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Moranbah North mine death: Gavin Fentwell honoured at memorial

A worker killed in an underground disaster at a Central Queensland mine has been identified as a 59-year-old father of three.



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@Duncanevans01  2 min read March 27, 2022 - 7:46AM

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The Moranbah community gathered for one minute's silence at 6pm at the Moranbah Miners Memorial on March 26 to mark the tragic death of Moranbah North Miner Gavin Fentwell.

A mine worker killed in an underground disaster has been identified as Moranbah North contractor Gavin Fentwell.

A shell-shocked [community gathered at Moranbah Miners' Memorial to mark](#) the tragic death of father-of-three Mr Fentwell.

Memorial secretary Andy Collins left a lit lamp at the memorial, Isaac Regional Council Mayor Anne Baker laid a wreath and Councillor Kelly Ve Ve read out the remembrance.

“We come together to support each other as members of the mining community because that’s what we do and that’s who we are,” Ms Ve Ve said.

“No one knows the dangers of this industry like the people who face it every shift.”



Councillor Kelly Ve Ve (standing right) speaks to the crowd at the Moranbah Miners' Memorial before marking one minute's silence in memory of Moranbah North miner Gavin Fentwell. Picture: Duncan Evans

The community stood in silence to remember the 59-year-old family man who died at Moranbah North mine while working to move an old piece of equipment in a roadway.

Mr Fentwell was working as a contractor with Mastermyne, a mining services firm, at the Anglo American mine.

Anglo American has suspended operations at the site while Resources Safety and Health Queensland conducted an investigation into the incident.

After the memorial service, Mr Fentwell's workmates and colleagues hugged and consoled one another as the day faded into night.

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Isaac Regional Council Mayor Anne Baker leaves a wreath at the Moranbah Miners' Memorial in memory of Moranbah North miner Gavin Fentwell on March 26. Picture: Duncan Evans

Mr Fentwell's death follows [a string of tragedies at Central Queensland mine sites](#).

In November 2021, Clark Peadon died at the Curragh mine near Blackwater after he was crushed by a dragline.

In September 2021, [Graham Dawson](#), 60, suffered critical injuries at Sojitz Gregory Crinum Mine when part of the roof dislodged and fell onto him.

Moranbah Miners' Memorial Committee president Scott Leggett expressed anger at the state of health and safety across the coal mining industry.

“The anger is actually getting directed,” he said.

“Our politicians, RSHQ, the inspectors, you know, where are they?”



(From left to right) Moranbah Miners' Memorial Committee members Andy Collins, Rob Grieve, Brody Bruncker, Simon West, Scott Leggett, Kelly Vea, Luke Reynolds, Pat Meldrum, Rory Bean and Daniel Vincent stand by the memorial in the twilight just before 6pm on March 26. Picture: Duncan Evans

Mr Leggett said too many high-potential incidents, or incidents which could lead to an accident or fatality, were happening on site.

He said HPIs invariably built up to fatalities.

“HPIs are happening throughout this industry daily,” he said.

Mr Leggett said he believed safety failures were industry-wide.

“It’s a systemic problem and it’s getting worse every day,” he said.

“Our politicians have got to understand that there is a problem and then make some legislative changes that are actually going to stop the problem.”

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Moranbah Miners' Memorial secretary Andy Collins leaves a lit lamp in honour of Moranbah North miner Gavin Fentwell. Picture: Duncan Evans

Mr Leggett is an open-cut examiner with 30 years' experience in mining and called on both the LNP and Labor parties to adequately address mine safety issues.