

WorkSafe highlights recent truck collisions

Eamon Rood - Fri, 14 Jun 2019

WorkSafe is reminding operators about the need for proper vehicle controls after two recent collisions at extractive sites.

In both incidents a dump truck came into contact with another queuing dump truck in the loading zone.

WorkSafe says there are similarities in both incidents which could have had potentially fatal consequences.

In the first incident, an excavator was pulling a hanging wall removing the waste off the top of the ore. During loading, the excavator operator made a two-way radio call asking dump truck one to move over to the right to finish loading (pictured).

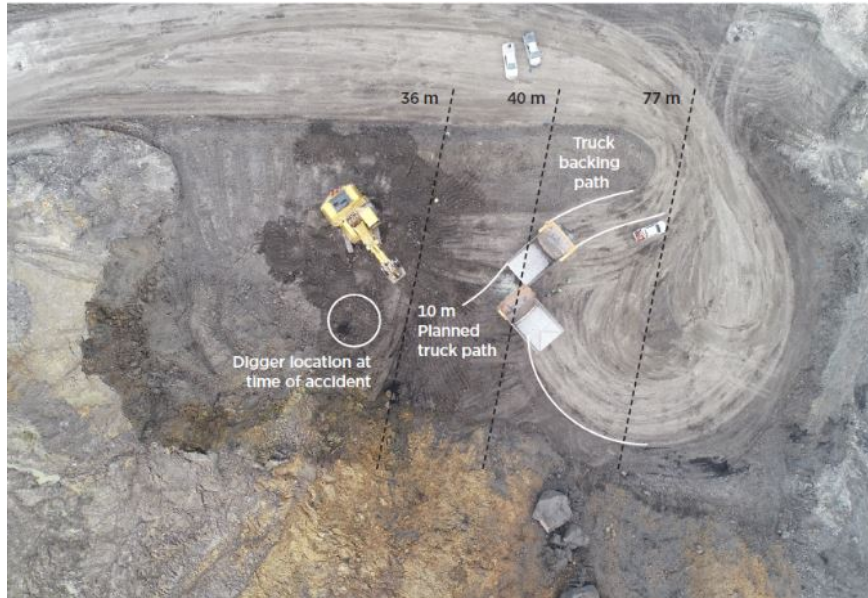
This required dump truck one to move out and then reverse back into a new position. However upon seeing this, the driver of the other queuing truck thought the first truck was leaving the loading zone, and proceeded to drive into it.

The two trucks then collided, causing substantial damage to both vehicles. The drivers were unharmed.

Incident two

In the second incident, a dump truck was positioned in front of the excavator preparing to stop under the bucket,

The excavator had to relocate to the opposite end of the bench for loading, upon which the operator then presented the bucket. The driver of the first truck had to manoeuvre while reversing further to the right to get underneath the bucket (pictured below).



At the same time, dump truck two entered the work area without the driver recognising that the excavator had relocated.

Importantly, the excavator was now positioned directly in the path of the reversing dump truck, which was now inside the site's 50-metre exclusion zone around mobile plant. The right rear corner of the reversing dump truck then hit the second truck.

Controls

WorkSafe says these incidents show the importance of truck operators making a proper assessment of what is happening in the loading area.

So is having appropriate controls, including job rotation, adequate bench widths, and strict compliance of exclusion zones to ensure safety when a routine task changes.

Communication between dump truck, excavator, and ancillary equipment operators is critical.

"Excavator operators always need to communicate intentions via the two-way radio system. Dump truck operators need to be listening and remain alert to recognise changing conditions," WorkSafe says.