

INVESTIGATION INFORMATION RELEASE

DATE: AUGUST 2022

Worker's leg fractured during strata support work in a coal mine drift

Incident date: 18 July 2022

Event: Worker's leg fractured during strata support work in a coal mine drift

Location: Appin East Mine

Overview

A worker suffered a fractured leg when hit by bolting equipment. The worker was undertaking strata support work in the drift of an underground coal mine when a personnel car, that travelled on rail tracks attached to a rope and drum winder system, travelled down the drift.

The mine

The Appin East Mine forms part of the Appin Colliery, which is on Appin Road. Appin Colliery is about 36 kilometres north-west of Wollongong, NSW. The mine is an underground coal mine that produces coking coal. Endeavour Coal Pty Limited is the mine operator of the Appin Colliery.

The incident

Three contractor workers were performing hand bolting strata support work in the drift at the Appin East Mine from about 8am on Monday 18 July 2022. The workers travelled to the area via the mine's personnel car. The workers and their equipment were dropped off by the personnel car operator. The personnel car returned to the surface and the contractor workers set up their work area and began work.

At this time, the personnel car was on the surface undergoing maintenance.

The personnel car operator began to travel inbye down the drift at about 1.10pm. The contractor workers became aware of the personnel car approaching and took evasive action to prevent being hit by the personnel car. As the personnel car passed the workers, the personnel car caught the bolting hoses and dragged a bolter down the drift. The bolter then hit a worker in the lower left leg, fracturing his fibula.

The investigation

The Regulator has commenced an investigation to determine the cause and circumstances of the incident. The investigation will explore, among other things, the management of simultaneous operations, taking plant out of service and reintroducing plant to service, working around plant, communication, instruction, training and supervision of the workers involved, as well as the adequacy of policies and procedures relevant to the incident. The mine operator and the contractor are co-operating with the investigation. A report will be published when the investigation is concluded.

Figure 1 The drift of Appin East Mine



Figure 2 The control car and personnel car at Appin East Mine



Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- [TRG - Powered winding systems part 1 general requirements](#) (Section 4.5 Operation procedures - Persons working in the drift)
- [NSW code of practice – Mechanical engineering control plan](#)
- SafeWork NSW - [Code of practice - Managing the risks of plant in the workplace](#)
- [Isolation issues identified at coal mines December 2018](#)
- SafeWork NSW - [Working with or around mobile plant](#)

About this information release

The Regulator has issued this information to draw attention to the occurrence of a serious incident in the mining industry. Further information may be published as it becomes available.

Visit our [website](#) to:

- learn more about our work on causal investigations and emergency response
- view our publications on other causal investigations

© State of New South Wales through Regional NSW 2022. You may copy, distribute, display, download and otherwise freely deal with this publication for any purpose, provided that you attribute Regional NSW as the owner. However, you must obtain permission if you wish to charge others for access to the publication (other than at cost); include the publication in advertising or a product for sale; modify the publication; or republish the publication on a website. You may freely link to the publication on a departmental website.

Disclaimer: The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing August 2022 and may not be accurate, current or complete. The State of New South Wales (including Regional NSW), the author and the publisher take no responsibility, and will accept no liability, for the accuracy, currency, reliability or correctness of any information included in the document (including material provided by third parties). Readers should make their own inquiries and rely on their own advice when making decisions related to material contained in this publication.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

CM9 reference	RDOC22/139585
Mine safety reference	IIR22-03
Date published	19 August 2022
Authorised by	Chief Investigator, Major Safety Investigations