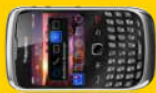


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Miner crushed to death by truck

Bruce Mckean | 5th October 2010

PAUL Dale, left, was in charge of 20 workers at a mining lease exploration site west of Clermont when one of the workers was crushed to death by a water truck with faulty handbrakes and which rolled backwards and pinned him against a metal gate.



The truck's brakes had failed two days in a row and when he heard about the fatality Mr Dale said: "F..., f..., I should have taken the truck off the road."

Mr Dale, 38, a geologist who operated his own company, was working for MacMines at the coal mine known as Yarrowmere at Hyde Park Station, about 175km west of Clermont.

Mr Dale was the project manager at the mine site.

He pleaded guilty in the Industrial Magistrate's Court in Mackay yesterday to breaching his workplace, health and safety regulations on the day of the fatality on September 29, 2008.

On the day before the fatality, the handbrakes failed on the truck in questioned and it rolled back and hit a drill sump.

The next day the truck was still being used and workers said the brakes started to fail by lunch-time and by 4pm they weren't working at all.

At 9pm a worker was driving on the mining lease site and saw Alan Richard Green pinned at the rear of a stationary water truck between a metal gate.

The truck was moved and emergency services were called but Mr Green died.

Authorities seized the truck for mechanical inspection and it was discovered that only two of the six service brakes were adjusted correctly and one of them had a significant air leak. Three of the four park brakes were incorrectly adjusted and were not operating effectively.

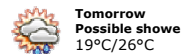
An investigation revealed that not all procedure manuals for workplace health and safety were at the mine exploration site at the time; some were in Charters Towers.

The court also was told that Mr Dale instructed at least one worker to not tell investigators about the incident the day before the fatality. Mr Dale has lost his company and it was recently wound up and he now relies on consultancy work for his livelihood.

Industrial Magistrate Damien Dwyer said Mr Dale was the site senior executive and he had been aware of problems with the truck and he knew it had rolled back and hit a drill sump the day before.

"You knew workers would be behind the vehicle at some stage and you knew of the difficulty with the handbrakes," Mr Dwyer said.

"You knew workers would be behind the vehicle to open and close gates at some time. All efforts have to be taken to preserve the health and safety of workers." Mr Dale was fined \$15,000 and was ordered to pay \$50,000 in investigation and legal costs.



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