins, 32, of Wallins Creek, was killed in a roof fall at a mine owned by Kopper Glo Mining in Clairfield, Tenn.

Claiborne County Sheriff's Det. Bobby Morelock was on the scene shortly after the accident occurred.

"We got notified around 5:45 a.m. that a person had been trapped in a mining accident around the Clairfield area, that's in Claiborne County northwest," said Moreland. "When we got there we learned the mining officials and mine personnel had actually gotten him out."

Moreland said Perkins was transported to Claiborne County Hospital near the accident site.

“Personnel had gotten him out and we learned at that point he was deceased due to the ceiling falling in and rocks coming down on top of him,” said Moreland. “Perkins was transported to the emergency room in Tazewell and the medical examiner pronounced him dead at the there.”

Moreland is investigating the incident along with other investigators.

“The mining company, myself and Det. Josh Russell are paired up on this with the Claiborne County Sheriff’s Office,” said Moreland. “We are continuing investigations along with Kopper Glo Mining Company. We went ahead and sent him for an autopsy to learn of the injuries.”

Moreland said no other injuries were reported.

“Nobody was trapped. Through our investigation we’ve learned that nobody else had any injuries,” said Moreland.

Moreland said the Kopper Glo Mining operation has a good safety record and follows “very strict guidelines.”

“In my 17 years of law enforcement I’ve never investigated a mining accident there. But, we all know when you go underground like that it’s unpredictable. We’ve never had any incident that I’m aware of, especially at that mining company.”

This is the first time the company has had a fatality.

According to Moreland, the investigation is not expected to be a lengthy one.

“We should be wrapping this up today. There’s no signs of any type of criminal activity whatsoever. I’m sure the mining company is going to finish their investigation,” said Moreland.

Federal mine safety investigators and state officials with the Tennessee Occupational Safety and Health Administration were on the scene by midmorning.

## **USA: California Fatality is Third in 5 Days in Mining**

A miner in California has become the third U.S. miner to die in the past five days.

The name of the victim has not yet been released following the 8:20 a.m. accident on Wednesday at Eagle Peak Rock & Paving’s North Pit in Modoc County. MSHA said the miner was run over by a dozer he had been operating at the site, an intermittent construction sand and gravel operation.

MSHA’s database indicated that no non-fatal days lost injuries have been reported since 2002 at the seven-person operation, which is located in the northeastern part of the state. MSHA fines over the past two years have come to \$1,764. No fines are listed for 2012, but two citations written during an inspection last month have yet to be assessed.

Today’s death comes a day after a Kentucky coal miner was killed in a roof fall in Tennessee, and five days following the death of a contract worker who died after a 30-foot fall at a surface copper mine construction site in Arizona.

The latest fatality brings the death toll in the nation’s mines this year to 30. The figure is far above the 22 miners who had died by this time a year ago. Sixteen coal miners have died in 2012, along with 14 deaths in the metal/non-metal (M/NM) sector. Eight of the M/NM deaths have been in the aggregate sub-sector.

Friday 28 September 2012

## **USA: Fitzsimmons Law Firm Files “Deliberate Intention” Claim Against Mine Operator On Behalf of Miner Killed in Coal Mining Accident**

*Extract from PR Web, USA*

Wheeling, WV (PRWEB) - A coal miner was tragically killed on October 17, 2011, when a ditch digger lurched forward and crushed him while working at Consolidation Coal Company’s

Shoemaker Mine located in Benwood, Marshall County, West Virginia. As a result of this fatality, a wrongful death claim was filed against the miner's employer, Consolidation Coal Company. Consolidation Coal Company operates several mines throughout West Virginia. Since its inception in 1864, Consolidation Coal Company has expanded from West Virginia to Pennsylvania and Kentucky and is now one of the country's largest producers of bituminous coal.

According to the Complaint, the Plaintiff asserts that Consol knowingly exposed its employees, including the decedent miner, to unsafe working conditions which ultimately led to the miner's untimely death. The claim against Consol is a "deliberate intent" claim filed pursuant to West Virginia Code §23-4-2(d)(2)(ii). Typically, an employee cannot sue his or her employer in West Virginia for work-related injuries because the employer is afforded immunity from civil claims by West Virginia's Workers' Compensation laws. However, under W.Va. Code §23-4-2(d)(2)(ii), an employee can maintain a civil suit against his employer for work-related injuries if he can prove that the employer's "deliberate intention" caused him harm.

What is "deliberate intention" and how can it be proven? Under West Virginia law, "deliberate intention" can be proven one of two ways. First, the employee can prove that the employer acted with the specific intent of causing harm to the employee. Alternatively, the employee can prove each of the five statutory elements contained in W.Va. Code §23-4-2(d)(2)(ii) which essentially require the employee to prove that the employer knowingly exposed the worker to specific unsafe working conditions which violations also constituted a violation of OSHA regulations, MSHA regulations, or some other state or federal safety statute or written industry standard. Examples of how this could happen include if the employer knew of the existence of a hazard in the workplace which presented a high degree of risk or carried a strong possibility

of injuring or killing an employee and failed to abate or remedy the unsafe working condition.

In the case of subject coal mining accident, the Plaintiff alleges that the following unsafe working conditions existed in the Shoemaker Mine at the time of the fatality: inadequate training of the miners, failing to properly train miners on the proper use of heavy equipment, inadequately maintaining mining equipment in a safe operating condition, failing to ensure that the mining equipment was equipped with all required safety devices, improperly marking and identify the machinery to distinguish the equipment and/or machinery's functions; failing to conduct appropriate job hazard assessments; and failing to supply a workplace free of identified hazards. Additionally, the Plaintiff contends that these unsafe working conditions were also violations of the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health and Safety Training laws and regulations as well as MSHA regulations. The case was filed in the Circuit Court of Marshall County, West Virginia (Case No. 12-C-106) and was subsequently removed to the District Court for the Northern District of West Virginia (Civ. Action No. 5:12-CV-00095) on diversity jurisdiction grounds. The Plaintiff filed a motion to remand to state court which is currently pending. For information about Fitzsimmons Law Firm, contact their office or visit their personal injury website at <http://www.FitzsimmonsFirm.com>.

Read the full story at

<http://www.prweb.com/releases/2012/9/prweb9958334.htm>

## **Canada: Trapped Saskatchewan Miners Rescued**

*Extract from Toronto Sun*

ROCANVILLE, SASK. - Even after being trapped for 24 hours, most of the workers at a potash mine in southeastern Saskatchewan will be back to work for their next scheduled shift.

The 20 miners were confined underground for a full night and day after a blaze broke out at the PotashCorp-owned mine near Rocanville, about 200 km east of Regina, around 2 a.m. Tuesday.

Darwyn Wirth, shift electrician, was the first to see the underground fire start.

"We have an alarm system, loud bells, flashing red lights, and you just immediately go to a refuge station and you call the control room so they know where you are and how many people are there," he said.

A weary Wirth, who started his shift at 6:30 p.m. Monday and returned to the surface just after 6:30 p.m. Tuesday, said he didn't get much rest but did get to speak to his family from within the refuge site.

"I tell them everything is all right and we just wait until we are allowed to come up," he said.

He says he didn't feel trapped, just "delayed."

The worst risk to the workers was smoke, said Courtney Ryan, mine rescue captain, who happened to be working near the scene of the fire and was able to assist with the rescue.

"In this case, we had enough ventilation that the smoke didn't back up too far, so we were able to approach the fire to within 20-50 feet," he said.

"We knew that everyone was accounted for, we knew exactly where the fire was, so our first job was to get to the fire and extinguish it."

The fire was put out Tuesday afternoon, but crews had to wait until the hot spots cooled down before they could start to retrieve the workers.

Late Tuesday evening, the workers made their way underground to the service shaft, where they were raised to ground level in a large elevator-type contraption called a lamp room. That brought them to the showers so they could clean up and put on fresh clothes before they emerged.

While trapped, the workers were safe and in communication with officials above ground, according to a company statement.

Operations superintendent Terry Daniel said there is sufficient oxygen to sustain 15 people for 72 hours. As well, he said the miners had access to food, playing cards, water and washrooms.

After providing hourly updates to media Tuesday, Daniel was happy to finally be able to report that it was all over.

"I am feeling great that our people are on surface," he said. "Everybody is safe, everybody seemed in good spirits, a little tired ... and that is success for us."

Nine other workers were rescued earlier Tuesday.

Daniel said investigators will start looking into the cause of the fire Wednesday, and the workers at the mine will be debriefed. The trapped miners are expected back at work Friday.

Mining at the site is done at a depth of 960 metres, according to the company's website.

## 17 Chinese trapped in 2 coal mine accidents

*Extract from Boston.com*

Chinese state media say two coal mine accidents have trapped 17 people underground.

The official Xinhua News Agency says a fire broke out Sunday in a mine in northeast Heilongjiang province, trapping 11. Two other people working in the mine were lifted out.

Xinhua says the mine's operating license had expired three weeks earlier and the county government is blaming illegal production for the accident.

Another mine in the same province was flooded on Saturday, trapping six miners.

Rescue efforts are under way.

China has the world's deadliest coal mining industry. Safety improvements have reduced deaths in recent years, but safety rules are often ignored and accidents are still common.

## 5 killed in gold mine fire in NW China

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

XI'AN - Five people were killed and two rescued after a fire broke out at a gold mine pit in northwest China's Shaanxi province Thursday evening, local authorities said Friday.

The accident occurred at about 6:30 pm Thursday as welding sparks ignited the fire on wooden scaffoldings at the mine run by Xinglong Mining Co. in Tongguan county that was undergoing a safety overhaul, the county government said.

All six trapped underground by heavy smoke have been pulled to the ground by Friday morning, but four died as medical treatment failed and the rest two are in normal condition, it said in a news update.

In addition, one rescuer was killed by carbon monoxide poisoning during the rescue operation.

An investigation into the cause of the fire is under way.

Monday 1 October 2012

## Slim chances of survival for miners trapped in NE China pit

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

Search and rescue continued Monday for six miners who had been trapped in a flooded colliery pit of northeast China's Heilongjiang Province for nine days, though their chances of survival were slim.

The six people were trapped in a pit of Jiayi Coal Mine in Jidong County in the city of Jixi since Sept. 22, the local workplace safety authorities said.

Fang Dongchu, Jixi city's safety chief, said the flooded pit had been drained on Sunday, when rescuers were finally able to enter the pit for search and rescue.

As of Monday morning, the rescuers had detected no sign of life.

"But we won't give up," he said, "though their chances of survival are slim after nine days."

Fang said the search and rescue would last for four days.

Investigators said the flood water had gushed from a mined-out area.

Tuesday 2 October 2012

## Canada: Momentum builds for mining inquiry

*Extract from www.thesudburystar.com*

There was a sense Monday night, in a crowded room at the Steelworkers' Hall, that a movement was being born.

Its seeds were planted in February when United Steelworkers Local 6500 released its 200-page report on the June 8, 2011, deaths of Jason Chenier, 35, and Jordan Fram, 26, at Vale's Stobie Mine.



Wendy Fram, Jordan Fram's mother, makes a point while addressing the crowd at the Steel Hall on Monday night. Fram was elected chair of the MINES committee. GINO DONATO/THE SUDBURY STAR/QMI AGENCY

After concluding the accident that killed the men was preventable, the union called on the province to launch a public inquiry into an

industry in which hundreds of workers have been killed in the 31 years since the last inquiry was held.

That call was advanced by a postcard campaign by USW Local 6500 and community activist Gerry Lougheed Jr., that has garnered hundreds of signatures of people calling upon Labour Minister Linda Jeffery to launch the inquiry.

Monday night, the campaign took a huge leap forward when almost 200 people packed a room set up with 80 chairs for the first public appearance of a committee called MINES -- Mining Inquiry Needs Everyone's Support.

Until now, it has been comprised of members of the Fram and Chenier families, union members and Lougheed, working behind the scenes.

After a fast-paced, 90-minute meeting, MINES now has a diverse list of about 200 people, many of whom appear willing to help it advance the cause.

USW lawyer Brian Shell, who was involved in the investigation report released in February, told the audience the time is right to pressure the minority Liberal government of Premier Dalton McGuinty to do the right thing and call an inquiry.

He reminded the audience, which was well behaved and gave many speakers standing ovations, that Sudbury is represented by Liberal MPP Rick Bartolucci, who is minister of Northern Development and Mines.

By not acting upon the call for an inquiry, there could be political consequences for the Liberal riding in the next election, Shell warned.

Retired Steelworker activist Homer Seguin was applauded loudly after he spoke in a raspy voice about the the need for an inquiry in 2012.

His hoarseness, Seguin said, is due to chronic obstructive pulmonary disease caused by years working in sintering plants for the old Inco.

Seguin said he "raised hell" during his years with USW for mining inquiries in Sudbury, to address

accidents, and later in Elliot Lake, to address industrial disease.

MINES is calling for an inquiry to look at both the health and safety sides of mining, something that would have ramifications for employees in all workplaces.

In his years with the union, Seguin said he saw 10 times as many workers killed by disease as by accidents.

Wendy Fram, Jordan Fram's mother, was elected chair of the MINES committee, the first committee she has ever led. She is willing to give it her best, she said after the meeting.

She and others told the audience that mandatory coroner's inquests and charges laid under the Occupational Health and Safety Act are not enough to protect workers like her son.

Fram pointed to the inquest into the 1995 death of Clifford Bastien at Stobie Mine, in circumstances similar to the run of muck accident that killed her son and Chenier.

At least six recommendations from that inquest related to issues, such as control of water, in a mine known for its water problem, that could perhaps have saved her son's life had they been implemented.

Briana Fram, Jordan's sister, spoke about how technology has transformed the mining industry, saying it is something that needs to be addressed in an inquiry.

Both Fram women were elated with the turnout at the meeting.

"I hope that people take us more seriously," said Briana Fram. "That it wasn't just a postcard campaign. That we're fighting for people like my father, my cousins, and my uncles and friends."

Cheryl Dufour, whose son Lyle Dufour was killed in a mining accident in Timmins in 2007, said after Monday's meeting: "Something wonderful happened here tonight."

Dufour said she and her husband, Lyle, felt very alone for five years as they were virtually

ignored by government in their call for safety improvements in mining. She is a co-chair of the MINES committee.

Rick Bertrand, USW Local 6500 president, said the meeting accomplished what he hoped it would. It demonstrated the call for a mining inquiry isn't just coming from the union, but from the community at large.

Lougheed said the attendance "speaks volumes to the importance of an inquiry to the people in this community and this province."

To get involved with MINES, contact Wendy Fram at framfam@persona.ca or Local 6500 at 705-675-3381.

Thursday 4 October 2012

## **Collapse at Guyana gold mine**

*Extract from Irish Examiner*

Three miners in Guyana were killed when the walls of the open-pit mine they were working in collapsed, burying them in tons of mud and sand. Police said the deaths of the three gold miners occurred in Guyana's western Cuyuni region near the border with Venezuela.

Two other men working at the pit were pulled from the soil and rushed to a local hospital for treatment. They are in stable condition.

For years, similar accidents have occurred in the South American country's remote interior. Guyana's small-scale mining industry has expanded rapidly to capitalise on high gold prices.

Guyana's mining commission has sent investigators to the area to probe the deadly accident and raise awareness about safety standards.

## **This week in mining accident history**

**6 October 1936**

**Morning Mine**

**Mullan, Idaho USA**

**Underground lead mine**

**Hoisting incident**

**10 killed**

Ten men were killed when a man-cage fell 900 feet at the Federal Smelting & Mining company, Morning Mine. Immediately prior to the accident, 5 men, including the cager, got on the lower deck of the 2-deck cage at the 3,450-foot level. They were hoisted to the 3,050-foot level to complete loading on both decks.

The cager permitted 6 men to get on the lower deck, making a total of 10 men. The cage doors were then closed and fastened.

The engineer was signalled, and the cage was lowered until the upper deck was flush with the station floor. While the cager was opening the cage doors to the upper deck, the rope broke about 1,200 feet above the cage.

No evidence was on the cage guides to indicate that the safety catches contacted them. The cage was used exclusively for hoisting and lowering men and material.

**Source:** *Historical Summary of Mine Disasters in the United States - Volume II*

Monday 8 October 2012

## **WA: BHP miners evacuated after rock fall**

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

BHP Billiton has evacuated 79 employees after a rock fall at its nickel mine near Leinster.

The company says the fall at the Perseverance underground mine at its Nickel West Leinster operation was caused by a seismic event late Sunday morning.

No one was injured.

BHP says the evacuation process was interrupted by a power outage however all 79 safely left the site.



**Photo:** Miners operate machinery at the Nickel West Perseverance mine at Leinster, 370km north of Kalgoorlie. (file photo: BHP Billiton)

The company says it is working to establish the cause of the event and the subsequent power outage.

Tuesday 9 October 2012

## **WA: Spotlight falls on mine safety**

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

The Department of Mining and Petroleum is rolling out a safety workshop around regional Western Australia over the next two weeks.

Resource sector employees are encouraged to attend the Mines Safety Roadshow, which aims to address on-site safety issues such as fatigue, supervision, construction and maintenance.

A total of 63 inspectors are employed by the department to oversee safety procedures, with an additional nine set to come on board later this year.

The department's Simon Ridge says he would like to continue a trend of not having a mining fatality in nearly 15 months.

He says people should get on board and be aware of the risks.

"Education is of paramount importance. If people are aware and able to identify hazards and able to manage the risks associated with the hazards

we'll be able to have good outcomes and not the bad ones," he said.

"Everybody has a duty to ensure safety in the workplace for themselves and people they work with.

"One fatality is one too many - we want none.

"Although we haven't had one for 14 or 15 months, we certainly have to keep working hard ... to make sure we maintain that record."

The roadshow will visit Port Hedland today, Karratha tomorrow and Newman on Thursday.

It will visit Bunbury next Tuesday and Kalgoorlie next Thursday.

Wednesday 10 October 2012

## **USA: Men Rescued from Mine**

*Extract from WTOV Steubenville, Ohio, USA*

The two men trapped have been rescued from the Hopedale Mining Company mine. They are safe with no reported injuries and are not going to the hospital.

Our reporter on scene has reported that the men are with their families.

Here is the statement release from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources:

"Two miners at a Harrison County underground coal mine were rescued by Hopedale Mining staff today at approximately 7 pm.

Both miners are in good condition.

The incident occurred at the Hopedale mine in Hopedale, which is located about five miles east of Cadiz in Harrison County.

Both the Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the federal Mine Safety and Health Agency, worked together with company miners and officials in executing the rescue response following a roof collapse in the area where the two miners were working."

### **3 dead, 1 missing in SW China colliery collapse**

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

Three people have died and another is missing after a roof of a coal mine where they were working collapsed in Southwest China's Yunnan province Wednesday, local government officials said.

The accident occurred around 1:30 pm at the Shuimichong Coal Mine in Qiubei county of Wenshan Zhuang and Miao autonomous prefecture.

Of the four miners buried underground, three have been confirmed dead while rescuers are still searching for remaining one, officials with the prefecture's government said.

The mine, with an annual producing capacity of 40,000 tons, is licensed.

The cause of the accident is under investigation.

Thursday 11 October 2012

### **5 dead in E China colliery gas accident**

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

Five people have been confirmed dead and one missing in a coal mine gas accident that occurred Wednesday in East China's Anhui province, local authorities said Thursday.

The accident occurred around 10:30 am in the privately-owned Wunan Coal Mine in Huaibei city, sources with the municipal publicity department said.

A preliminary investigation showed that six people were working underground at the time of the accident. Five people have been confirmed dead and one remained missing early Thursday morning, the sources said.

Rescue efforts for the missing person are continuing.

The Huaibei municipal government has ordered an overall production suspension at local coal mines.

A further investigation into the cause of the accident is underway.

### **USA: Feds say more mine explosion charges coming soon**

*Extract from Associated Press*

CHARLESTON, W.Va. - U.S. Attorney Booth Goodwin says the continuing probe of the Upper Big Branch mine disaster will soon produce more criminal charges.

Goodwin said Wednesday he expects to make some announcements shortly, but offered no specifics.

His comments came at a meeting of a health and safety foundation created under a \$200 settlement Goodwin's office reached with the mine's current owner, Virginia-based Alpha Natural Resources.

The April 2010 explosion killed 29 men.

Two criminal prosecutions so far have been directly linked to the blast.

Former superintendent Gary May awaits sentencing in January for conspiracy to defraud the federal government and is cooperating with prosecutors.

Ex-security chief Hughie Stover is appealing his conviction for lying to investigators and ordering a subordinate to destroy documents during the investigation.

Friday 12 October 2012

### **Qld: Collinsville to remember mine blast victims**

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

The small north Queensland town of Collinsville, south-west of Townsville, will stop to reflect at a special service tomorrow.

On October 13, 1954, seven miners and two pit ponies were killed in a mine blast.

The organiser of the memorial day, Rick Grant, says 58 years on the disaster is still very much a part of the fabric of the community.

"It had a profound impact on all the families in Collinsville," he said.

"It's a close-knit mining town so most people who still live here are directly related to the disasters that have happened on site here."

## Tas: Mine disaster remembered

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

Tasmania's west coast community is commemorating 100 years since one of Australia's worst mining disasters.



**Photo:** A steam train re-enacts the funeral procession for the miners killed in the disaster. (ABC: Selina Bryan)

Forty-two miners died underground in 1912 when a fire broke out in a pump house at the North Lyell Mine more than 200 metres underground.

More than 100 miners made it out alive thanks to dedicated rescuers, including Victorian firefighters who raced to Queenstown with breathing apparatus.

Descendants of victims, survivors and rescuers have gathered for a full day of events marking the tragedy.

A memorial service has been held at the site of the original shaft which has since been buried under excavated rock.

A lone piper played as the Mount Lyell mine's rescue crews carried a stretcher with a wreath to a new memorial plaque.

The mine's current operators have been surprised by the level of emotion surrounding the anniversary.

Vedanta Copper Mines of Tasmania general manager Scot Clyde says people have travelled to Queenstown from around the country.

"A lot of people have made a great effort to be here today and we've been a bit taken aback by the strength of feeling and the appreciation of what we've done today with the memorial plaque, and having this service," he said.



**Photo:** People gather at the site of the 1912 disaster. (ABC: Selina Bryan)

Mr Clyde says it was important for many descendants to return to the spot and see where the tragedy occurred.

"There's more, I suppose, poignancy if you like to actually be standing here."

The original funeral train procession was recreated, taking visitors and descendants to the town's cemetery.

Jacqueline Symmons and her daughter Chelsea are descendants of Sydney Symmons, a miner who was involved in the rescue.

"My great grandfather was involved in the mine disaster, he was actually in the mine at the time as a plate layer for the railways and he helped rescue," she said.

"He was one of the earlier rescuers to get people out."



**Photo:** Wreaths are carried on a stretcher from the scene of the 1912 disaster. (ABC: Selina Bryan)

## Mining dictionary

### A guide to coal mining terminology

#### B

#### **Box-type magazine**

A small, portable magazine used to store limited quantities of explosives or detonators for short periods of time at locations in the mine which are convenient to the blasting sites at which they will be used.

-Ed



## Trade & Investment Mine Safety

### Registration is now open for electrical safety seminar

The 2012 Electrical Engineering Safety Seminar is on again and bigger than ever. The focus of the seminar is identifying and managing risks and sessions include;

- Presentations from industry experts on a range of electrical issues including lightning, welding and electric shocks, power tools in wet environments and designing/assessing exi systems.
- A key note presentation on risk from Michael Rosengren of BHP Billiton.
- Initial observations on Pike River from Darren Brady of Simtars.
- Updates on legislation changes and the national harmonisation process.
- Information on online safety solutions.
- A practical case study on design registering a shaft sinking winder.

A seminar dinner is being held with special guest Wayne Bennett, one of rugby league's most influential and innovative coaches.

The seminar is on 7 & 8 November 2012 and for the first time it will be held at Darling Harbour. Delegates are encouraged to book accommodation early.

To register for the seminar, or for information on accommodation options and parking visit the NSW Mine Safety website at

[www.resources.nsw.gov.au/safety/events/electrical-engineering-safety-seminar](http://www.resources.nsw.gov.au/safety/events/electrical-engineering-safety-seminar)