

Serious injury

Incident date: 2 April 2018

Event: Serious injury at open cut coal mine

Location: Werris Creek No 2 Coal Mine, Werris Creek NSW

Overview

A worker suffered a serious laceration on his lower back when the articulated water cart he was driving rolled over. Other workers provided first aid to the injured worker before he was transported to hospital for treatment. The NSW Resources Regulator has commenced an investigation into the incident.

Photograph 1: Final position of articulated water cart.



The mine

Werris Creek Coal Pty Ltd, wholly owned by Whitehaven Coal Limited, operates the Werris Creek No 2 Coal Mine. The mine is at Werris Creek Road, Werris Creek, NSW. Werris Creek is about 45 km south west of Tamworth.

The mine is an open cut coal mine. Overburden and coal is mined by truck and excavator and the coal is transported by rail to Newcastle for export.

The incident

On 2 April 2018, a labour hire worker, aged 20, was operating an articulated water cart. The water cart was used for several tasks at the mine, including the watering of coal stockpiles to prevent spontaneous combustion.

At 1.20 pm, the worker received a request to go to pit bottom and use the water cart's jet nozzle to clean a dozer. Before travelling to pit bottom, the worker went to the water fill point and filled the water cart with about 30,000 litres of water.

The fully loaded water cart was then driven down the access ramp toward pit bottom to a right-hand bend. The water cart failed to negotiate the bend and rolled over with the cabin coming to rest on its roof.

The worker managed to free himself from the damaged cabin of the water cart. The worker walked up the ramp where he located other workers. The worker suffered a large laceration to his lower back. The worker was transported to the workshop where first aid was rendered before he was transported to hospital for further treatment.

Photograph 2: The damaged cabin of the articulated water cart.



The investigation

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

The mine operator and labour hire company are cooperating with the investigation.

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

Safety observations

Mine and petroleum site operators are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage risks to health and safety, and to provide safe plant and 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 must have effective safety management systems in place and identify risks associated with the operation of mobile plant. All plant must be fit for purpose and safety critical systems and safety-related components must function as designed.

Safety critical systems include braking, steering, warning systems and interlocks. Safety-related components includes fixed components such as steering arms, and operator protective devices such as ROPS (roll-over protective structure) and FOPS (falling object protective structure).

Mine operators must also ensure that workers are adequately trained and competent in the safe use of mobile plant. All plant should be operated in a safe manner and in accordance with the manufacturer's guidelines.

Manufacturers and suppliers of plant must ensure that plant is safe to operate and provide adequate information about the plant and any conditions necessary to ensure the safe operation of the plant.

Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- [Safety bulletin SB18-07 Safe systems of work for mobile plant](#)
- [MDG-15 Guideline for mobile and transportable plant for use at mines other than underground coal mines](#)
- [Safety bulletin SB17-01 Truck roll overs](#)
- [Safety bulletin SB-15-01 Rollover of load shifting equipment](#)
- [Safety alert SA03 01 Articulated Dump Truck Roll Overs](#)
- [Guide for importing and supplying safe plant](#)

About this information release

The Resources Regulator has issued this information to draw attention to the occurrence of a serious injury 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. All photographs were taken by the Resources Regulator.

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- learn more about our work on major investigations and emergency response
- 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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