

Fatal incident as bulldozer overturns into pit (update)

Mines safety alert no. 362 | 01 March 2019 | Version 2

What happened?

On Monday 31 December 2018 at approximately 10.30pm, an experienced 49 year old coal mine worker was fatally injured while operating a bulldozer at an open-cut coal mine near Dysart, Central Queensland.

The bulldozer was traversing—with the blade not in contact with the ground—along a bench in an area where three bulldozers were pushing overburden material.

The bulldozer being operated by the deceased went over the bench's crest and rolled downwards approximately 20 metres. The reason for this is yet been determined, but the bulldozer came to rest on its roof in an area of mud and water about two metres deep.

Another bulldozer operator who witnessed the incident 'called in' the emergency immediately and an emergency response team attended the site.

Queensland Police Service attended at the mine, later handing control of the scene to the Queensland Mines Inspectorate, for further investigation.

How did it happen?

A formal investigation by the Queensland Mines Inspectorate into the fatal incident is underway and the cause of the incident has not yet been determined. However, this safety alert does contain recommendations for mines to consider.

Comments

This incident occurred while conducting dragline bench preparations, but mines should consider the below recommendations for all dozer operations.

Recommendations

Mines should ensure that:

1. there is adequate edge protection to prevent equipment and persons from inadvertently going over the edge of an excavation
2. there is adequate protection to prevent equipment from entering bodies of fluid and where practicable remove the fluid before work commences
3. work methods used on benches achieve an acceptable level of risk
4. work methods contain a specific traffic management plan for entering and exiting work areas



5. if a machine is introduced to site and has the capability to transmit function/operational data, the system should be enabled
6. there is vehicle access into pits where machinery is working on benches above.

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Issued by the Queensland Department of Natural Resources, Mines and Energy

Placement: Place this announcement on noticeboards and ensure all relevant people in your organisation receive a copy.