

Mining Accident News No.0811

Monday 30 June 2008

Qld: Review prompts changes to mine safety reporting

BRISBANE - A damning report into the way mine safety statistics are recorded in Queensland will bring about changes to the system, Queensland Mines and Energy Minister Geoff Wilson says.

A government-commissioned review of the annual mine safety report has made 36 recommendations, on issues such as mine audits, the definition and reporting of injuries, and the level of awareness of health and safety risks.

"While it shines a light on what's being done right, it also hangs a lantern on some of the problems in the mining industry," Mr Wilson said of the review.

"For instance, the safety and health experts found the reporting of lost time injuries was incomplete.

"The stats in the annual report didn't tell the true story. They only reported on half the injuries that prevent a person from returning to work."

Mr Wilson said the government was committed to working through all of the recommendations with the key stakeholders in Queensland's mining industry.

"I'm ready to roll up my sleeves and work with key stakeholders on all the recommendations, one by one," he said.

Wednesday 2 July 2008

QLD: Inquest hears of events leading up to mine death

The driver of a shuttle car that crushed a miner against the wall of a central Queensland mine has told a coronial inquest a series of events could have led to the death.

Jason Blee, 33, was killed when he was crushed between a shuttle car and a wall at the Moranbah North mine in April last year.

Mr Blee was working as a safety trainer and assessor at the Anglo Coal Mine at the time of his death.



Mr Blee was working as a safety trainer and assessor at the Anglo Coal Mine at the time of his death. (ABC News)

Shuttle car driver Graham Lucas told the inquest, Mr Blee was a first-rate miner and constantly thought about safety.

He said just before Mr Blee died, a track on a nearby continuous miner snapped, causing on-ground staff, including Mr Blee, to move their positions.

Mr Lucas told the inquest the breakdown changed the normal sequence of work and could have led to Mr Blee's death.

DPI Mechanical Engineering Safety Seminar

The 18th Mechanical Engineering Safety Seminar will be held at the Waterview Convention Centre, Sydney Olympic Park, on Wednesday 13 and Thursday 14 August 2008.

For more information:

<http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/minerals/safety/resources/seminars-and-conferences/mechanical-engineering-safety-seminar>

Sunday 6 July 2008

21 dead in China coal mine accident

BEIJING — An apparent blast at a coal mine in northern China has killed 21 workers.

Four miners were rescued by emergency workers. Seven managed to escape on their own after the accident Saturday at the Wujia coal mine outside Datong city in Shanxi province.

All of the victims died of carbon monoxide poisoning. The number of miners underground at the time of the accident was not known and rescuers are continuing to search.

News reports in China say a preliminary investigation into the accident showed it was probably caused by an explosion.

The Wujju mine is a registered operation with an annual production capacity of 150,000 tons.

China's mines are the world's deadliest, with explosions, cave-ins and floods killing nearly 3,800 people last year.

Wednesday 9 July 2008

Beaconsfield mine inquest to go ahead

HOBART - A coroner has ruled that an inquest is required into the death of Beaconsfield miner Larry Knight.

Miners Todd Russell and Brant Webb survived 14 days trapped underground in northern Tasmania's Beaconsfield gold mine after a rock fall which killed Mr Knight on April 25, 2006.

Lawyers for the mine told Coroner Rod Chandler at a preliminary hearing in Launceston last week that he should consider concluding the inquest before calling witnesses.

Beaconsfield Gold lawyer David Neale urged Mr Chandler to instead adopt the findings of an earlier state government report into the collapse to avoid a lengthy and expensive inquest.

Mr Chandler adjourned the hearing to consider the request, but today ruled that he "is required to conduct an inquest as the death occurred at a workplace" and it was therefore mandatory under the Coroners Act.

The inquest will cover geotechnical issues, risk management, the mine's financial situation and the role of Workplace Safety Tasmania, Mr Chandler said.

The mine's lawyers had argued that the inquest should be confined to geotechnical issues and not include an investigation into the mine's

finances and the role of the workplace safety watchdog.

Miners were warned the mine would be shut down if production levels slipped, the preliminary hearing was told last week.

Counsel for the Knight family, Kamal Farouque, told the hearing that the court should consider whether production decisions were influenced by the financial structure of the mine.

Mr Farouque also said there was no "systematic risk assessment" in place when Mr Knight was killed.

The full hearing, with about 30 witnesses including Mr Russell and Mr Webb, is due to start on July 22 at the Launceston Magistrates Court.

It is expected to run for more than two months.

The inquiry's purpose is to determine the cause of the fatal rock fall and make safety recommendations. It does not include finding criminal culpability.

Mining dictionary

A guide to common mining terminology

H

hydraulic elevator / jet elevator An arrangement used to lift alluvial material and water to a higher level, so that gravity sluicing could be effectively utilised. Introduced from the 1880s. A sump was dug in the base of the alluvial area, and a vertical pipe with a constricted throat was placed in the sump. A hydraulic hose was led to the base of the pipe, and a nozzle directed up it. Any dirt and gravel washed into the sump was blown up the pipe onto sluices above.

- Ed.