

Fatality

Incident date: 3 November 2018

Event: Tyre handler fatality

Location: Bengalla Coal Mine, Muswellbrook NSW

Overview

A worker was fatally injured when a large earthmoving tyre fell from a tyre handler at the mine's heavy vehicle wash bay. The NSW Resources Regulator has commenced a major investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.

Photograph 1: The tyre handler and tyre at the mine's wash bay. Photograph by Major Investigations Unit.



The mine and contractor

Bengalla Mining Company Pty Limited, is the mine operator of the Bengalla Coal Mine, located about four kilometres southwest of Muswellbrook, in the Hunter coalfields of NSW. Bengalla Mining Company is a joint venture of Wesfarmers, New Hope Group, Mitsui and Taipower.

The Bengalla Mine is an open cut coal mine that uses a dragline, truck and shovel operation. The mine is operated 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The mine produces coal for international customers.

The worker was employed by Marathon Tyres Pty Ltd and was undertaking tyre maintenance tasks at the mine.

The incident

At 7.20pm on 3 November 2018, the worker, 37, suffered fatal injuries when a large earthmoving tyre, weighing about 2.2 tonnes fell onto him at the mine's heavy vehicle wash bay.

The worker and another worker had removed the tyre from a water cart at a service bay with the tyre handler. The tyre handler was then used to take the tyre to the nearby wash bay for cleaning. At some point during the cleaning process, the tyre fell onto the worker.

Other workers responded to the scene and initiated the mine's emergency response procedures.

The investigation

NSW Police and emergency services responded to the incident.

Resources Regulator inspectors and investigators also responded and commenced a major investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident.

The mine operator and contractor are cooperating with the investigation.

An investigation report will be prepared for the Secretary of the Department of Planning and Environment and the NSW Coroner.

Safety observations

This incident reinforces the importance of implementing effective risk control measures when working near suspended loads and lifting equipment.

Mine and petroleum site operators and contractors are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety associated with the operation of suspended loads and lifting equipment in accordance with the provisions of the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and *Work Health and Safety (Mines and Petroleum Sites) Act 2013* and Regulations.

Mine operators and contractors must have effective safety management systems in place and identify risks associated with the operation of lifting equipment such as tyre handlers. When managing these

risks, mine operators and contractors must have regard to the possibility of interactions between the lifting equipment, the load and people, and falling objects.

Appropriate separation distances between the lifting equipment, the load and people must be maintained. Work areas must be clearly defined, and appropriate exclusions zones must be effectively maintained in the event of an uncontrolled release of the load from the lifting equipment.

Mine operators and contractors must also ensure that workers are provided with information, training and supervision when working around lifting equipment and suspended loads.

Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- [MDG-15 Guideline for mobile and transportable plant for use at mines other than underground coal mines](#)

About this information release

The Resources Regulator has issued this information to draw attention to the occurrence of a fatality in the mining industry. Investigations are ongoing and further information may be published as it becomes available.

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing. However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that the information upon which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of the Department of Planning and Environment or the user's independent adviser.

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- learn more about the NSW Resources Regulator
- view our publications on other major investigations
- find your local mine safety office, where you can contact our team of mine safety inspectors.

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