

COAL TERMINAL WORKERS / H.S.R.s SUBMISSION:

Coal Workers' Pneumoconiosis (CWP)

Date: 14/03/2017:

- Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminal commenced operations in 1983.
- Coal is processed from the majority of Bowen Basin Coal mines including BHP / BMA Mines.
- Employees both past and present have been sourced from Coal Industry, including Underground, Open Cut and C.H.P.P. Coal Handling & Preparation Plants as well as other Industries.
- The original Rail Recieval 1 - RRP1 was operated by Designated RRP Operator without the existence of a Control Room. (From an area on the RRP Platform that was between the main crib room and the first unloading hopper).
- RRP2 when commissioned some years later had similar location for the Operator on the RRP2 Operating side.
- These Operators were permanently placed at RRP 1. (Greater potential exposure).
- RRP Operators were exposed to the elements, including Coal dust from the Rail Unloading process.
- To compound the dust exposure problem Operators were originally required to manually open the Coal wagon doors, this required 2 operators, one to open doors, the other to close the doors and also a third Operator to manually jackhammer wagon to remove coal when required.
- Reports that at time coal dust being so severe that visibility was severely reduced inside the unloading facility.
- Due to the nature of the Coal types and characteristics, Manual Jackhammering was sometimes required to release coal from wagons.
- This required the Operator to operate a manual suspension pneumatic Jackhammer and walk beside coal wagon while performing Jackhammering, while being exposed to excessive amounts of coal dust from the unloading process.(After Quik Drop system was implemented that removed the requirement for Operators to manually open and close wagon doors).
- At time two operators were used, one on each jackhammer to remove coal. (Only when very sticky coal was encountered).
- This process was conducted for part train unloading or for the total duration of the Unloading process which could take 2 hours or longer or in extreme cases several hours, upwards.
- RRP2 was commissioned and Operators were required to work in the same environment as RRP1, Including Manual Jackhammering and coal dust exposure from user mines. (Without a sealed control room).
- An Operations control room was installed and commissioned in appx 2007, which gave Operators the much needed relief from coal dust exposure.
- RRP1 / RRP2 Operate from the same control room.
- RRP3 was commissioned in appx 2008 and operates from a separate control room and unloading facility, however manual jackhammering was conducted for a number of years on that platform.

- Due to noise and dust control measures the Rail Recieveal Stations were enclosed with dust / noise curtains which has effectively reduced both noise / dust to surrounding areas but has confined dust to the inside areas of the Rail Recieveal unloading stations.
- Manual Jackhammering continued until appx 2014, when the Manual Jackhammers were decommissioned and Auto Wagon Vibrators were installed and commissioned.
- Dust collectors are in operation, however maintaining them is a problem and they are not always available or operating effectively.
- Coal dust exposure at the RRP Platforms is sometimes very high due to the Coal Unloading process that dumps coal into V shaped hoppers and feeds out at bottom onto conveyor belt, dust can only go up and settle onto Platform area.
- No dust sprays are at top level.
- Moisture addition and / or dust control is added by the RRP Operator once coal is on belt and travelling to Stockyard.
- Extensive amounts of hose down and clean down are required after a dusty train is unloaded.
- The lower levels of the Rail Recieveal Stations are also very dusty areas, especially after a dusty train unload and require extensive clean-up and hose down.
- RRP Operators are required to conduct inspections in the RRP area including lower areas after each train has completed unloading.
- The Blair Athol coal trains were frequent reoccurring very dusty trains.
- Dust preventative Helmut's were available at RRP 1 / RRP2 however have not been maintained and a decision has been made to remove from service.
- Hail Creek Coal was a real dust problem when the Mine first opened.
- Reported that Operators were also required to operate open cabin Dozer / Loader when Terminal originally opened.
- NOTE: Other Worker have also been continually exposed to coal dust on a regular ongoing basis when they are required to continually sample coal wagons. This is conducted from the RRP top Platform.
- These Workers are employed by User Mines and are contractor Workers. Companies include (B.V., A.L.S, and S.G.S.)
- These Workers are also exposed to coal dust in the Coal Sample Plant Sample building areas and the coal sample plants.
- The coal sample building has had problems with coal dust extraction in the past. (This is where coal samples are pulverised, milled and sampled and is a very dusty area).
- DBCT Operators are also required to work in all other areas of the Terminal where they are regularly exposed to Coal Dust however this is at a reduced level.

OTHER FACTORS WHERE WORKERS ARE EXPOSED TO COAL DUST:

- Hot weather results in dusty coal.
- Wind causes coal dust lift-off.
- Housekeeping.
- General clean-up.
- PM Inspections.
- Maintenance.
- Breakdowns.
- Coal Blockages.
- Screened Coal.
- Dozer / Loader Operations.
- Coal Sampler coal stockpile inspections / testing.
- Contractor workers.
- Cleaning staff.
- QR / PN Train drivers.
- Fixed term RRP Operators who were only contracted to work at RRP Facility.

NOTE:

Extensive work has been conducted regarding Dust minimisation and control, however exposure is still an ongoing Health and Safety concern.

Past employees and present employees who worked in the Unloading facility pre Control Room is also of major Health and Safety concern.

Hoping this is of assistance to the C.W.P. Committee and provides historical information in relation to Coal Terminal Operational Workers and Contractor Workers employed in the Industry.

Regards

Richard BARRY.

H.S.R. Health & Safety Representative.

14/03/2017.