

Fall from height results in contract worker injury

Synopsis

On February 17, 2022, at 13:30h a sub contractor employed by a mining company to complete a roofing project at the mine site, broke through a rotten portion of the roof as the particle board sheathing and fascia board separated from the roof trusses causing him to fall. The worker fell approximately four meters to the concrete ground. The worker sustained serious injuries that required immediate hospital treatment due to the height of the fall and impact with gas meter safety bollards. The worker was working alone without supervision and was not utilizing a fall arresting device.

Findings

The incident was reported to the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation (EMLI), as a reportable incident as per the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in British Columbia (HSRC). An investigation, under section 7 of the *Mines Act*, was initiated by the Chief Inspector of Mines (the "CIM"). The Investigation was conducted by the Mines Investigation Unit (the "MIU").

The investigation determined the mine manager did not adequately ensure all practicable measures were implemented so that the worker was not exposed to any undue risks or harms while conducting roofing works. The mine had a safe work procedure for working from heights, along with appropriate safety equipment, however, it was not implemented. In addition the mine manager did not plan the work activities to ensure the health and safety of the worker.

Outcome

The following recommendations were provided to the CIM:

Mine managers are reminded to ensure:

- implementation of a Mine Health and Safety Program tailored to address key health, safety and environmental hazards & risks on site, as required by section 1.6.9 of HSRC.



FIGURE 1. Roofing works, Incident Scene

- all practicable measures are implemented so that the workers are not exposed to any undue risks of harm, as required under their primary duty of care pursuant to section 1.9.1 of the HSRC.
- a meaningful review of the completeness and effectiveness of the Mine Health and Safety Program in consultation and collaboration with the occupational health & safety committee.
- workers are trained and assessed as competent, in any SWPs/ SOPs, including those required under the Mine Health and Safety Program.
- SWPs/SOPs are developed and workers are trained in risk assessments and working alone.
- risk assessment (or similar) must provide adequate instructions required for safe completion of work and as necessitated by the risks of such works, these records are to be reviewed by a competent/qualified person prior to start of work and during the works.
- workers are orientated in all SWPS/SOPs including those under the Mine Health and Safety Program. These SWPs/SOPs should include high-risk activities of working at heights.
- documentation and maintenance of employee training records.
- requirements of section 4.4.1 of the HSRC, “where a person is exposed to the hazard of falling more than 3m, a fall arrest device shall be used.”

An Administrative Monetary Penalty (AMP) Report for the alleged non-compliance findings was referred to EMLI statutory decision maker (SDM).

In May 2022, a Hazard Alert was issued to the mining industry regarding “Working from Height”. The Hazard Alert provided general considerations when working from heights and reminded mine manager and supervisors of their responsibility for the well-being of their workers. [Hazard Alert Number 18 Fall from Heights.pdf](#)