

SAFETY BULLETIN

Rocks breach catch bund

INCIDENT

A recent incident involving rocks breaching bunding at the base of a dump occurred at a Hunter Valley mine, while dumping was taking place above an active haul road. The dump was about 40 m high and a substantial catch bund had been established at its base. The dozer operator checked the bund from the dump and believed it had sufficient capacity. During the shift, a truck stopped on the haul road below the dump, waiting for some spillage that was blocking the road to be removed. At that time, a number of rocks breached the windrow and came to rest about 15 m from the stopped truck.

There have been several incidents recently involving rocks breaching bunding at the base of dumps, impacting other work areas. The purpose of this safety bulletin is to highlight the hazard and make recommendations for control measures to minimise the potential for re-occurrence.

Figure 1: Scale of the rocks that breached the windrow. Photo supplied by mine.



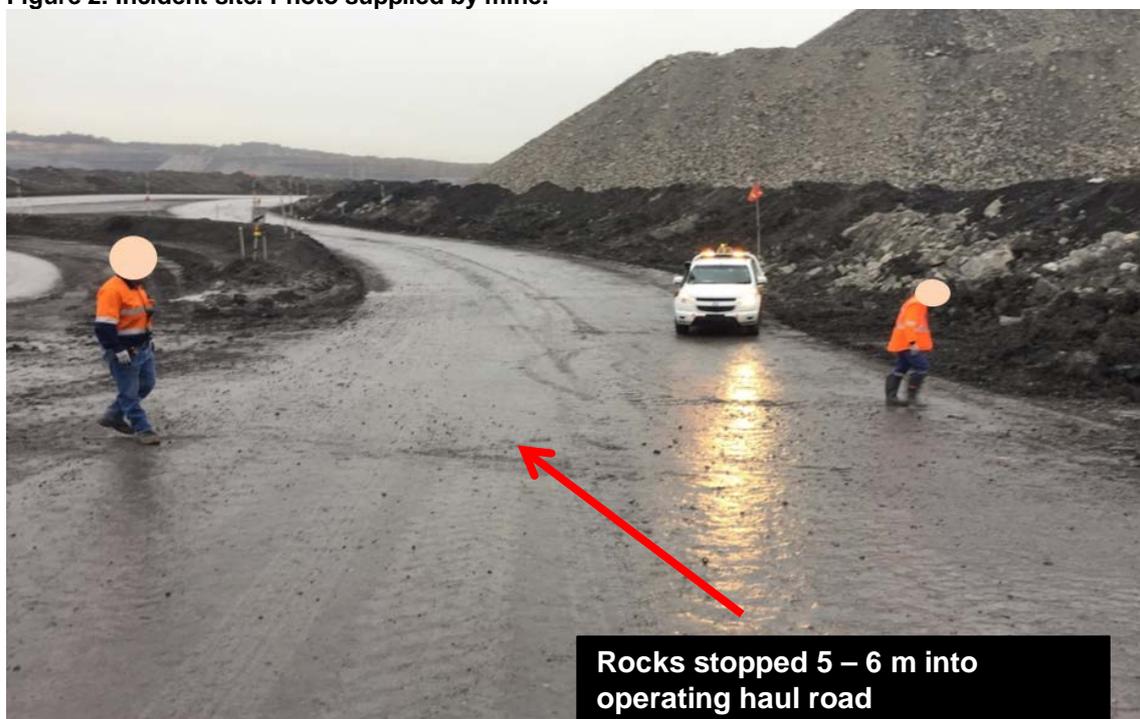
CIRCUMSTANCES

Another truck was observed dumping their load just prior to the breach. Rocks from this load have rolled out of the tray and continued down the dump slope. They have reached the bund and, with a combination of a partially filled bund and excess momentum, they have breached the bund and come to rest near the stopped truck.

INVESTIGATION

The investigation conducted by the Resources Regulator established that the dozer operator did not identify that the catch bund was filling up. The dozer operator had only inspected the dump from the top of the dump, about 40 m from the breach point. Up until the breach, no supervisor inspections of the dump had been conducted during the shift.

Figure 2: Incident site. Photo supplied by mine.



RECOMMENDATIONS

- It is poor practice to have any operations occurring below an active dump. Operations below an active dump should be avoided where possible.
- If it is unavoidable to exclude operations from below an active dump, an appropriate risk assessment of the hazard should be completed. The risk assessment should have input from those potentially at risk from the hazard.
- Additional controls must also be implemented to minimise the risk to those operating below a dump. These controls should include:
 - dumping in daylight only
 - dumping at a different location when traffic is below the dump
 - managing the size of the material so that oversized material is placed separately on the dump
 - increasing the size of the catch bund, both in terms of height and thickness

- reducing traffic, equipment and exposure levels in the work area below
- increasing inspection frequency based on the increased risk
- increasing supervision of the work being undertaken at both locations
- stopping access during the time of dumping a load.

NOTE: Please ensure **all relevant people** in your organisation receive a copy of this Safety Bulletin, and are informed of its content and recommendations. This Safety Bulletin should be processed in a systematic manner through the mine's information and communication process. It should also be placed on the mine's notice board.

Issued by

Dave McLean

Chief Inspector of Mines

Appointed pursuant to Work Health & Safety (Mines and Petroleum Sites) Act 2013

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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 information on which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Department of Industry or the user's independent advisor.