



Fatal impact of light vehicle into rear of heavy vehicle

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Mine Type

All mine types

Incident

A contractor's employee was fatally injured at an open cut coal mine when he drove his utility into the rear of a large, empty, low loader travelling slowly in the same direction. The low loader weighs some 200 tonnes and is used to transport heavy equipment such as dozers and excavators. The low loader driver was unaware of the collision and continued on to his destination. The utility cab was crushed beneath a projecting 'tow hitch' at the rear of the low loader.

Equipment

Large low loader or 'float' and Mitsubishi Triton utility.

Hazard

Heavy and light vehicle interaction.

Cause

Investigation not yet concluded.

Comments

Environment

- Late morning, sunny (overhead), dry.
- Wide haul road, gravel surface, well graded and good condition, minimal dust, good forward visibility, down grade of 3°.
- 80kph speed limit; no overtaking of heavy vehicles.

Light vehicle



- Nothing apparent in the condition of the vehicle that contributed to the accident.
- Excessive speed apparently not involved; no skidding apparent.

Low Loader

- Speed approximately 27kph.
- Two blue strobe lights at rear - top left and right, operational.
- Large 'tow hitch' projection at rear.

Recommendations

1. Reinforce the message to mine workers that accidents can be particularly tragic in their simplicity. They must remain constantly alert.
2. Heavy and light vehicle interaction is a Principal Hazard at mines and their segregation should be optimised.
3. Projections such as this tow hitch are a potential hazard. Conduct a review of heavy vehicles to identify such potential hazards and opportunities to better manage them.
4. Consider fitting strobe lights for increased visual awareness.
5. Consider fitting proximity warning devices that provide an audible alarm when other vehicles are approaching.



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Issued by the Queensland Department of Mines and Energy

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