

Oaths Act 1867

Statutory Declaration

QUEENSLAND

TO WIT

I, Paul Brown, of 44 Nelson Street, Mackay, Queensland, 4740 in the State of Queensland, do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

1. I am an Inspector of Mines within the mining discipline of the Coal Mining Inspectorate (“the Inspectorate”) within Resources Safety and Health Queensland (“RSHQ”). I commenced with the Inspectorate in October 2015 as an Inspector of Mines.
2. I am the holder of a Mine Deputy Class Certificate of Competency (Coal), a Second Class Mine Managers Certificate of Competency (Coal) and have attained an Advanced Diploma of Underground Coal Mining Management.
3. I have 35 years of experience in the mining/coal industry in various operational and management positions.
4. In response to a request from the Board of Inquiry, I provide the following evidence to assist the Inquiry.

HPI on 20 March 2020 at the Grasstree Mine

5. I recall that I received a telephone call from Mr Kelvin Schiefelbein at approximately 13:50 hours on Friday 20 March 2020. Mr Schiefelbein reported that there had been a High Potential Incident (“HPI”) methane exceedance at Longwall 808 at the Grasstree Mine at approximately midday. At the commencement of the call, Mr Schiefelbein had asked me where Inspector of Mines Keith Brennan was, and he wanted to speak to him about a HPI. I informed him that Inspector Brennan was probably busy on other matters and that he should report this occurrence to me as I was in the Brisbane airport and I had my computer open.

6. I had my laptop open and entered notes directly into the Inspectorate's database, Lotus Notes, during the conversation between myself and Mr Schiefelbein.
7. Mr Schiefelbein explained in his primary information that a roof fall in the goaf had caused the exceedance. When I questioned the shearer position and cutting sequence, it was apparent that the cutting process contributed to the excessive goaf wash. I recall saying to Mr Schiefelbein that goaf well performance should be checked as well. I recall that we discussed that these matters required follow up.
8. During the course of the conversation Mr Schiefelbein made me aware that he had already reported a HPI to Inspector Brennan.
9. I then told Mr Schiefelbein that I would be in touch soon, as I was soon boarding for a flight from Brisbane to Mackay.
10. At 3:52pm that afternoon I received an email from Inspector Brennan (RSH.002.059.0001), who I am aware had received two earlier notifications for HPIs for methane exceedances at Longwall 808 of the Grasstree Mine that day. The email that Inspector Brennan sent to me contained the Form 1A notification for the HPI that I had taken.
11. The following day I reviewed the Form 1A. I decided, after reading the Form 1A, that I needed to know more information about what had happened to cause the gas exceedance, as the Form 1A did not address my concerns.
12. At 8:19am on 21 March 2020 I sent an email to Mr Schiefelbein following up my queries of the previous day (RSH.002.059.0001) and forwarding the form 1A that I had received from Inspector Brennan in this email. In the email I requested screen shots of the previous 12 hours longwall Citect trends (12.30am to 12.30pm), including shearer positioning / movement, TG sensor, Dogleg sensor and Barometer. I requested the UMM to provide commentary for which gas wells were active in this 12hr timeframe the gas well performance both planned and actual. To support this information I requested positions of goaf wells on a mine plan related to the exceedance. I requested scanned copies of the original investigation reports completed by the ERZ Controller for the exceedances reported occurring at 1200pm on the 20/03/20. I requested a plan of the area identifying the 6ct man door referred to as adjusted in the Form1A. I

requested detail of the longwall ventilation circuit and quantities. I stated that I appreciated the fact that the mine had implemented some controls however, I wanted to know more about the operational process / contributing factors identified, what operational controls were being considered, what other ventilation / gas management controls and monitoring have been considered or were in progress.. I asked for this material to be provided to me by Monday 23 March 2020.

13. At 2:33pm on Sunday 22 March I received a response to my emails from Grasstree Mine. At that time I did not have an opportunity to review the documents.
14. At 8:43am on Monday 23 March 2020 I forwarded the emails that I had received from Grasstree Mine to Shaun Dobson, Deputy Chief Inspector of Coal Mines (RSH.002.061.0001). The gas exceedance had been discussed at the 8:00am Monday morning Inspectorate meeting. Inspector Dobson asked during the meeting what follow up had been conducted. I provided a brief of actions taken and to support this I provided Inspector Dobson with copies of the emails after the meeting was completed.
15. On 23 March 2020 I reviewed the documents that I had received from Grasstree Mine on 22 March 2020. The documents provided by UMM Schiefelbein addressed most points I raised, there were however points not addressed which required further follow up.
16. On 23 March 2020, I had a telephone conversation with Mr Schiefelbein regarding the methane exceedance that had been reported to me on 20 March. I did not take notes of this telephone call, however I sent an email to Mr Damian Wynn, SSE, shortly after the telephone call with Mr Schiefelbein (RSH.002.060.0001). I have reviewed the email, and it is consistent with my recollection of the conversation.
17. At 6:17pm on 24 March 2020 I received an email from Mr Wynn in response to my email of 23 March 2020. I reviewed his response. SSE Wynn provided a copy of the mine Ventilation Advice that would be used for adjusting the roller door in a two heading tailgate back bleed. This, with the other information supplied by UMM Schiefelbein addressed my concerns raised with the exceedance to achieve an acceptable level of risk. This email is included as Annexure "A".

And I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the *Oaths Act 1867*.

[Redacted Signature]

Signature of declarant/deponent

Taken and declared before me at Mackay this 27 day of July 2020

[Redacted Signature]

A Justice of the Peace/Commissioner
for Declarations



[REDACTED]
From: Wynn, Damien

Sent: Tue, 24 Mar 2020 07:44:02

To: BROWN Paul (Mines)

Subject: FW: As discussed

Sensitivity: Normal

Attachments:

0220 Ventilation Advice - Two Heading Tailgate - Permitted Ventilation Control Device Adjustments.docx; 0220 Ventilation Advice - Two Heading Tailgate - Permitted Ventilation Control Device Adjustments_VO UMM Auth.pdf;

Paul,
Please see attached and the email below from Braedon (VO) in regards to our decision to the dot point below.
Thanks

- *My main concern which I expressed to Kelvin is the management of the 6ct man door, I believe if you apply your own systems this would and should be identified as a minor ventilation change and the relevant documents are to be applied. Kelvin said there had been some changes made by Deputies without communicating with the CRO and there is a procedure for doing this, my advice is this should be controlled by your system as is any change in the ventilation system. Given your gas management is so sensitive to change and your running at what could be seen as close to your maximum capacity for goaf drainage, I suggest a more disciplined approach must be applied. Kelvin did explain how the dynamics of pressure and ventilation behave as you approach these CT's, I believe that is all the more reason to control any changes to VCDs through an approved ventilation change form.*

Damien Wynn

GM/ SSE – Grasstree Mine – P [REDACTED]

PRIVILEGED & CONFIDENTIAL

From: Smith, Braedon [REDACTED]

Sent: Tuesday, 24 March 2020 5:29 PM

To: Wynn, Damien [REDACTED]

Cc: Schiefelbein, Kelvin [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: As discussed

Hi Damien,

As discussed, today Kelvin and I have issued a ventilation advice to the MOS/ERZ Cs to clarify and explain the control process for the adjustment of TG VCDs. (Digital unsigned also attached for clarity of diagram).



VENTILATION ADVICE #02-2020

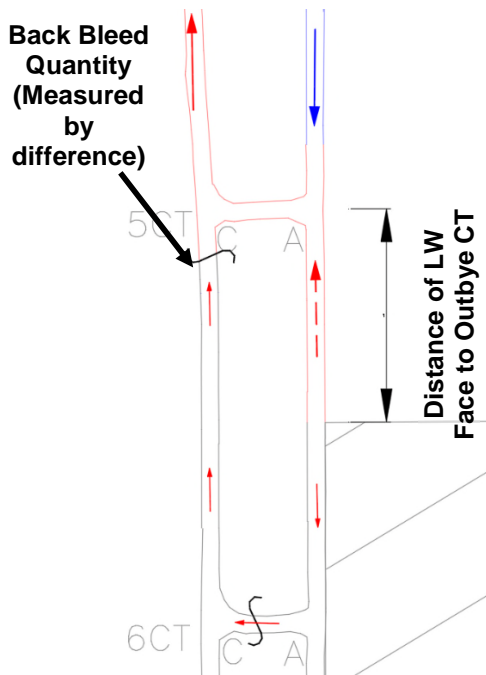
Two Heading Tailgate - Permitted Ventilation Control Device Adjustments

LOCATION: Longwall (808)

During investigation with a number of Gas exceedance/trip events in the LW it has been identified that additional guidance is required with respect to the two heading tailgate ventilation arrangement.

To assist MSOs and ERZ Cs in management of this ventilation arrangement the following table has been developed of acceptable ranges of back bleed ventilation through C HDG that Deputies can effect on shift by adjusting the C HDG roller door.

These roller door adjustments are to be considered as Authorised by the Underground Mine Manager and Ventilation Officer (as per S351 CSMH Reg 2017) to occur at any stage by the deputy provided chainage criteria are met. This constitutes a Minor Ventilation change (under the Mine Ventilation PHMP.GTM.006) and does not require a specific ventilation change form.



However, when adjustments are made to this arrangement they must be recorded the Statutory Report, and the MSO/ERZ C is to ensure that the occurrence of the change is positively communicated to the VO and UMM as soon as is practical.

Distance of LW Face to Outbye Cut-through (m)	Permitted Back Bleed Volume (m ³ /s) (measured by difference method SWP.GTM.1067)
<45	10-15
65-45	7-10
65+	5-7

If adjustments outside of those outlined above are required in the Longwall tailgate, authorization/instruction is to be obtained by the UMM and VO (as per S351 CSMH Reg 2017).

VO Approved – Braedon Smith

Sign:

Date:

UMM Approved – Kelvin Schiefelbein

Sign:

Date:

PERSONNEL NOTIFIED OF PROPOSED ACTIONS: MSO, ERZ Controllers

Action: Operate as per this Ventilation Advice during longwall retreat.

Ventilation Advice Understood: (MSO/ERZ C Signatures)

Date completed: ____/____/____

Advice No: 02-2020



VENTILATION ADVICE #02-2020

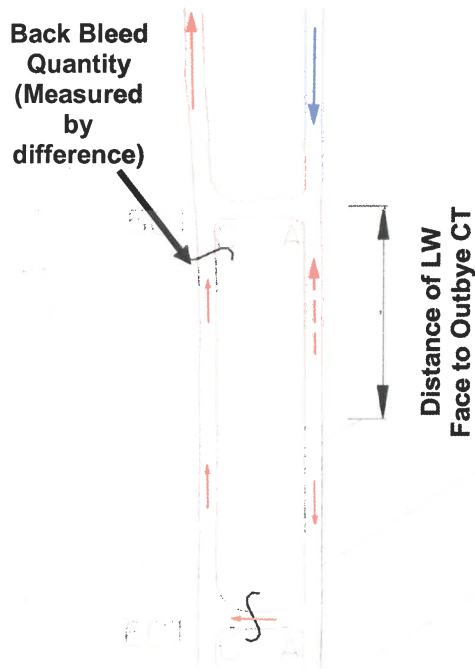
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VO Approved – Braedon Smith

UMM Approved – Kelvin Schiefelbein

Sign: [Redacted]

Sign: [Redacted]

Date: 24/3/20

Date: 24/3/2020

PERSONNEL NOTIFIED OF PROPOSED ACTIONS: MSO, ERZ Controllers

Action: Operate as per this Ventilation Advice during longwall retreat.

Ventilation Advice Understood: (MSO/ERZ C Signatures)

Date completed: ____/____/____

Advice No: 02-2020