

FATAL ACCIDENT REPORTS

**REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT
1997**

Name of Victim:	Joseph A. Sciascia
Address:	Beallsville, PA
Name of Mine:	Bailey Mine
Name of Company:	Consol PA Coal Co.
Date of Accident:	2/7/97 - Greene County
Jerome Grashion Underground Mine Inspector	Bituminous - District 2 Bureau of Deep Mine Safety

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On February 7, 1997, at approximately 2:00 p.m., Joseph A. Sciascia, age 42, longwall systems operator, was fatally injured while standing on a conveyor to look in the stage loader, at Bailey mine, Consol PA Coal Company, Greene County. The victim was survived by a wife and two children.

Due to a torn slope belt, the longwall section was idle. The victim and a coworker had replaced a longwall shield ram jack and were in the process of transporting the replaced ram jack off the face. The ram jack was placed on the face conveyor and ran to the stage loader. At this time, another coworker started assisting with one worker positioned at the stage loader controls and the other one positioned on the walkway side of the stage loader. The victim was positioned on the face side of the stage loader. The worker at the stage loader controls could see the worker on the walkway side, but not the victim. At this time, the worker at the stage loader controls jogged the stage loader conveyor for the purpose of transporting the ram jack out through the stage loader towards the belt tail. The workers heard the ram jack hit the crusher. The worker on the walkway side of the stage loader instructed the worker at the stage loader controls to hold up while he and the victim tried to see if the ram jack had cleared the crusher. To look into the stage loader, the victim stood on the conveyor and lifted a piece of belting which was obstructing the view. The worker at the controls, not aware of the victim's position and not understanding the other workers instruction to hold up, jogged the conveyor. The victim was pulled through the stage loader and underneath the crusher, causing crushing injuries.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The victim stood on the stage loader conveyor without properly locking out the conveyor and not communicating his intentions to the worker at the stage loader controls.

**REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT
1997**

Name of Victim:	Lewis A. Radomile
Address:	VanVoorhis, PA
Name of Mine:	Mine 84
Name of Company:	Eighty Four Mining Co.
Date of Accident:	3/28/97 - Washington County
Stephen M. Strange Underground Mine Inspector	District 5 Bituminous Region

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On Friday, March 28, 1997, at approximately 9:00 a.m., a machinery accident occurred in the North Mains Section of the Eighty Four Mining Company, Mine 84, resulting in the death of Lewis A. Radomile, mechanic, and injuries to the shift maintenance foreman. The victim, age 44, was married with four children and according to company records, was employed as an underground mechanic for approximately 21 years.

While working to repair a tram problem to a remote controlled continuous-miner, the mechanic and coworker had positioned themselves between the left outby frame (electrical compartment) of the miner and the rib to observe diagnostic indicators located there. Using the remote control of the miner the victim, intentionally or otherwise, caused the miner to begin tramping. The outby end of the miner moved to the left and crushed the victim against the rib causing fatal injuries.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The cause of this accident was the result of several factors. The continuous-mining machine had developed operational problems that caused the tramping mechanism to respond intermittently to the tram control when it was activated. The location of the machine when it finally quit tramping during the production shift placed the diagnostic panel side of the machine near the coal rib. Normal troubleshooting procedures to determine the cause of the tramping malfunction required observation of the diagnostic panel for the information displayed. This caused the victim and coworker to be in a tight, vulnerable position between the machine and rib. While troubleshooting, the continuous-mining machine suddenly pivoted towards the victim and coworker pinning them against the rib. The inability to have another means to tram the continuous-mining machine, other than the remote which was caught with the victim, may have been a factor in the severity of the injury. However, if the onboard controls had been operational, they may not have worked due to the nature of the tramping problem.

After extensive field and laboratory test, the cause of the continuous-mining machine intermittent tram problems could not be determined.

REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT 1997

Name of Victim:	Robert M. Rebovich
Address:	491 Paulette Ave., Uniontown, PA
Name of Mine:	Maple Creek Mine
Name of Company:	Maple Creek Mining, Inc.
Date of Accident:	7/1/97 - Washington County
Paul Eckenrode Underground Mine Inspector	Bituminous - District 6 Bureau of Deep Mine Safety

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On Tuesday, July 1, 1997, at 5:30 p.m., a fatal rib fall accident occurred at the 2 West Section conveyor belt transfer construction area. Robert M. Rebovich, age 43, was fatally injured while working as a belt repairman at Maple Creek mine, Maple Creek Mining, Inc. in Washington County. The victim had a total of 22 years mining experience.

The workers were instructed to work on constructing an overcast block wall which was located 40 feet in by the transfer in the 2-west belt entry. The victim was preparing to cut the roof bolt into sections at approximately 5:30 p.m. when a large portion of the mine wall dislodged and struck the victim from behind, forcing him to the mine floor. The victim sustained multiple blunt force trauma injuries and, as a result of those injuries, was pronounced dead at approximately 6:45 p.m.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The victim was in the process of using an oxygen and acetylene torch to cut lengths of steel rod for use on the belt transfer frame. Immediately after lighting the torch, the mine wall collapsed.

The required legal examinations of the area had been performed prior to the accident, and no hazards or dangers were observed.

The state approved roof control plan was not being complied with at the accident site where mining had been done 6.36 feet above normal seam height. The additional exposed mine rib height and the inability to sound and perform adequate visual examination, created a hazardous condition that was not noticed during examinations.

MEANS OF PREVENTING A SIMILAR ACCIDENT

Exposed ribs/mine walls must be adequately supported.

Roof and ribs must be sounded and visually inspected when examinations are being performed at all work areas.

Instructions and safety meetings should be conducted and proper methods of sounding roof and ribs, and the extraction of loose or doubtful materials shall also be part of this retraining.

A device for sounding roof and pulling down loose and doubtful materials shall be carried and used by all persons making required examination.

**REPORT OF FATAL ACCIDENT
1997**

Name of Victim:	James Faidley
Address:	Stoystown, PA
Name of Mine:	Sarah Mine
Name of Company:	Penn Coal, Inc.
Date of Accident:	7/15/97 - Somerset County
Lynn Jamison Underground Mine Inspector	Bituminous - District 14 Bureau of Deep Mine Safety

DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT

On February 15, 1997, at approximately 4:00 p.m. James Faidley, age 44, section foreman, was fatally injured at Sarah mine, Penn Coal, Inc., Somerset County. The victim was survived by a wife and four children.

At approximately 2:30 p.m., the South Mains section crew, under the supervision of the victim, entered the mine and traveled to the working section. Upon arrival on the section, the afternoon shift crew relieved the day shift crew who had just completed mining a cut of coal in the crosscut being mined from No. 2 to No. 3 room. Continuous-mining operator was instructed by the victim to cleanup the last cut mined by day shift, move the radio remote controlled continuous-mining machine and prepare to mine the crosscut between No. 2 and No. 1 rooms. Started mining at approximately 3:45 p.m. and mined two shuttle cars of coal from the crosscut. After the second car of coal was loaded, approximately 10 to 12 inches of rock fell from the newly exposed roof. Mining was stopped so the exposed roof could be bolted. Victim and continuous-mining operator walked along the right side of the continuous-mining machine tail and positioned themselves just inby the bumper of the machine.

At approximately 4:00 p.m., while waiting for the shuttle car, victim and coworker heard a "ping" sound that seemed to originate at or near the face. The victim instructed the machine operator to clean up and move out the continuous-mining machine. The operator was about to start the continuous-mining machine when he looked towards the newly mined face and saw the roof starting to ripple. The operator immediately turned and ran assuming the victim was doing the same. Only traveled a few feet when the entire inner section fell. The victim was recovered at 8:30 a.m., July 16, 1997. Cause of death as asphyxiation.

CAUSE OF THE ACCIDENT

The fatal roof fall accident was caused by a combination of factors. The dark gray laminated shale (upper roof) was badly fractured and weathered due to its close proximity to the surface. This deterioration virtually eliminated the bridging capability of the laminated shale roof and resulted in a dead weight loading of the strata below. The chumed shale mass directly above the bolted roof contained many sickensides, which reduced its spanning capability. While the immediate roof appeared reasonable well consolidated by the 5-foot long grouted bolts, the presence of joints and fractures may have weakened this strata as well. As the intersection was developed normally and subsequently widened by mining to the left, which removed the coal support, the immediate roof was over-stressed and collapsed with little warning.

**PENNSYLVANIA
BITUMINOUS FATAL ACCIDENTS**

1997

<u>Deep District Number</u>	<u>Name of Victim</u>	<u>Victim Address</u>	<u>Company</u>	<u>County</u>	<u>Date of Accident</u>	<u>Cause of Accident</u>
2	Joseph Sciascia	Box 245 Beallsville	Consol Pa. Coal Co. Bailey Mine	Greene	2/7/97	(Stage Loader) Machinery
5	Lewis Radomile	Box 126 VanVoorhis	Eighty Four Mining Mine 84	Washington	3/28/97	(Tram-re- mote controlled continuous miner) Machinery
6	Robert Rebovich	491 Paulette Avenue Uniontown	Maple Creek Mng., Inc. Spinner Shaft Maple Mine	Washington	7/1/97	Falling section of the mine entry wall (Rib Wall)
14	James Faidley	149 Wilderness Drive Stoystown	Penn Coal, Inc. Sarah Mine	Somerset	7/15/97	Entrapment Roof Fall