

INVESTIGATION INFORMATION RELEASE

DATE: April 2020

Fatality

Incident date: 15 November 2019

Event: Non-work-related death

Location: Bulga Surface Operations, Singleton NSW

Overview

A 35-year-old worker was found unresponsive inside a rubber-tyred dozer at Bulga Surface Operations. Despite the efforts of his co-workers and paramedics, the worker was unable to be revived.

The NSW Resources Regulator investigated the incident and considers the death of the worker to be non-work-related.

Figure 1 The rubber-tyred dozer



The mine

Bulga Surface Operations is located 15 kilometres southwest of Singleton in NSW. The mine extracts coal from multiple seams using dragline, truck and excavator open cut mining methods.

The nominated operator of the mine is Bulga Coal Management Pty Ltd, on behalf of the Bulga Joint Venture, part of Glencore Australia Holdings Pty Ltd.

The incident

On 15 November 2019 at 6.24am, a worker attended the mine and started his shift after being on a roster break for several days. At 9.43am, the worker drove a rubber-tyred dozer (also known as a push dozer) into a working strip area of the mine, lowered the blade and parked up. A short time later, another mine worker attempted to make radio contact with the dozer operator and had no reply. The mine worker followed up, making a request to mine dispatch to contact the dozer operator.

At 10.15am, a nearby haul truck driver approached the dozer and saw that the worker was slumped over the steering wheel. The truck driver found the worker unresponsive and unconscious. Emergency response was activated.

Mine workers and ambulance workers attempted to revive the worker, but were unsuccessful.

The investigation

The NSW Resources Regulator investigated the circumstances of the worker's death. As a result of investigation inquires undertaken and information provided by the Coroner, the worker's death is not considered to be work-related.

Safety Observations

Mine and petroleum site operators are reminded of their duty to identify hazards and manage the risks to health and safety 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 should have effective health monitoring programs in place to ensure workers are healthy and fit to work at a mine. Regular medical examinations should be undertaken by qualified medical practitioners.

Persons conducting a business or undertaking should provide information to workers about healthy lifestyles and fitness-for-work programs.

Workers should maintain a healthy lifestyle and be fit to undertake the work they perform.

Further information

Please refer to the following guidance materials:

- [Health monitoring](#)
- [Health control plans](#)
- [Coal mine workers order No. 43](#)

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.

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