

Operating mine trucks

This Alert highlights the danger to underground mine workers whilst operating mine trucks and provides solutions to reduce or eliminate associated risks.

June 2016

Recently, an underground articulated dump truck rolled uncontrollably backwards down a mine's primary decline for approximately 46 metres.

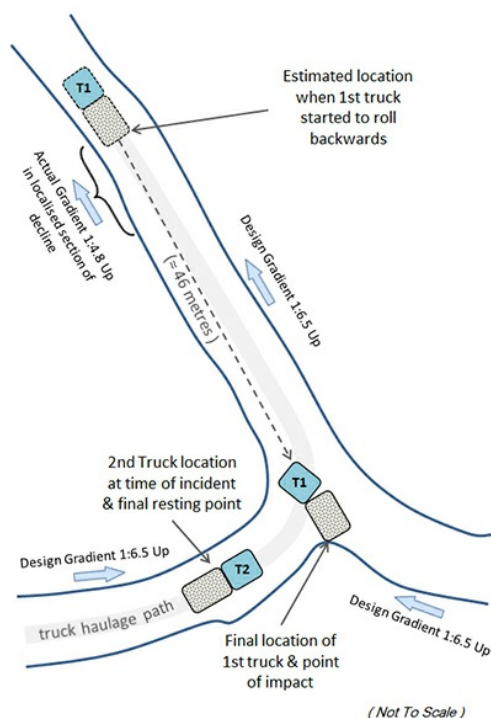
The truck came to a final rest once making contact with the decline wall.

A second truck was travelling up the decline at the same time and stopped approximately 5 metres from the incident location. The operator of the first truck sustained minor injuries from the incident.

Legal obligations

Under regulation 5.3.7 of the Occupational Health and Safety Regulations 2007 (Regulations), mine operators must, so far as is reasonably practicable, identify all mining hazards at their mine and assess the risks to health or safety associated with those mining hazards.

Under regulation 5.3.8 of the Regulations, Mine operators must adopt risk control measures that eliminate, so far as is reasonably practicable, risks to health or safety associated with any mining hazards at the mine. If it is not reasonably practicable to eliminate those risks, mine operators must reduce the risks so far as is reasonably practicable.



Recommended Control Measures

The risk of a haulage truck uncontrollably rolling down a decline and the potential for mobile plant collision, can be controlled by:

- substituting manual gearing and convertor lock up mining trucks with automatic gearing and convertor lock up trucks.

- installing automatic activation brake systems from the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) on all trucks. This safety system automatically activates a truck's braking system if the truck is left in neutral for an extended period of time (eg 3 seconds) during uncontrolled movement.
- providing employees and contractors with all the necessary information, instruction and training in relation to the operating system for the type of mining truck they will be operating during their shift. This training should include relevant emergency stop procedures for the type of truck the employee will be using.
- retraining or offering refresher training to employees and contractors in relation to a truck's operating system. For example, employers should provide employees with training and information that highlights different types of operating systems, procedures and standards for each truck used by the mine.
- implementing administrative controls such as a policy that specifies the minimum separation distance between vehicles travelling within the mine.
- ensuring the operation of mining trucks is undertaken in accordance with adopted specifications and standards.

Mine operators at underground mines must have an emergency plan for responding to incidents with a significant risk of serious injury or death under regulation 5.3.34 of the Regulations.

Mine operators' obligations

Mines are highly regulated and mine operators should be aware of their obligations under Part 5.3 of the Regulations. This Alert does not address or reference all of the obligations contained in Part 5.3.

Contact Details

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For more information on occupational health and safety, go to WorkSafe's website: worksafe.vic.gov.au

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