BOI.039.001.0001

# MACE KINGSTON (6 chock)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Work location:**  | 6 chock LW104  |
| **How notified:**  | 2 bumps. 1 small. 1 large.  |
| **Time**  | **Description**  |
| 3:15pm  | 2 bumps power off Lots of dust  |

Interview with Inspectorate (8 May) Page 4 (RSH.002.425.0001)

Mr Kingston: “So I walked back to the maingate area which is, I was standing out at about 5 chock and I would have been there for probably two minutes before I felt the first initial wind blast which seemed a very standard type of goaf fall wind blast, changed the direction of ventilation for a few seconds before returning, at which the second blast dropped power and completely consumed the area with coal dust where you could not see anything in front of you for probably five or ten seconds. I only felt two blasts myself. As soon as the vision came back from the second blast, I seen the panel deputy at the time, Adam Maggs. He had walked down the side of the maingate and was checking the brattice bag between number 1 chock and the walk side rib, re-establishing that, due to the wind blast knocking it a little bit over. And I could see his ALTAIR beeping and flashing, which is probably a little bit more out of the ordinary for the maingate area...”

…

Pages 6-7

Mr Tolhurst: “…You stated that you felt two wind blasts, for better words.

Mr Kingston: Yep.

Mr Tolhurst: Which one was greater, the first one or the second one?

Mr Kingston: No, definitely the second one.

Mr Tolhurst: What sort of time period between the first and the second?

Mr Kingston: The first one was what felt like a reasonably standard goaf fall on a longwall take-off, goafing shears at the start of a new block. It was a decent enough blast to pop your ears, change the direction of the ventilation for, I would guess, three to five seconds, until it reversed the other way and then there was probably, just at a rough guess, 15-10, 15

seconds until the next one, the big one. The power stayed on for the first blast and I know from looking at the screen just a minute before the first blast that the shearer was off and the chain was running and the boys were advancing chocks in the tailgate attempting to maintain cavity.

Mr Tolhurst: Apart from the wind blast on both occasions, was there any other noise?

Mr Kingston: No, I personally didn’t notice any, any type of blast or bang or anything like that, no recognised heat or anything on either of them. Mr Tolhurst: No instant light or anything lit up the…

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Mr Kingston: I didn’t see a flash. The second blast there was just no visibility at all due to coal dust completely surrounding the area.

Mr Tolhurst: And you were at about 5 chock when that occurred?

Mr Kingston: Yes.

Interview with Inspectorate (10 September) Pages 9-10 (RSH.007.034.0001)

Mr Kingston: …So we proceeded back to the maingate. We were there for a very short time and then we felt the first pressure event.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay. Where were you when you felt the first pressure event?

Mr Kingston: I was standing at the maingate on, I think 5 chock.

Mr Tolhurst: I know you’ve described it previously, but, well can you describe what you felt?

Mr Kingston: Yep

Mr Tolhurst: Was it any different to other falls or…

Mr Kingston: The first, the first pressure, pressure wave was similar to a large first goafing fall where it popped your ears and changed the direction of ventilation considerably for a few seconds. Then it, the ventilation returned back into the normal direction towards the tailgate for only a short, short period, a few seconds again and then the large second pressure event happened where it was a lot larger than a standard style sort of fall and it was completely different in the way that it completely removed your visibility with coal dust. And that was for, slightly longer than the first one. I only felt one, sorry, I only felt two pressure events and after 10, 15 seconds or so, after the second one the visibility returned and the ventilation was back in the normal direction again.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay. What about, which way, do you recall which way you were facing or standing?

Mr Kingston: I was facing the face I believe, standing there with…

Mr Tolhurst: So you would have…

Mr Kingston: …one of my other boys.

Mr Tolhurst: …you would have felt it from your right hand side?

Mr Kingston: I believe so, yes.

Mr Tolhurst: On both occasions?

Mr Kingston: On both occasions until it reversed to normal both times, yes.

Mr Tolhurst: What about any light, any flash, did you see any of that?

Mr Kingston: I didn’t see any, any flash, the only lights that I saw were the canopy lights that were still, we still had power on them until the second pressure event when, where the power was dropped.

Mr Tolhurst: So all power was lost in the second event?

Mr Kingston: So it seemed, yes, the lights went out

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Mr Smyth: So just on where you were standing, was that on top of the pontoons or…

Mr Kingston: Yes, on the front pontoons.

Mr Smyth: Pontoons, yeah, yeah and you distinctly felt two events? And the only reason why we’re going back to that number is there, some witnesses have said three, some witnesses have said two.

Mr Kingston: Yeah, I understand that.

Mr Smyth: We’re trying to understand whether or not there was a certain way that you were standing, elevation or below or whatever that may have caused you to miss the first event. Say for example if there was a first of three events.

Mr Kingston: Yeah, I would definitely not have missed the first event. I think the second and third I may have grouped together in my recollection just because once all my vision from the second one is lost you, I stand there and close my eyes so that I don’t get coal dust in my eyes and then, you know I don’t notice the ventilation turning if there was a third, I didn’t, I don’t recall being nearly knocked over three times or anything like that.

Mr Smyth: When you say ventilation reversed first time around, that was on the basis of you felt the air going the wrong way… Mr Kingston: Yes.

Mr Smyth: …physically? Yeah?

Mr Kingston: Yes. I could see it in the general dust in the air, as well as feel it and my ears popped.

Mr Smyth: Do you have any idea how fast that was moving? I mean I know that’s a detailed question, right, but if there was say dust particles in the air, you know was it going a metre a second or…

Mr Kingston: I wouldn’t be able to give it a speed, but it was very similar to our first or a large first goafing fall.

Mr Smyth: And just on the, you’ve been there since 101, right, you know, was there ever any instance, you know where you’ve had that, let’s say plunger effect, right, of whatever’s in the goaf coming out, whether or not that’s air or gas, right, creating a power outage, you know like stopping the face?

Mr Kingston: Definitely.

Mr Smyth: There has been?

Mr Kingston: Yes.

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# INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 5 (100 Chock)

Post-incident statement made in hospital and provided to Anglo

“I was walking along the face from the maingate to the tailgate to relieve the guys for crib. I was at about 70 – 80 chock when I felt a burst of air, like a pressure burst, from the tailgate. The burst of pressure knocked me over to the ground, and I felt a second burst of pressure from the tailgate. There was a yellow flame. I was on the ground when the yellow flame happened.”

Interview with Inspectorate (18 May 2020) Pages 6-7 (RSH.002.428.0001)

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 5: Just after 3:00ish there was a thick heavy surge of air pressure that travelled from the tailgate to the maingate. It made a whistling noise and it was dusty. I turned to start to walk to the direction of the tailgate to go and help them and then the second pressure surge blew towards me. I saw a wave of ash of some sort for a split second and then the right side of my face, the back of my head, my neck and my upper arms started to burn. I was doing all these movements to try and put it out, then I remember screaming.

Mr Tolhurst: Do you want to have a break?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 5: No. I dropped to the ground. I tried to put my selfcontained rescuer on. I couldn’t see because my hat had blown off…”

Further written questions from John Tolhurst (19 May 2020)

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 5: “If my PPD (personal proximity detector) showed that I was standing at 100 shield, I am happy to accept that’s the case. In any event, I recall that I was standing near the faulted area on the face at the time.

…

From where I was standing, I could see down to the last advanced shield. My best guess is that this would have been a distance of about 50 meters from where I was standing. I only saw the flame for a split second and it was only about one chock away from me when I saw it.

…

No, I can only recall the two pressure waves.

…

To the best of my recollection, the face power switched off at the time of the first pressure wave and the chain then stopped.

…

I was watching the position of the shearer from the Mimic on the front of the shield that I was standing on.

Q6: Would you classify the first pressure wind blast event as something that is normal or unusual for longwall operations at Grosvenor mine whilst already having retreated as far away from the installation face?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 5: I have never experienced a windblast with that amount of pressure in my life before this event. It would therefore be classed as a very unusual occurrence.

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# ADAM MAGGS (Maingate DCB)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“Magsy left to go to MG to let Cadbury know face conditions and that we didn’t have to pump. Hung up phone and felt percussion. At this stage thought we had lost 36 c/t. 15 sec after first percussion felt 2nd percussion.”

Video Statement to Debrief Officer (6 May)

Mr Maggs: “After that, I made my way to the maingate, got up on to the DCB, tried Cadbury. There was no answer there. As I hung up from Cadbury, there was just a huge percussion or a wave that hit me in the chest on the DCB, followed by a big dust. It reversed the ventilation and came back over the top of us. There was three boys with me – Jackson, Beau, and actually there was another one, there was Johnny Badke on the – on the maingate there.

I then hopped up and said, “Something happened there. We’ve either had a fall – I thought the cut-through that we’d just gone past may have fallen in, so 36 cut-through had fallen in on the maingate side. As I went to go down the stairs, another big percussion had hit us.

Interview with Inspectorate (8 June 2020) Page 30 (TRA.510.003.0001)

Mr Maggs: “…I went to the DCB then, so the maingate DCB area then, hopped up on top there and I used the maingate phone there. I wanted to have a look at the pressures, as well, of the chocks around that area, if 149 and that had got any. I made that phone call to Cadbury. He didn’t answer. As soon as I hung that phone up, that’s when the first…

Mr Tolhurst: Wave?

Mr Maggs: Wave, yes.”

…

Pages 32-35

Mr Tolhurst: “Adam, you said you were obviously at the DCB, you tried to contact Mick Burgess up on top, when you felt that first pressure wave?

Mr Maggs: Mmm.

Mr Tolhurst: So can you explain what you felt, what you heard at that point?

Mr Maggs: Yes. So, yes, the first one – I’d only just hung up the phone, just hung it up and it was a pressure bump and a big pressure bump. Like, it was an event. It was a huge event. It was something I’d never felt before.

Mr Stook: You've been there for, what, two years; right?

Mr Maggs: In the wall.

Mr Stook: In the wall?

Mr Maggs: Yes.

Mr Stook: And you've been on the start of 104, start-up of 104 as well?

Mr Maggs: Yes, yes.

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Mr Stook: So compare to coming away from install face and getting past the square, this event was unique?

Mr Maggs: Yes, definitely.

Mr Stook: Never felt anything like it?

Mr Maggs: Never felt anything like it, no. The thump of it and the reversing ventilation – so the ventilation reversed straight away. I looked straight down a 1, 2, 3, 4 chock and that maingate bag, and it just billowed over the top of that, the dust and the ventilation, and that bag was just fluttering, the dust that come over the top of that area and reversed from there, it was – it was a goaf event.

I actually thought, to start with, and this is what I said to the boys on the face “We’ve just lost 36 cut-through”. I thought the 36 cut-through, the one we were in line with there – I thought it had come in and we’ve lost that area. I thought we’d had a fall around that area, and I said that to the boys. I had my MX6 in my hand. So the face had reversed. Like I just said then, over the top of that 1, 2, 3 was just something I’d never seen, and it twists my guts now thinking about, you know, the –

Mr Stook: Yes, yes, and that’s why you thought it might have been 36, because it was closer by. It’s pretty hard to imagine something happening on the face reversing ventilation?

Mr Maggs: That’s right, that’s right. And just what I seen come over the top around that 1, 2, 3 chock, you know, that’s what made me think that it was around that initial area and goaf area, with that maingate bag flapping so hard, it was really flapping and that. I said to the boys, I said to Johnny Badke there, Beau, and I said to Jackson, I said, “We’ve just lost 36 cut-through. I think that’s fallen in around them.

Visibility was zero because of the reverse ventilation. I grabbed my MX6 out. I’ve got to be honest with you now, I thought it was quite strange, for something like that – and this is another reason I thought it was around that area, was I didn’t have nothing on it. There was no gas or anything at that time. You know, it didn’t – it wasn’t registering too much.

I then asked Beau. Beau’s a trainee deputy as well. He had an ALTAIR with him as well, so I actually grabbed his ALTAIR as well, to correlate between two gas detectors, and they were pretty similar. I was getting down the DCB stairs – ladder then, at the time. So I was halfway down that ladder, it was probably 10 to 15 seconds later. As I said to you, visibility was zero.

I could hardly see there. And the second one, it was just a lot more violent, a lot bigger. We’re talking six, seven times, eight times, a lot of pressure and shock.

I was getting down that DCB ladder, and it braced me, if you know what I mean. Like, the force of it braced me up against the ladder. A couple of boys on the DCB, they hit the deck. Still again, you know, I still felt that it was a goaf – a goaf event. The force and that of around that 1, 4 and maingate area, and that maingate bag sort of fluttered. There was a bit that flapped past and that, and I still had feelings that it was definitely around the goaf or roadway or something like that. I still wasn’t thinking of the tailgate.

But we’d lost power on that second one. The gas detectors were going off their heads. I had around 13 to 14 per cent O2, quick, but you know, spike. CO was going off. I’ll be honest, I can’t remember what – I didn’t even see what it was up to. I was getting down the ladder then, and visibility was zero. I was bumping up against the rib, the DCB, trying to get down to that – peek through that maingate bag.

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Mr Stook: Would you expect that amount of force, say for example, for the first one, to have been a consequence of that tailgate roadway finally coming in, for however long it was standing up for?

Mr Maggs: The tailgate?

Mr Stook: Yes. It doesn’t seem like it could be.

Mr Maggs: No I’m a long way from that tailgate roadway.

Mr Stook: Yes.

Mr Maggs: I think it’s something bigger, myself. I really think it’s a – you know, if – my initial thinkings of it now, and knowing of it, I really think we’ve had a huge goaf fall, you know or that whole roadway’s come in, anything from that tailgate right the way – if we’ve got a ring main effect or something of that.

Mr Stook: Yes, yes.

Mr Maggs: Because I poked my head through – once I got to that maingate area, that one chock and that, you know, we were right in line with that 36 cut-through, visibility was still zero. I couldn’t see there, but I could see two bits of tape of the cans that were in the 36 cutthrough. At that stage I knew 36 cut-through hadn’t come in.

But in correlating that, at the same time, that’s when I heard the boys on the DAC. I heard T on the DAC at that time…”

…

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# JACKSON HAYES (Maingate DCB)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“Little, bigger, bang (3 x pressure waves)”

Interview with Inspectorate (26 June 2020) Pages 15-17 (QCMBOI Transcript)

Mr Tolhurst: “Where were you located on the longwall at the time of the incident?

Mr Hayes: At the time of the incident, I was standing on the maingate at the - sorry, the DCB section of the maingate.

Mr Tolhurst: What do you recall, what did you hear or feel or see at the time of the incident?

Mr Hayes: … So I'd gone up to the maingate, just got up there, got the information, and then there was the first pressure bump. And then we sort of were, like, that's unusual. Everyone's like, you know, sort of like, taking notice. And then the next wave came over us, all the wind. Myself and Beau were standing next to each other, and I grabbed on to the CME because I was getting blown over.

Mr Tolhurst: That was the second one?

Mr Hayes: Yes.

Mr Tolhurst: So let's talk about the first event.

Mr Hayes: Yes.

Mr Tolhurst: How would you describe it?

Mr Hayes: A pressure bump, you know, like when you get a goaf fall. Like, most people who've been underground would have felt one at some point.

Mr Tolhurst: So you've experienced a goaf fall previously?

Mr Hayes: Yes. Yes, like, yes, I've experienced them, and it's just sort of like your ears equalising through your whole body is the best way I could explain it.

Mr Tolhurst: And so the first pressure wave you'd describe as just what you've felt previously, or would it be more?

Mr Hayes: It was, yes, just a heavy, like a big, you know, pressure bump. You know, like, it's a weird feeling that you get through your body.

Mr Tolhurst: So you felt the pressure?

Mr Hayes: Felt the pressure, power was still on, and then –

Mr Tolhurst: Did you see anything? Was there a lot of dust or anything around?

Mr Hayes: I can't remember seeing anything at that stage. Like, it just sort of had happened, and then the next one came and it was just like a - it just - it felt originally like another one, I think, and then it just built and built, and then the dust came. Power dropped at some point in that sequence, the power had dropped, and then - yes, and then I sort of grabbed onto that CME, and it just was white for, I don't know, enough time for me to get down the outbye stairs, and then the ventilation recirculated and we heard the boys call out over the DAC.

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…

Mr Tolhurst: Between the first wave, pressure wave, and the second pressure wave, how much time do you believe?

Mr Hayes: Well, I know how long it was because I've been part of the investigation, so it was 13 seconds.

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# INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1 (133 chock)

Post-incident statement to Anglo No initial statement provided to Anglo.

Interview with Inspectorate (18 December 2020) Page 8 (RSH.014.017.0001)

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: “…Anyway and then our crib relief guys, the two guys had come down to relieve us for crib and yeah INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3 come down. I was just about to do a quick handover with him so we could go for lunch and then we had a, a goaf fall behind us and it reversed the ventilation, it blew a couple of boys over. I had managed to, I was in between the chocks sort of thing so I managed to keep myself upright and at that point it dropped the power and the face went, went dead and I remember saying to INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3 they’re not going to like this, this is another HPI. Then there was another bigger goaf fall and the last thing just before the ignition happened there was a pop and then it was just, yeah, it was just flames.

Mr Dobson: Where were you stood at the time then, INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1, when that first wave hit and knocked you over?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Well it didn’t knock me over, I managed to stay upright. But I was beside the shearer and sort of in between where the mimics are on the chocks to operate the roof supports, in that gap, between the chock beside it and where the mimic is, I had sort of been in there. I was sort of there because I was about to start just checking on the mimics, what was going on.

Mr Dobson: Were the mimic on the, on the front walkway or on the rear walkway?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Front walkway.

…

Mr Dobson: So you were actually on the pontoon in…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: On the feet of the pontoon, on the front of the chock, yes.

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Beside the shearer, yeah the shearer was behind me and I was facing into the chocks.

…

Pages 9-14

Mr Dobson: When you say it were a goaf fall, the first one, did you hear that break of strata or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah, no…

Mr Dobson: …were it just a…

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: …it was just a, yeah just a, the ventilat-, it just pushed us, a big, you know burst of wind going the opposite direction to the ventilation and that stopped the ventilation, it went still.

Mr Dobson: You know when, I'm talking from my own experience, you know when you’re at tailgate [unintelligible – “(ui)”] fall, when you’re first goafing…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah.

Mr Dobson: …and you get that break of strata where you’ll hear, it will come down and you’ll hear the strata break behind you. Did you hear any of that or did you just…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I think no, it was just…

Mr Dobson: Just a pressure wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: …a pressure wave come through, yes.

Mr Dobson: And did you say the first one knocked, it knocked some of the guys over?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: It was, yeah, it was pretty intense the first one and yeah, and that one dropped the power, so yeah and, yeah but that’s, yeah if you haven’t got your feet right and that, especially if you don’t know it’s coming it will knock you over, yeah if you’re not careful.

Mr Dobson: So did the other guys beside you, did they get knocked over?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I can only recall INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3.

…

Mr Dobson: And then do you recall what the time lag was between that and the second pressure wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Not very long.

Mr Tolhurst: Are you talking…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I couldn’t tell you…

Mr Tolhurst: …seconds?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: …actual time. Seconds yeah.

Mr Dobson: And was that as intense or was that… INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: The second one?

Mr Dobson: Yeah.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Was yeah, it was just as intense, yes. Mr Dobson: And that were the same, it were a pressure wave, but there were no…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes.

Mr Dobson: …you didn’t hear any breaks of strata or falling strata?

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Just a pop, like a pop.

Mr Dobson: A pop and then a pressure wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah and then there, yeah I don't know what happened, but it was, yeah from there it wasn’t very pleasant.

Mr Dobson: Did you, when you say a pop, INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1, did you hear where it came from?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No.

Mr Dobson: Did it come from the left or your right, deep in the goaf or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: It was tailgate end, but I couldn’t tell you if it was behind or where, it was just a pop.

Mr Dobson: What sort of, I know it’s hard to say, but you know is it like a pop of a cork out of a bottle or a louder…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Like a rock hitting, dropping a big rock down onto something else, yeah, yeah

Mr Dobson: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: So like two rocks hitting, you know that sort of a clonk, pop, yeah.

Mr Dobson: And after that what were the time from the pop to the flames occurring?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Not, yeah, just probably, sort of nearly at the same time sort of thing.

Mr Dobson: More or less instantaneous?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah.

Mr Dobson: Okay and where you were stood, did you see where the flames came from?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No, hell no.

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah it just, wasn’t expecting something like that to happen, it was just, yeah a goaf fall, so you, yeah you’ve just reset yourself and, but then, yeah the ignition was just out of the blue, it was just, yeah.

Mr Dobson: And what, do you recall what position you were facing when you, were you…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I was…

Mr Dobson: …facing the mimic towards the goaf?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes, yes I was still facing that way and yeah then all of a sudden it was just, I recall just for a second a blue flame and then that’s it, I just, yeah covered up as best I could, yeah.

Mr Dobson: And do you recall how long the flame lasted?

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Well to me it seemed to last an eternity. I have no idea to be honest…

Mr Dobson: And with the, with the ignition of the flame, you said there were a very short, more or less instantaneous occurrence of that. Was the ventilation still stalled at that time?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes, yes the ventilation hadn’t pushed back at that stage.

Mr Dobson: So in the instance from the first roof fall through to the ignition, the ventilation was stalled throughout that time?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes

…

Mr Dobson: Do you recall if you’d had any similar type pressure events, roof falls that…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No not like that, no.

Mr Dobson: No?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No.

Mr Dobson: Some of a lesser magnitude?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: At the start of the wall, yeah, because you always get that period where that roof will (ui) up at the face, it takes a little while, but other than that, before that, prior to that, no I don’t recall any, you know pressure waves or goaf falls like that, yeah.

Mr Dobson: Do you recall any on the previous blocks, on…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah there was a couple on the previous blocks, yeah, nothing like that though, yeah it was just a, the (ui).

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: And it didn’t reverse, the ventilation as, you know, it stalled it for a second, but then it cleared through pretty quick.

…

Pages 14-15

Mr Dobson: …When they, when you had that first pressure wave as well, INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1,…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes.

Mr Dobson: …were there any, did you feel any suck back towards the goaf? Were there any draw back?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No.

Mr Dobson: No. So it were just a pressure wave…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes.

Mr Dobson: …a stall of ventilation…

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes. Mr Dobson: …a second pressure wave…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Second pressure wave.

Mr Dobson: …and then the flame…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: And the ignition, yes.

…

Mr Tolhurst: I just want to talk about the flame. Do you recall, like was it up in the canopy or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I don’t, have no idea.

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: And I was just standing there and then all of a sudden I just see, I just, there was blue flame and that’s, I just went sort of standing feel (?) position with my eyes, yeah just, just covered up, just, and yeah.”

…

Pages 52-54:

Mr Tolhurst: “… I just want to revisit I guess your description at the start where you said you heard a pop.”

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes. …

Mr Tolhurst: Can you describe that to us again, you know?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Like I said it sounded like if you dropped a big rock on another one, a solid rock and that pop like when they hit, it was like that.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay. It was quite loud or distinct?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: It was distinct, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay and again you can't recall what direction, if it was behind the…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: I, no idea where it come from.

…

Mr Dobson: I'm just trying to get me head around the sound me self. Is it like when you’ve had a roof cavity and you’ve got rocks on face side and one drops out of the cavity and smacks onto another rock?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes, similar to that, yes.

Mr Dobson: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Not, it didn’t sound like rock hitting the canopy, it just sounded like a…

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Mr Dobson: A crack or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: …a clap, you know just, yeah.

…

Mr Dobson: I know you, did that, where you were stood in the shields, right…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yes.

Mr Dobson: …facing the goaf, you don’t recall if it were in front of you or were the clap, did it sound like it were all around?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No, no. I just heard it, I don't know where it come from.

It didn’t sound like it was all around me, it was just like a…

Mr Dobson: And then the flame followed that?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: It was, yeah.

…

Mr Tolhurst: And from your location did it sound, and again sorry to harp on… INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: No you’re right, you’re right.

Mr Tolhurst: …did it sound close, far away? I know it’s hard to judge, but…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Yeah I just, I just heard it. I don't know where it come from, because if there was a bit more time between probably yeah I could, but it was like…

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: The first fall had tripped the power out.

…

Mr Tolhurst: So obviously there’s nothing running at the time you heard that pop?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1: Nothing moving, nothing running, it was, yeah the lights had gone out, the shearer had dropped off, yeah everything was down.

# INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3 (131 Chock)

*Post-incident statement to Anglo*

No post incident statement made.

*Interview with Inspectorate (11 February 2021)*

Pages 8 – 9 (RSH.027.008.0001)

….

BOI.039.001.0016

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: And about then heard a little, like a little pop and he turned to me and said that didn’t sound good and I sort of took it as it’s just, you know the roof was going to fall in again, you know there’s going to be a rock fall and just straight after that the rock fall and that, when it come down, you know just knocked, the air and that forced, knocked us completely over…

…But yeah the wind just completely knocked us, you know knocked us all over and then I remember on the, because I was standing on the, the relay bar, me mate was standing on the pontoons, I just remember picking me, looking for me light on the ground and scrambling in the dirt and I saw me light, because all the lights had gone off, it was dark and the dust, so I found me, saw me light. So I sort of picked it up to try and get some light, see on the matter (?) and I, I mean I couldn’t tell you then how long it was until we got the heat and the blast and yeah that, they did say on the camera on the shearer, the timer on that was about 13 seconds between the, like the first blast and then the fire. But I couldn’t tell you that at the time.

So I we, I was scrambling just to get up and next minute just the heat and just got us. Me and INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1 were still pretty close and you know, I mean we were screaming out, you know because we were in pain and then within a few seconds, like the pain had gone, it was, you know it was bigger than Ben Hur by then. Yeah we were trying to gather ourselves, I couldn’t even…

…

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Mr Tolhurst: Okay. Do you, I know you said you don’t recall where you were standing, but at the time, so within that exact location on the face, but do you recall how or which way you were facing? Were you facing, when the first blast came through.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: I think I turned me back just by defence, you know because, yeah I think, because I landed virtually on me hands and me knees, on me, on me hands, on me, facing away from it.

Mr Tolhurst: Facing the AFC?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah, facing towards the maingate.

Mr Tolhurst: Towards the maingate, okay. INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah. So I…

Mr Tolhurst: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: …yeah, just I don't know…

Mr Tolhurst: At the face, yeah.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah I don't know if I got blown that way or just defensive mechanism, you just, turn me back on the dust or whatever, I don't know.

Mr Tolhurst: And how would you describe the intensity of that blast?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Of the first one, of the air?

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Mr Tolhurst: Yeah.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah just took, yeah just took me by surprise. Yeah I just, next minute, next second I just knew I was on me, on me hands and me knees and me, knees and me hands. I know I hit me, hit me knee on the way down, it was probably on one of the relay bars, but yeah I just, just didn’t know what was happening, it just happened so quick. I'd never been in a big enough fall to, you know to have, knock people over, you know I was just [unintelligible – “(ui)”].

Mr Dobson: In your experience before INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3, have you been on the face when you’ve had goaf falls before where you’ve had a blast of air?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Nothing like that.

Mr Dobson: No. Have you had similar, have you had, have you been on when you’ve set off from the face start line and then you get first goafing? Have you been on the…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yes.

Mr Dobson:…face when it falls? How did it compare, compare to that?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Unbelievably, yeah lot, a lot. Yeah I mean I’ve had, you know I’ve had those small falls with the fall and you feel, just feel a gust of wind, you know, just there and back, but this was just, yeah just knocked us completely over and like, and like, and when we heard later it even knocked the blokes in the maingate, then, I mean you don’t realise how big.

Mr Dobson: In terms of intensity would it be, you know two or four or six times what you’d normally experience with a normal goaf fall?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Oh yeah, four or six times, yeah, it was just, yeah it was huge, yeah.

Mr Dobson: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: At least, yeah, it might be more, but yeah I’ve never anything like that. I’ve been, you know a little bit of wind, you feel it and turn, but this was just, yeah completely off me feet and…

Mr Dobson: So you talked about a pop sound. Now did the pop occur then, the first pressure wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yes.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay. Almost…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Most, straight after, yeah heard the pop and then simultaneously it was like, yeah it was like then, I heard the pop and then just the fall, we heard the fall and just the wind, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: Can you describe the pop?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No it’s just, yeah like something just popping away.

That’s why I thought it was just, you know it’s going to be a goaf fall, it’s like, yeah like, you know the rock when it sometimes just pops, the layers like pop off, like you just broke…

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Mr Dobson: Yeah.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: …that sort of pop.

Mr Tolhurst: Did it sound like it was behind in the goaf, behind the shields, above or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No like above and towards the, in the, right in the tailgate and above us in the tailgate.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: It was, yeah towards more the tailgate, but in, like where we were in the face sort of just about.

Mr Tolhurst: So it would have been between where the shearer was located in the tailgate.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yes.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay.

Mr Dobson: So what would you say like, like when it sounds like a strata layer breaking, is that similar to like when you’ve advanced a shield and you hear that crack of ground that drops behind you? Like if you get tailgate shields and then it’s been hanging up.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: I’ve never sort of really heard that sound (?) that clear like a pop before, so it was different, yes. Yeah, yeah it was definitely, yeah that’s, I mean it was, yeah just, and that’s why I went, we, and like I said I was talking to INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1 and it, yeah it definitely, you know it sounded different, you know, it was, yeah like, so that’s why it sounded like it was going to be bad, you know because I never heard that and it was like a pop and then yeah.

…

Mr Dobson: And you said the lights went out. Did they go out on that first pressure wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah, that’s what, yeah.

Mr Dobson: Okay. When you, I know I'm labouring down on this crack sound, this pop sound, but what sort of loudness would you put with that pop?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: It wasn’t really loud, it was like just something you could just virtually hear, but it was, yeah definitely like a popping sound, it wasn’t, you know like, like a, yeah probably different, like cracking was just a pop.

Mr Dobson: And the pressure wave came more or less simultaneously after it did you say?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yes, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: And then that’s knocked you to the ground.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yep.

Mr Tolhurst: Had you gotten up prior to the second event?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: I'm not sure if I was trying to get up. I think I, I think I might have, but yeah I must have, must have just got up, because I think I was standing up

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when I got, yeah, so I must have just got up and then, and virtually I know, I know, I can't even remember if I actually saw it coming towards us, but yeah then it, yeah I think I must have just got up and then yeah, because we were standing up when we were on the fire, on fire.

Mr Tolhurst: We talk about on the second event, was that when the flame was…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yes.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay. Do you recall what colour the flame was?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No.

Mr Tolhurst: Do you recall which way the flame came towards you and where you were standing?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Felt like more from the tailgate, tailgate direction. Felt like it come from that way.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay.

Mr Dobson: Were you facing the tailgate at that time or were you facing the goaf?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No, no I was probably just about probably facing, probably might have been facing the goaf. But I think when the flame, I think, remember sort of definitely probably turning to defend myself against the heat and that’s why me back, I think, assuming the reason why me back was the worst and me arms were the worst hit. I mean me stomach wasn’t and me chest wasn’t affected by the heat. Yeah I know, because I turned away from the tailgate, yeah just felt like that’s where it’s coming from, so (ui) I turned.

…

Mr Dobson: And with regards to the pressure waves, did you feel any suck back between the pressure waves at all? Do you recall any...

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No I didn’t notice any.

Mr Dobson: No.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No, I didn’t notice it.

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Mr Tolhurst: … You talked about two incidents, so two pressure events. There was the first pressure event that knocked you over…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: …you’ve stood up, then there’s been the second event of which was the ignition or the flame as well. Was there a third, do you recall a third pressure event?

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No I don’t.

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Mr Dobson: With the pressure wave, INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3, do you recall whether it changed the visibility? Were there dust blown up, were there anything different in the environment with the pressure wave, with the first one?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: There’s a lot of dust in the air, once we’re getting up, yeah could hardly see. I mean obviously it was dark as well, but yeah you could tell there was a lot of dust, there was a lot of dust in the air.

Mr Dobson: Yeah and when you say knocked you over, so it came from the goaf to the face, the direction of the wave?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: Probably more from the tailgate, the tailgate than the, yeah than directly from the goaf.

Mr Dobson: Okay.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: But you know probably, probably behind, behind the tailgate chocks, I would imagine that’s what it felt, and that, you know sort of the tailgate direction for us was, yeah.

Mr Dobson: You don’t recall any smells or anything with that at that time or anything different?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3: No I didn’t.

…

# INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2 (132 Chock)

Post-incident statement to Anglo No post incident statement made.

Interview with Inspectorate (2 March 2021)

(RSH.036.060.0011)

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: It was our last shift obviously, so it was kind of, you know, it was good, the feeling was good because we were going home and you know. Yeah and we were, I’m pretty sure we were pumping or had been pumping. I remember carrying stuff down. It wasn’t my turn to be a chock man or anything like that, but I filled in for the lunch break and, but all that morning and that I pretty much just was running supplies down the face and, yeah.

I can’t really remember too much more than that to be honest, but then, yeah I remember going down for lunch, when they went to go for lunch and I think … INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1 was driving the shearer and INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 4 was chocking and I went down with INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3 to, I was chocking and INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3 was driving. And I remember INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 1 cutting the tailgate and the power going out. And I’m pretty sure he cut the whole tailgate out and I was waiting, when the power went out I had, it was at the stage where I had to go in

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and move the chocks, chocks in and, because the tailgate chocks hardly ever went in auto, they did sometimes, but most of the time we had to bring them in manually.

And I remember it was just pretty casual. I think we were just, I was sitting there talking and that with Jackson I think or INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 3, one of them two, I can’t remember. I don’t actually remember walking into the tailgate, but I have had flash, flashbacks of me doing it and, but I do remember ventilation change, like a, the ear pressure and I remember hearing….A…couple of months ago I…got woken up by the sprinklers outside, the garden sprinklers starting and that reminded me of the noise, so that’s, I kind of heard that kind of noise, like sprinklers. Obviously it wasn’t sprinklers, but yeah…

…and then I just remember being on fire and the fire going out and I sort of fell down unconscious obviously…then I remember waking up and…just walking out of there.

…

Mr Tolhurst: So when the incidents occurred have you felt, you mentioned the sprinklers and the change in the ventilation…did you feel anything else?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: I did hear a goaf fall to be honest, yeah I did, yeah… Mr Tolhurst: And can you explain what that sounded like?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: It’s like, yeah like a, the roof, like the roof falling down, you know like a, it wasn’t, it wasn’t huge, but it was bigger than just a little one, you know…

Mr Tolhurst: So in your experience working longwalls since 2011, have you experienced goaf falls?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Oh yeah, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: So how would you rate this goaf fall?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Oh, it was, when it happened I didn’t really think anything of it because, yeah, I remember it happening and then I didn’t think anything of it, I just thought, oh, yeah it was a bit of a, yeah, a bit of a fall. But, you know.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay, and the location of the fall?

…

Mr Tolhurst: You know behind the chocks or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah, yeah, it would have been in the main, in the tailgate roadway or…behind the tailgate chocks, yeah I’d say.

Mr Tolhurst: So it was towards the tailgate end?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah, yeah, it was more inbye than what I, where I was.

Mr Tolhurst: And with hearing that goaf fall, did you hear or feel anything else at that time?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: After it I’m pretty sure I heard those sprinkler kind of, yeah like a, I don’t know if it was a, yeah, I can’t, that’s the only way I can explain that noise, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay and the change of ventilation, apart from the noise can you recall…

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INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Just the pressure in my ears. I remember it being quite, quite large, yeah…

And I can’t say when that happened, but I know, like I’ve had a flashback and I can remember, you know, I can actually remember that change of pressure, yeah. And it wasn’t normal for where we were and what we were doing.

Mr Tolhurst: And with regards to the change in pressure, did you only feel it once or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah, just once.

Mr Dobson: Do you recall INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2, when that pressure change occurred, do you recall whether the ventilation changed at all?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah.

Mr Dobson: The air velocity.

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: I think so, yeah, like of course it did, you know it was quite large, yeah, yeah.

Mr Dobson: You don’t recall how long that was for?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No, I’m a bit lost with the…I can remember certain bits, but I can’t remember…in what order, you know.

Mr Tolhurst: With regards to I guess the ventilation change and the goaf fall, do you recall which way you were facing or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: I was facing towards the panline sort of, but sort of facing a little bit towards the tailgate.

…

Mr Tolhurst: And with regards to I guess the goaf fall and the change of ventilation or pressure, did that, were you affected by that?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No it didn’t knock me over, not from what I can remember, no.

…

I don’t even remember like a, like a push or anything like that. I don’t, I remember just being on fire. I’m not sure if, if there was a push when that happened or not, but yeah.

…

Mr Tolhurst: What do you recall about the flame?

…do you recall if it came from maingate, tailgate…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No…

Mr Tolhurst:… above?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: …I don’t.

…

I don’t remember seeing it come towards me so, so yeah it obviously came from behind the chocks or…

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Mr Tolhurst: Or from maingate if you were facing, did you say you were facing towards tailgate?

…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah, you know, I definitely didn’t see it come towards me, so yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: And do you recall how long the flame was in existence?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: …it wasn’t very long.

…

Mr Tolhurst: If we can just go back to the, I guess the incident, the time leading up to it. Do you recall what equipment, if any, was operating at the time?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: The face power was off, as far as I can remember there was nothing, yeah. The power had gone out, that’s why we were sitting there talking and, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay so the power’s gone out, is that after the initial goaf fall?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No.

…

I remember the power being out and hearing the goaf fall, yeah.

Mr Tolhurst: Okay, so power went first?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: Yeah, yeah.

…

Mr Tolhurst: Okay and sorry for missing that, missing this at the start, but from the moment I guess you’ve lost power to the goaf fall to the flame, you were talking matters of seconds or minutes or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: It would have been minutes. I remember talking for quite, a little bit, yeah.

…

Mr Tolhurst: I may have asked it, but when you felt that ventilation change come through did you feel a second ventilation change or…

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No.

Mr Tolhurst: …any pressure?

INJURED COAL MINE WORKER 2: No I didn’t, no. I was unconscious at one stage, I do remember that, so if it happened during that time…

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## BEAU LACEY (Maingate)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“Sitting at MG, felt ears funny. Vent reverse and went then sucked in, another pressure wave.”

## THOMAS BARRY (Maingate Carport Area)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“2 x vent reversed. Dust. 2nd larger than first”

## JOHN BADKE (Maingate DCB)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“I was located at MG DCB platform. Last DAC call I heard was double chocking at TG. Severe wind blast experienced at MG roadway. Loss of power and methane warning heard over DAC”

## AARON CHRISTENSEN (5 shield)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“Small bump. Felt big bump. Dusted out.”

## JASON DITCHBURN (6 C/T)

Post-incident statement to Anglo

“2 x pressure waves. Ears popped. Power went out after 2nd pressure wave.”