

Light vehicle incidents

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Recently there have been a number of high potential incidents in open cut mines involving light vehicles that could have led to serious consequences. In the last five years, 30 incidents have been reported from 14 open cut coalmines in Queensland's central coalfield region. It is to be noted that as there was no legal requirement to report all types of high potential incidents before the introduction of *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999*, there could possibly be more occurrences of incidents than have been advised to the inspectorate. For example, the average number of incidents has increased to 9 from 2 for the year immediately after the implementation of the new Coal Mining Safety and Health Act.

The following major categories were taken for analysis:

Type of incidents

Incident	Percentage
Roll over	50%
Light Vehicle hitting another heavy vehicle	17%
Parked light vehicle run over by heavy vehicle	13%
Others	20%

By Place

Location	Percentage
Intersection	21%
Haul road	21%
Work area of other vehicles	17%
Others	41%

Contributing factors

There was no single cause for the incidents. However, major contributing factors could be catagorised as below:



- The operators not driving to condition of roads during wet weather or immediately after watering of the road.
- Light vehicle parked too close to operating heavy vehicles or when attending a heavy vehicle for maintenance.
- Following heavy vehicle too close in poor visibility conditions, and not being able to stop when required.
- Handling equipment (mobile phone etc.) while driving.

Recommendation

- Each mine needs to audit the parking practice and where required demarcate parking areas for vehicles approaching heavy vehicles even during maintenance.
- The mine needs to consider segregating heavy vehicle and light vehicle traffic.
- Random audits/checks should be conducted to verify compliance to relevant principal hazard management plans covering the hazard.
- Roadway watering activities should be reviewed to promote a suitable rate of water application and identification of roadway sections where watering may create a significant increase in driving hazards.

A review of the effectiveness of berms should be conducted, with specific reference to sections of roadway that may be considered hazardous after watering or rainfall.

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