

MNM Fatal 2010-12

- Powered Haulage Accident
- June 20, 2010 (Arizona)
- Copper Operation
- Mechanic
- 52 years old
- 8 years of experience

Overview

The victim died on June 20, 2010, when the ½-ton pickup truck he was operating was struck by a 240-ton haul truck. The pickup truck had parked in front of the haul truck just prior to the accident. A passenger in the pickup truck, was seriously injured in the accident.

The accident occurred because management policies, procedures, and controls were inadequate and failed to ensure that persons could safely park small vehicles near larger haul trucks. On June 14, 2010, large haul truck tires were placed in the parking area to demarcate parking spaces for mobile equipment that would then be parked between the large tires. This project was completed on June 16, 2010, four days prior to the accident.

With this configuration, the smaller vehicles could not park beside the larger haul trucks as before. Management did not establish new procedures and policies designating specific non-blind parking areas for smaller vehicles or require radio communications between the drivers of small vehicles and the haul truck operators.



Root Cause

Root Cause: Established traffic control policies and procedures were not being followed for travel in the pit area. Tires added to demarcate parking spaces prevented service and maintenance vehicles from parking next to the driver's side of any haul truck.

Corrective Action: Management established new procedures in the mine's "Self-Propelled Mobile Equipment Field Service & Repair Approach and Departure" policy designating specific non-blind areas for service and maintenance vehicles to park. Procedures were established requiring service and maintenance vehicles to be parked next to the driver's side of a haul truck.

The procedures also require persons traveling in service and maintenance trucks in the pit area to monitor a specific radio channel. These persons must make contact with the haul truck operator or the dispatcher prior to pulling up to a truck that was in use. Persons must also yield the right of way to haul trucks. The 8-foot buggy whips on service and maintenance trucks were replaced with 12-foot buggy whips with orange mesh flags mounted at the top. All miners were trained regarding these new policies and procedures.

Best Practices

- Do not park smaller vehicles in a large truck's potential path of movement.
- Before moving mobile equipment, be certain no one is in the intended path, sound the horn to warn possible unseen persons, and wait to give them time to move to a safe location.
- Ensure all persons are trained to recognize work place hazards, specifically the limited visibility and blind areas inherent to operation of large equipment and the hazard of mobile equipment traveling near them.

Best Practices

- Establish procedures that require smaller vehicles to maintain a safe distance from large mobile equipment until eye contact is made or approval to move closer is obtained from the mobile equipment operator. Provide training in these procedures.
- Install cameras and collision avoidance systems on large trucks to protect persons.
- Regularly monitor work practices and reinforce the importance of them. Take immediate action to correct unsafe conditions or work practices.