

Inquest into the death of Jason George Elliott Blee

Jason George Elliott Blee, aged 33 years, died on 9 April 2007 while employed as an underground coal mine. He died from a pelvic crush injury when he was trapped by a coal shuttle car.

Coroner Annette Hennessy handed down her findings of inquest on 10 September 2009.

The Queensland Government responds to recommendations directed to government agencies at inquests by informing the community if a recommendation will be implemented or the reason why a recommendation is not supported. The departments named in this response will provide implementation updates until the recommendation is delivered. Further information relating the implementation of recommendations can be obtained from the responsible minister named in the response.

Recommendation 16

That the Standards Review Committee formed as a subcommittee reporting to the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Council thoroughly review the 'place change' [1] system of mining with a view to establishing best practice guidelines to be recommended to the Health Advisory Council for consideration of developing a recognised standard for promulgation to the minister. The standard should include the guidelines and seek to ensure that risk assessments are conducted to the highest possible standard to ensure the lowest level of risk.

Response and action: the recommendation is implemented.

Responsible agency: Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

On 11 June 2015, the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee discussed the review of the 'place change' system of mining at its meeting on 27 March 2013 and agreed that a sub-committee be formed. The Advisory Committee called for tripartite membership nominations for the sub-committee to thoroughly review the place change system of mining with a view to establishing best practice guidelines for consideration.

The sub-committee membership was finalised on 11 June 2014 at the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee meeting and comprises representatives from the Mines Inspectorate, the mine using place change operations, unions and companies that have previously used these operations. The use of place change operations is not common and at present there is only one coal mine in Queensland using them.

¹ 'Place change mining' is a method of bord and pillar mining involving a continuous mining machine and a mobile bolting machine. The basic process involves the continuous mining machine cutting and exposing a length of roadway then moving to the next roadway or bord to recommence the cutting sequence. When the mining machine moves from the newly cut roadway the mobile bolting machine moves in and installs the strata support.

The sub-committee determined that a Recognised Standard made under the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* would be the most appropriate guidance material and has gathered data from the mining industry to determine what is best practice for place change operations in coal mines. This information is being used to develop a Recognised Standard which will set acceptable practice standards for assessing risks of place change operations to address the coroner's recommendation.

The sub-committee is continuing its work on the development of a Recognised Standard on place change with the standard scheduled to be published in late 2015.

The recommendation will be implemented when the Recognised Standard for place change is approved by the minister.

On 16 January 2016 the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The sub-committee is in the process of developing a second draft of the Recognised Standard for place change mining in Queensland. The draft standard will be reviewed by the sub-committee to assess the adequacy of the content and to determine if any further development of the Recognised Standard on place change is required.

The Recognised Standard is scheduled to be published in June 2016.

The recommendation will be implemented when the Recognised Standard for place change is approved by the minister.

On 23 May 2016, the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The second draft of the recognised standard for place change mining was delivered to the Recognised Standards Review Committee on 4 March 2016 for their review and comment.

The final draft of the recognised standard for place change mining will be delivered to the Recognised Standards Management Group with the aim of final approval by the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee by mid-2016.

The recommendation will be implemented when the recognised standard for place change mining is approved by the minister.

On 4 January 2017 the Minister for State Development and Minister for Natural Resources and Mines responded:

The 28 September 2016 Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee meeting supported approval and release of the Recognised Standard. Recognised Standard 12: *Place change mining operations in underground coal mines* approved by the minister on 16 December 2016.