

# Oropi Quarries fined over \$160K for death of worker

Eamon Rood - Wed, 15 Jun 2016



Oropi Quarries must fork out over \$160,000 in fines and reparations over the death of a worker last year.

The Tauranga District Court also heard that nearly a year after the 24-year-old's death, WorkSafe was forced to halt work at the Bay of Plenty quarry because health and safety systems were still not up to scratch.

During sentencing WorkSafe prosecutors accused Renner and the company of a "litany of health and safety failures" that led to the "tragic and preventable death" of Tane Hill-Ormsby.

The 24-year-old died in April last year when the fully laden rock cutter he was driving fell into the pit, throwing him from the vehicle. After the incident, WorkSafe had the vehicle - a 40-tonne Moxy - inspected by independent experts who identified 32 faults ranging from mismatched and over-inflated tyres to a missing door on the cab.

As well as charges under the Health and Safety in Employment Act, Oropi Quarries pleaded guilty to charges under the 2013 mining and quarrying regulations. In addition to the defective Moxy, there was no quarry manager or any service records for any of the other vehicles.

Hill-Ormsby was not wearing a seat belt at the time of the accident and the only training he had received was some advice from other employees. He was also unlicensed to drive that sort of vehicle.

"There were significant issues with vehicle maintenance; failures to train the worker; a lack of policy on wearing seatbelts; and a lack of supervision," says WorkSafe's chief investigator Keith Stewart

It was also revealed in court that in March this year the quarry was subject to a prohibition order after WorkSafe identified similar health and safety failings that led to the accident 11 months earlier.

"It is almost beyond comprehension that having had a tragic and preventable death under their watch, the quarry operators had not learned the lessons and made sure everyone on that site was safe every hour it was working,"

"The failures by this company and its director to ensure this young worker was able to go home healthy and safe have left a mother without her only son, a partner who was looking forward to a marriage that will never happen, and a four year-old without a father."

In a reserved judgment released late yesterday, Judge Paul Mabey ordered emotional harm reparations of \$100,000 be paid to the family. He also fined the company \$54,000 and its sole director Catherine Renner \$9,600.

## **New systems**

*Inside Resources* recently visited Oropi Quarries and reported on its new [health and safety systems](#).

These include signage, a new barrier arm at the entrance to segregate light and heavy vehicles, and a traffic management plan.

Its new quarry manager Rob Maze runs 'toolbox' meetings with workers every morning to discuss hazards.

Article thanks to [Inside Resources](#) Mining and Quarrying Intelligence