

SAFETY ALERT



FATAL ACCIDENT - EMPLOYEE HIT BY ROCK IN GORGE

INCIDENT

This preliminary safety alert has been issued to inform the mining industry of a significant mine event.

EVENT

A mine environmental officer, working in open country in a gorge, sustained severe injuries from a rock which rolled down a steep slope.

The injured person was taken to hospital where he died two days later.

CIRCUMSTANCES

A road was being excavated down the slope of the gorge to provide access to a site for the development of an adit. Heavy machinery was forming the road at the time of the accident.

It is understood that the environmental officer and his assistant were assessing the proposed route of the new road below the road works.

A large rock travelled down the steep slope of the gorge, striking the environmental officer and causing this person to fall some 20 metres down the slope. The assistant was not injured and was able to seek assistance.

RESPONSE

This accident is being investigated by the Investigation Unit of the Department.

MATTERS FOR CONSIDERATION

When excavating roads on slopes, the following should be considered:

1. Procedures for restricting and controlling access to the road site, below the road site and the surrounding areas.
2. The construction of safety barriers to prevent access to the excavation site and to prevent and trap falling free material.
3. The need for persons visiting the excavation site to communicate with the site supervisor.
4. No excavation work be allowed to continue while any person travels and engages in activities below or about the excavation site.

Managers responsible for surface road works should examine the adequacy of safety on their project and take any appropriate action.

SIGNED OFF

R Regan
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR SAFETY OPERATIONS