



CRUSHED BY MESH SHEETS – FATAL ACCIDENT

A mining fatality which took place in January 1998 has recently been the subject of a Coronial inquest.

The deceased was crushed under the weight of 15 sheets of steel mesh intended for use in a ground support program. The 2.4m x 3.0m mesh sheets each weighed approximately 29 kg, giving a combined weight of about 435 kg. They had been stacked leaning against the sidewall of a drift, but had evidently toppled over and the deceased was found lying underneath them by a work colleague.

The Coroner found that death occurred by way of accident, but issued the following recommendation in his finding:

Following the death, [EMPLOYER] developed a formal procedure for the transportation, storage and manual handling of steel wire mesh sheeting, including that no more than two sheets may be stored together leaning against a wall, and that larger numbers may only be stored flat on the ground. I would recommend that wherever mesh is used in similar situations, similar safe procedures be adopted to ensure that there is no repeat to the tragic consequences that occurred in this case.

The Coroner was also of the view that the death once again demonstrated the dangers which exist in the workplace and the need for workers and employers to be vigilant to identify potential hazards.

J M Torlach
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16 November 1999