



# Mining Accident News No.1309

1 to 20 September 2013

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## Sunday 1 September 2013

### **China: 1 dead, 8 trapped in mining accident**

*Extract from Econs.cn*

One miner was killed and another eight trapped in a coal and gas outburst at a coal mine early Sunday in southwest China's Yunnan Province, local authorities said.

The accident happened around 4 a.m. when 12 miners were tunnelling a mine shaft at the Bailongshan Coal Mine in the city of Qujing. Three of them were lifted out of the shaft, said a spokesman with the city's emergency response office.

Rescuers are trying to reduce the gas density to save the trapped miners, and the cause of the accident is being investigated.

The coal mine is operated by the Diandong Energy Co., Ltd. under the China Huaneng Group, a major state-owned energy company.

## Tuesday 3 September 2013

### **NZ approves conditional funding to recover remains from Pike River mine**

*Extract from ABC News Online, Aus*

New Zealand's government has approved conditional funding for a plan to re-enter the Pike River mine to try to recover the remains of the 29 men who died there in 2010.

The cost of the plan is estimated at about \$6 million and is conditional on the re-entry being safe, technically feasible and financially viable.

The government made the announcement today following a vote by cabinet yesterday.

**NOTE:** Views expressed in this newsletter are those of the individual sender, and are not associated with ANY organisation, individual or publication

The plan was drawn up by the mine's new owners, Solid Energy, and has also been approved by the High Hazards Unit, which is in charge of mine safety.

Earlier this year an independent inquiry found there were systemic failures by the departments responsible for granting Pike River Coal a mining permit and then overseeing its operations.

The inquiry found there was no evidence of carelessness, incompetence or breach of policy by managers, so it recommended no action be taken against government staff.

## **Mexico: Endeavour Silver Reports Fatality at Guanacevi Mine**

*Extract from The Wall Street Journal, USA*

VANCOUVER, BRITISH COLUMBIA -- Endeavour Silver Corp. regrets to announce the death of a mine worker due to a fatal accident at the Guanaceví mine in Durango State, Mexico. The accident occurred on September 1 and was the result of a rock fall underground near a pump station at Porvenir Cuatro. This area remains closed while the Company and the Mexican authorities complete a full investigation. Other areas remain open and production has not been affected.

Bradford Cooke, CEO of Endeavour stated, "We are greatly saddened by this tragic accident and extend our sincere condolences to the victim's family, friends and colleagues. Safety is a top priority for Endeavour and once the investigation is complete, Endeavour will review and implement any additional safety measures recommended to prevent such an accident from recurring."

About Endeavour Silver - Endeavour is a mid-tier silver mining company focused on growing its profits, production, reserves and resources in Mexico. Since start-up in 2004, Endeavour has posted eight consecutive years of

accretive growth of its silver mining operations. The organic expansion programs now underway at Endeavour's three silver-gold mines in Mexico combined with its strategic acquisition and exploration programs should facilitate Endeavour's goal to become a premier senior silver producer.

## **USA: State waiting on feds on mine safety devices**

*Extract from wvgazette.com, USA*

CHARLESTON, W.Va. -- Members of a state board on Tuesday again delayed any action on a proposal that could end a common type of coal-mining accident in which workers are hurt or killed when they are crushed by a piece of underground equipment.

The state Board of Coal Mine Health and Safety discussed the proposal to require all underground mine operators to install "proximity detection" systems to shut off mining equipment when it gets too close to workers.

But board members agreed, without a formal vote, not to act until they find out more about the timeline for the federal Mine Safety and Health Administration to finalize a nationwide rule on the matter.

Five years ago, a team of state Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training urged West Virginia officials to mandate proximity detection equipment, but the state has never acted on the recommendation. The recommendation, revealed in records obtained under the Freedom of Information Act, was the subject of a Sunday Gazette-Mail story late last month.

Board members have in recent months reviewed several reports about West Virginia miners killed when they were crushed or pinned by underground mining equipment.

During a meeting in Charleston on Tuesday morning, board member and United Mine Workers representative Carl Egnor referenced

one of those deaths and suggested the board should do something.

"I think it's time this board moved on that," Egnor said.

Another UMW representative on the board, Gary Trout, said that "the technology is there" to prevent crushing and pinning deaths.

Chris Hamilton, a West Virginia Coal Association board representative, said that the state should be looking not just at proximity devices, but also at cameras that help improve blind-spot visibility and at strobe lights and fluorescent clothing.

Gary Trout, a UMW representative on the board, said proximity detection systems that automatically turn off mining equipment are better than cameras, because cameras still require miners to take action quickly to avoid accidents.

"It stops it before it gets there," he said. "It takes the human factor out."

Charles Russell, another industry representative on the board, said there's no question that the additional safety provided by proximity devices "far exceeds" that of other technologies that Hamilton mentioned. But, Russell said, the variety of potential solutions available is part of what's holding up regulatory action.

"There are so many things out there, and they all look promising," Russell said. "I think that's what's slowing things down."

Between 1984 and 2010, 30 miners died and 220 were injured nationwide when they became crushed, pinned or struck by continuous mining machines underground. Mine safety experts say these deaths and injuries could be prevented if mine operators installed proximity detection devices.

On the federal level, two separate U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration rules to require proximity detection systems remain

stalled, one at MSHA and the other at the White House.

Terry Hudson, another industry representative on the board, said he's heard that MSHA is planning to issue one of its two rules -- requiring proximity detection for continuous mining machines -- sometime this month.

"It would be a good idea to just wait and see what is in their rule," Hudson said. Hudson said that if the state learns MSHA isn't going to act soon, he would recommend that West Virginia move ahead on its own.

In its latest regulatory agenda, made public in July, MSHA said it planned to issue a final version of the proximity detection rule for continuous mining machines sometime in August 2013.

As of Tuesday, MSHA's final language had yet to have been filed with the White House Office of Management and Budget, where an economic review of the rule could take months and further delay the rule taking effect.

## **USA: Coal miner killed in eastern Ky., 2 more injured**

A coal miner has been killed and two more injured in an apparent wall collapse in an underground eastern Kentucky mine.

State officials said the workers were inside a Harlan County mine operating a continuous miner machine Tuesday and became trapped when a wall apparently collapsed.

The collapse at Huff Creek No.1 fatally injured 56-year-old Lenny D. Gilliam, of Appalachia, Va. The death was the second mining-related fatality in Kentucky this year.

The Kentucky Office of Mine Safety and Licensing said the incident was reported around noon EDT at the mine near Holmes Mill on Black Mountain in Harley County. The injured workers were taken to a hospital with non-life threatening injuries.

The mine is operated by Lone Mountain Processing, a subsidiary of St. Louis-based Arch Coal.

Wednesday 4 September 2013

## **China colliery accident death toll hits 6**

*Extract from Xinhua*

The death toll from a coal mine gas burst in southwest China's Yunnan Province rose to six after five more bodies had been recovered as of Wednesday afternoon, mine sources said.

A total of 215 miners were working underground at the Bailongshan coal mine in Fuyuan County when the accident occurred around 4 am on Sunday.

One miner was killed and eight were left missing after the accident, while the other miners were lifted out safely.

Search and rescue for the three miners who remain missing is under way.

## **5 fatally electrocuted in SW China mine**

*Extract from Xinhua*

Five people were killed and three others injured on Wednesday after an electric shock in a coal mine in southwest China's Guizhou Province, local authorities said.

The accident occurred around 6 pm above ground at Yangliutian coal mine in Caiguan Township of Anshun City, a statement from Guizhou provincial government said.

The injured people have been sent to receive treatment at hospital.

Further verification into the accident is under way, according to the statement.

Thursday 5 September 2013

## **USA: July Fatality Classified as Mining Related**

*Kindly provided by James Sharpe, Sharpe Media, LLC*

The death in July of an 87-year-old contractor at a coal preparation plant in Pennsylvania has belatedly been classified as mining-related by MSHA.

Samuel V. Vignoli was operating a skid steer-type machine equipped with a mowing device to cut grass when "for some unknown reason" the machine traveled into the waters of an impoundment, MSHA said in a preliminary report released today. The accident occurred at Maple Creek Preparation Plant's Ginger Hill #1 Pond in Washington County. The facility is run by Maple Creek Mining, Inc. The accident occurred about 4:30 p.m. July 3.

According to MSHA's report, at the time of the accident, Vignoli appeared to be mowing the embankment, which was 9 to 11 feet in length and had a slope of approximately 40°, vertically. The victim's body was recovered, and Vignoli was pronounced dead due to drowning at about 1 a.m. July 4. He was employed by Vignoli Welding Service, a locally based company.

The skid steer machine remains in the impoundment waters and is not visible from the embankment, MSHA said.

The fatality is the 14<sup>th</sup> in the coal mining sub-sector so far this year. Ten other miners in the metal/non-metal sub-sector have also died on the job in the U.S. in 2013. At this time in 2012, 13 coal miners and 12 metal/non-metal miners had died.

## **Quote of the week**

"We are made to persist. That's how we find out who we are."

Tobias Wolff (1945-)  
American author

Monday 9 September 2013

## **Canada: Prospector fatally injured in ATV accident**

*Extract from Canadian OH&S News*

A prospector working for a mining company was fatally injured on the job on Aug. 31 after his all-terrain vehicle (ATV) tumbled over an embankment near Marathon, Ontario.

James Buckner, 63, a contract worker for Stillwater Canada Inc., was killed after the ATV he was driving went over a steep embankment that afternoon. Buckner had been involved in the company's Marathon PGM-Cu Project, a mining operation in the northwestern Ontario district of Thunder Bay.

The provincial Ministry of Labour is investigating the accident, as are the Ontario Provincial Police (OPP) and the company itself, according to a Stillwater press statement from Sept. 3.

"Buckner was driving a four-wheel ATV, when it appears he missed a turn and went over the edge of an embankment," said Matt Blajer, a media spokesman for the Ministry of Labour. "He died as a result of his injuries." The ministry was planning to travel to the site of the crash to investigate further, Blajer added.

Const. Dave Shaw of the OPP's Marathon detachment conducted a reconstruction of the collision at the site.

"The trail basically ended at a bush road, or the main road," Const. Shaw said, "and as he came down that trail, he failed to make the right turn for an unknown reason and went down an embankment on the other side of the road. The ATV came to rest up against a tree, and there are several trees that he may have struck on his downward descent."

Const. Shaw confirmed that Buckner, who lived in Ear Falls, hadn't been wearing a helmet while driving. Speed was not believed to be a factor in the accident, he added.

"There's not much to report at this point in time," he admitted. "It's unknown whether protective equipment would have aided him in any manner. It's one of those things where you just don't know if it would have helped him or not." The cause of death was still to be determined, he went on to say, and a postmortem examination has been planned.

Stillwater Canada expressed condolences to Buckner's family in its press release. "The company is committed to the safety of its employees and contractors and is cooperating fully with the ongoing investigation," it read.

Stillwater Canada Inc. is a subsidiary of Stillwater Mining Company, a Montana-based corporation. Stillwater is the United States' sole producer of palladium and platinum, as well as the world's largest primary producer of platinum-group metals outside of South Africa and Russia, said information from its website. It established its Canadian subsidiary in 2010 to conduct the Marathon operation.

Tuesday 10 September 2013

## **USA: Former Massey Coal Executive Sentenced to Prison**

*Extract from 4-traders.com, USA*

The former president of a Massey Energy Co. unit was sentenced to three and a half years in prison for conspiring to violate mine safety laws, the Justice Department said.

David C. Hughart, former president of Massey's Green Valley Coal Co., admitted to conspiring to violate safety standards at various mines and to hiding violations by warning mine operators when federal inspectors were on their way, the Justice Department said.

Mr. Hughart's attorney couldn't be immediately reached for comment.

The criminal investigation into the actions of Mr. Hughart and other Massey executives



began after a 2010 explosion at Massey's Upper Big Branch mine killed 29 miners.

Prosecutors have said that safety laws were routinely violated at Massey to maximize profits. Mr. Hughart, who is 54, wasn't directly involved in the management of Upper Big Branch, which was operated by Massey's Performance Coal subsidiary.

Mr. Hughart--the highest-ranking official ever accused of conspiring to impede federal mine safety officials, according to the Justice Department--will be subject to an additional three years of supervised release, the Justice Department said. His sentence was one year more than federal guidelines advise.

Massey was acquired by Alpha Natural Resources Inc. in 2011. A representative for Alpha Natural couldn't be reached for comment.

Thursday 12 September 2013

## **USA: Coal dust fire at Wyoming mine burns 3 miners**

*Extract from Casper Star Tribune, USA*

Three coal miners are recovering from second- and third-degree burns at a hospital in Greeley, Colo., after coal dust ignited at North Antelope Rochelle mine in Campbell County.

The miners' identities were not released.

The men were burnt Tuesday about 10:50am at a coal truck crusher dump, said Amy Louviere, a spokeswoman with the US Mine Safety and Health Administration, which is investigating the incident.

A bearing was being changed on a chain conveyor and the bottom crusher doors had to be opened to access the conveyor, Louviere said in an email to the Star-Tribune. Coal dust from a slide in the crusher engulfed the area.

The dust was ignited by hot bearing embers and a weed burner used to heat the bearing race, Louviere said.

The miners were transported to Campbell County Memorial Hospital in Gillette. From there they were transported to Greeley, said Felicia Messimer, Campbell county hospital spokeswoman.

The mine is owned by St. Louis-based Peabody energy Corp.

Peabody spokeswoman Charlene Murdock said miners are Peabody employees. In addition to the federal investigation, Peabody safety personnel are investigating, she said.

The mine is located in the Powder River Basin, whose miners supply 40 percent of coal mined in the nation.

The last incident at a basin mine was Aug. 16, when Jacob Dowdy was killed at the Black Thunder Mine, owned by Arch coal Inc. Another miner was injured during the shovel truck accident.

Louviere said Wednesday the Black Thunder incident remains under investigation.

At North Antelope Rochelle, there have been no operator fatalities since at least 2002, according to MSHA records that go back to 2002.

The most recent contractor fatality was in 2011, MSHA data states.

This year, operator injuries are down compared to last year.

Through June 30 of this year, there had been only one operator injury and three contractor injuries. In 2002, there were 11 operator injuries and six contractor injuries, MSHA data stated.

Sunday 15 September 2013

## **Afghan coal mine collapse kills 27**

*Extract from zeenews.india.com*

Kabul: In the latest mining accident in Afghanistan, 27 miners have been killed in a

coal mine collapse in Ro-e-Dohab district in the northern province of Samangan, reports said Sunday.

The accident took place at Abkhorak coal mine, located almost 200 km north of Kabul, when a part of the mine caved in, said provincial governor's spokesman Mohammad Seddiq Azizi.

The rescue men were joined by locals in saving miners' lives but because of poor equipments four rescuemen were hurt in the process, reports said.

Also 13 miners were still said to be trapped according to the BBC.

Before this, a mine accident in Afghanistan's Baghlan province in December last year killed 11 miners.

## This week in mining accident history

**3 September 1847**

**West Wellwood coal pit,  
Muirkirk Parish, Scotland, UK  
Underground coal mine  
Winder incident  
1 killed**

**Fearful Accident** – A melancholy and fatal accident occurred last Friday afternoon, at a coal pit on the farm of West Wellwood, parish of Muirkirk. After the workmen had got up, a lad named James Shankland having left a napkin in the pit, wished to descend for it. Another lad named Angus, one of the workmen, who was standing at the pit mouth, volunteered to lower him, and was recklessly permitted to do so by the engineman, whose name is Oswald. On Shankland getting into the basket, Angus, by some mismanagement, reversed the engine, when the former was accordingly carried over the pulley, and falling headlong into the pit, 52 fathoms deep, was literally smashed to atoms. Both Oswald and Angus were apprehended by Thomas Eadie, criminal officer, on Monday, at Muirkirk, and

committed to Ayr prison. [Caledonian Mercury 9 September 1847]

**15 September 1892**

**Kames Pit Muirkirk,  
Muirkirk Parish, Scotland, UK  
Underground coal mine  
Winder incident  
1 killed**

**Fatal Pit Accident** - Yesterday morning, Matthew Holden, aged 14, a pony driver in Kames Pit Muirkirk, was accidentally killed. Holden had left his own work to give the bottomers a hand, and by some means he was caught by the cage and taken up the shaft. While on its way up the shaft, the cage chain broke, and the cage fell back to the bottom, killing Holden in its fall [Scotsman 16 Sept 1892]

Monday 16 September 2013

## Mine flooding traps 5 in NE China

*Extract from ChinaDaily, Africa*

SHENYANG - Rescue operation has entered the third day on Monday after five mine workers were trapped in a flooding accident in Northeast China's Liaoning province, local authorities confirmed.

Three rescue teams have been working in rotation around the clock to retrieve the workers, who were trapped in a flooded iron mine in Jianping county around 3 pm Saturday, according to sources with the press office of Chaoyang city, which administers the county.

By early Monday morning, rescuers have not yet located the workers, the sources said.

The mine, operated by Zhongquan Mining Co, Ltd., is a privately-owned one with all required licenses, according to the sources.

Tuesday 17 September 2013

## **Coal mine collapse traps 4 in north China**

*Extract from english.eastday.com*

HOHHOT, -- Four miners have been trapped after a coal mine pit collapsed late Monday night in north China's Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region, local authorities said Tuesday.

The accident occurred around 11:54 p.m. at the Huangyuchuan coal mine, located in the township of Xuejiawan in Jungar Banner. The mine is owned by Shenhua Yili Energy Co., Ltd.

Rescue operations are under way.

China's mining industry is plagued by frequent accidents due to poor safety measures and lax supervision.

The accident occurred on the same day when five people choked to death after inhaling poisonous gas underground in a pyrite mine in central China's Hunan Province.

On Saturday, flooding at an iron mine in northeast China's Liaoning Province left five workers trapped. Rescuers have yet to locate the miners.

## **Toronto-based mining company fined \$1M after fatal Sudbury accident**

*Extract from CityNews, Toronto, Canada*

A Toronto-based mining company has been fined \$1 million for the deaths of two workers in a Sudbury, Ont., mine two years ago — the largest work-safety penalty ever levied by a provincial court.

The Ontario Ministry of Labour says the Vale Canada Ltd. workers were transferring muck — broken rock and ore — through a transfer gate roughly 900 metres underground in the Stobie mine when the accident happened.

The ministry says that though there was a protected area to operate the transfer point, the men had to stand in front of the gate in order to view the movement of muck and use a remote control.

It says an uncontrolled run of muck suddenly burst through the gate, burying one miner and hitting another — both employees died from massive crushing injuries and multiple blunt force trauma.

The ministry says its investigation revealed that Vale — a wholly owned subsidiary of the Brazilian mining company Vale — failed to deal with water issues, leading to the deadly accumulation of wet muck clogging the mine.

It says Vale was fined a total of \$1,050,000 under the Occupational Health and Safety Act after pleading guilty to three counts related to mine safety.

The ministry said Tuesday that a 25 per cent victim fine surcharge was additionally imposed by the court against the mining giant, with the money going to a provincial victim-assistance fund.

The miners were identified as Jason Chenier, 35, and Jordan Fram, 26, both of Sudbury.

It took rescuers 80 minutes to reach the location and even longer to recover them. They were pronounced dead at the scene.

Sixty workers on the night shift were underground when the two miners were killed. The others were brought to the surface and accounted for, and grief counsellors were brought in.

The labour ministry issued nine work orders — including two work stoppages — to Vale immediately after the workers' deaths.

Vale has six mines, a mill, a smelter and a refinery in Sudbury.



## USA: Miner Killed at Missouri Quarry

*Extract kindly provided by Sharpe Media, LLC*

A miner has died after his haul truck ran off a highwall at a limestone quarry in northern Missouri.

David A. Gully, 58, of Huntsville was killed in the accident 9:15 a.m. Sept. 16 at Con-Agg of MO, LLC's Huntsville Quarry in Randolph County, according to the Missouri Highway Patrol. Gully was operating a loaded 1980 Caterpillar 773B haul truck when it went through a berm and over the highwall and overturned several times, ejecting him. The truck ended up on top of the victim, police said.

According to preliminary report by the U.S. Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), Gully had nearly 26 years of mining experience at the mine, including over 14 years as a truck driver.

Con-Agg, a subsidiary of Summit Materials, LLC, has operated the mine since January, according to MSHA's database. The former owner was Norris Quarries. The mine, which employs 13, has not reported a non-fatal days lost accident since at least 2005. Two no days lost/restricted duty accidents occurred in 2010.

An MSHA inspection last month produced two citations, the first for the mine this year. The alleged violations have not yet been assessed.

The fatality is the 11<sup>th</sup> in the metal/non-metal (M/NM) sector in 2013. Of these, five have occurred in the aggregate subsector. There have been 14 coal fatalities. At this time a year ago, 27 miners had died, including 12 in M/NM.

## USA: Engineering Firm Admits Role in Crandall Canyon Tragedy

*Extract kindly provided by Sharpe Media, LLC*

A Colorado-based engineering firm has reached a settlement with MSHA over its role in an underground coal mine tragedy that claimed nine lives six years ago.

Agapito Associates agreed to accept a high negligence citation and pay a \$100,000 fine in connection with the failure of coal-support pillars during retreat mining that led to a massive outburst at the Crandall Canyon Mine in Utah. Six miners were killed in the August 2007 incident. The failure was so violent it measured 3.9 on the Richter earthquake scale. Another outburst 10 days later claimed the lives of two rescue workers and an MSHA inspector.

In a press release Sept. 18 announcing the settlement, MSHA called Agapito's engineering design "flawed," and said its investigation determined that the consulting firm contributed to the accident by producing an inadequate mine design with unsafe pillar dimensions. Mine operator Genwal Resources, Inc. and its parent company, UtahAmerican Energy Inc., submitted their mining plan to MSHA based on Agapito's analysis, the agency said.

While the mine operator is required to devise mining plans, MSHA has the ultimate say in whether or not such plans are approved. Following the accident, MSHA came under fire for approving amendments to Genwal's roof control plan because safeguards built into the amendments did not prevent the tragedy or a similar outburst six months earlier in another part of the mine that did not cause injury. An internal investigation of MSHA's performance was not kind to the agency.

"With this settlement, Agapito takes responsibility for its role in the tragic mine collapse at Crandall Canyon," said MSHA

chief Joe Main. "Since this tragedy occurred, the agency has made a number of enforcement, administrative and regulatory reforms to improve the health and safety of the nation's miners, particularly in the area of roof control safety."

The settlement must be approved by the Federal Mine Safety and Health Review Commission. If it does, it will mark the end of legal proceedings brought by the federal government arising from the disaster at the Emery County Mine. A year ago, Genwal and Andalex Resources Inc., also owned by UtahAmerican, agreed to pay nearly \$950,000 in civil penalties for Crandall Canyon violations. MSHA had originally proposed a \$220,000 fine against Agapito.

In addition, Genwal Resources pled guilty in federal court to two criminal misdemeanors for its willful violation of mandatory health and safety standards at the mine and agreed to pay a \$500,000 fine.

The bodies of the six miners remain entombed in the mine, which has since been closed.

Despite pronouncements of improvements in roof safety, retreat mining, whereby remnant coal pillars are mined as the workforce backs out of a mine, remains hazardous. In March, Elam Jones, 29, was crushed by a slab of rock at the Castle Valley Mine #4, also in Emery County. Another miner was injured but survived. The accident remains under investigation.

Wednesday 18 September 2013

### **Third settlement reached in Crandall Canyon Mine disaster**

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

SALT LAKE CITY — The consultants whose poor engineering analysis contributed to the catastrophic mine collapse at Crandall Canyon will pay a \$100,000 fine for "high negligence,"

in a settlement announced Wednesday by the U.S. Department of Labor.

The agreement between the Mine Safety and Health Administration and Agapito Associates Inc., closes the final chapter against the trio of corporate actors that played a role in the 2007 tragedy in Emery County.

"With this settlement, Agapito takes responsibility for its role in the tragic mine collapse at Crandall Canyon," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for the Mine Safety and Health Administration. "Since this tragedy occurred, the agency has made a number of enforcement, administrative and regulatory reforms to improve the health and safety of the nation's miners, particularly in the area of roof control safety."

Main conceded that while the \$100,000 penalty may seem minimal in light of the magnitude of the tragedy, he stressed that it is not insignificant that the consultant firm acknowledged responsibility that amounted to "high negligence."

"There is some accountability here," he said. "High negligence, that is meaningful action in the litigation process. ... This is something that folks should not take lightly."

Miners Kerry Allred, Don Erickson, Luis Hernandez, Carlos Payan, Brandon Phillips and Manuel Sanchez were nearing the end of their 12-hour shift when the mine collapsed during the early morning hours of Aug. 6, 2007.

According to MSHA's investigation, the miners were killed when roof-supporting coal pillars collapsed in a catastrophic outburst that violently ejected coal over a half-mile area in the underground mine tunnels. The force of the collapse was so violent it initially registered as a 3.9-magnitude earthquake.

Ten days later, MSHA inspector Gary Jensen and two mine employees, Brandon Kimber and Dale Black, died in another coal outburst that occurred during rescue efforts. The

investigation found that the flawed engineering analysis by Agapito resulted in an inadequate mine design, with unsafe pillar dimensions, which contributed to the accident.

Despite repeated rescue attempts that dragged on for weeks, the original six miners' bodies were never recovered and they remain entombed at Crandall Canyon, which has since been idled.

MSHA said Genwal and its parent company, UtahAmerican Energy Inc., submitted their mining plan to the agency based on Agapito's analysis.

If the settlement is approved by the administrative law judge, it will mark the end of legal proceedings brought by the federal government because of Crandall Canyon.

Last year, Genwal Resources and Andalex Resources Inc., also owned by UtahAmerican Energy, agreed to pay nearly \$950,000 in civil penalties for Crandall Canyon violations.

In that agreement, Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith said the two companies acknowledged failures that led to the "needless deaths of nine members of the mining community."

Additionally, Genwal Resources pleaded guilty in federal court to two criminal misdemeanors for its willful violation of mandatory health and safety standards at the mine and agreed to pay a \$500,000 fine.

Main added that the breadth of actions taken against the trio of companies stem from a series of actions that went beyond mere missteps — but constituted failures in industry and in regulatory oversight at the time to ensure the safety of miners.

"We have made a lot of changes on our side of street and are holding mine operators more accountable from all the lessons we have learned for this experience," Main said.

Utah's latest coal mining death, that of Elam Jones, 29, happened on March 22 at the

Rhino Mine, not far from Crandall in Huntington Canyon. Jones was crushed by a slab of rock during a retreat mining operation that remains under investigation by MSHA. His cousin, Dallen McFarlane, was injured but survived.

## Canada: Wesdome Gold Mines fined for worker injuries

*Extract from CBCnews, Canada*

A court in Marathon has fined a mining company \$130,000 for two separate incidents that resulted in injuries to workers.

In one case, the Ministry of Labour had charged Wesdome Gold Mines after a March, 2012 accident at the mill operation for the Eagle River mine, 35 kilometres south of White River. The accident resulted in an employee suffering cyanide poisoning and chemical burns on his leg.

The ministry said the worker inadvertently stepped into a hole that wasn't visible because it was covered with dirty water. The hole also contained sodium cyanide.

Wesdome was fined \$70,000 for failing to have an alarm to warn workers about the presence of cyanide gas during overflows or spills.

As well, the company received a \$60,000 fine for a June, 2011 incident in the mill in which a worker suffered broken bones when he slipped on a plastic screen covered in a chemical.

Wesdome pleaded guilty to failing to ensure a safe means of access was provided where workers are required to work, operate, maintain or service equipment.

In addition to both fines, the court imposed a 25 per cent victim surcharge. The surcharge is credited to a special provincial government fund that assists victims of crime.

Thursday 19 September 2013

### 3 Dead after N China Colliery Collapse

*Extract from Xinhua, China*

Three miners have been confirmed dead and another has been rescued after a colliery pit collapsed on Monday night in Inner Mongolia Autonomous region, local authorities said on Thursday.

Rescue operations at the Huangyuchuan coal mine ended at 4.20 am on Thursday as rescuers retrieved the body of the last trapped miner. The rescued worker is receiving medical treatment and is reportedly in a stable condition.

Four workers were trapped after the accident occurred at 11.54 pm on Monday at the mine located in the township of Xuejiawan in Jungar Banner. The mine is owned by Shenhua Yili Energy Co Ltd.

China's mining industry is plagued by frequent accidents due to poor safety measures and lax supervision.

The accident occurred on the same day when five people choked to death after inhaling poisonous gas underground in a pyrite mine in central China's Hunan Province.

On Saturday, flooding at an iron mine in northeast China's Liaoning Province left five workers trapped. Rescuers have yet to locate the miners.

Friday 20 September 2013

### USA: Quarry Worker Killed in Kentucky

*Extract kindly provided by Sharpe Media, LLC*

A miner has been killed at a Kentucky limestone quarry.

The accident occurred at 1:08 p.m. Wednesday at Gaddie-Shamrock, LLC's

Caldwell Quarry in Clinton County, according to MSHA's preliminary report. The victim, whose name has not been disclosed, was trying to remove rock from a pug mill hopper when he was engulfed by material in the hopper, according to MSHA. The miner, believed to be a 56-year-old male, was employed as a front-end loader operator and had over 16 years of mining experience.

Twelve persons are employed in the quarry operation at the mine, which is located in the southern part of the state near the Tennessee border. According to MSHA's database, lost-time accidents have occurred in five of the last dozen years, including in three of the last four years. The last lost-time accident occurred less than a month ago.

MSHA conducted inspections this year in April and July and levied fines totaling \$3,194, all paid.

The fatality is the second this week in the aggregate sub-sector. David Gully died Monday when the loaded haul truck he was operating went through a berm and traveled over the edge of a highwall in Missouri. Four other aggregate workers have died this year.

In the Metal/Non-Metal sector, there have been 12 deaths in 2013 and another 14 fatalities in Coal. The 26 total fatalities is one short of the number killed in U.S. mines at this time a year ago.

## Mining dictionary

A guide to coal mining terminology

### C

**Cast** A directed throw; in strip-mining, the overburden is cast from the coal to the previously mined area.