



SAFETY ALERT

Lucky Escape from Underwater Truck

INCIDENT

A truck driver sustained injuries to his forehead when the vehicle he was driving escaped his control and rolled over a highwall into a water reservoir.

CIRCUMSTANCES

The driver was transporting finished product away from the crushing plant in a centre-articulated rear dump truck. In an effort to speed up cycle times the driver selected an alternative haul route which involved driving the loaded truck down a secondary haulroad.

As the truck approached the haulroad descent the operator lost control of the vehicle. Brake application and evasive steering action failed to prevent the truck from rolling over an 8m embankment before coming to rest in approximately 7 metres of water. The operator was able to escape from the cabin and swim to the surface.



Truck submerged approximately 3 metres underwater. (Note: The truck is lying on its side with the cabin extending towards the top of the page).

INVESTIGATION

The incident is currently under investigation by NSW Department of Primary Industries officers. The truck has not been recovered from the water so specific causal factors are still not fully understood.

The weather and visibility conditions are not considered to have contributed to the incident.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In light of a number of similar incidents, particularly SA05-10, all mines should immediately review their haulroad operating conditions, as well as previous recommendations, including;

- Fit-for-purpose barriers, such as bunding or windrows, are in place to prevent uncontrolled mobile plant going over embankments.
- Haulroad design and maintenance is consistent with sound industry and engineering practices.
- Haulroads that are redundant or not suitable for use should be barricaded or sign posted to avoid inappropriate access.
- Operators are trained and assessed as competent using a formal, documented system.
- Mobile plant operators are regularly reminded of correct speeds, gear selection and braking procedures.
- Seatbelts are fitted in accordance with MDG 15 *Guidelines for mobile and transportable equipment for use in mines*, and are worn (SA06-07).
- Vehicles are regularly assessed as 'fit for purpose' against MDG 15 requirements.
- Risk assessments and safe work procedures are reviewed to ensure all potential hazards associated with earthmoving activities, particularly haulroads, have been identified and controlled.

Signed



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