



Yukon Workers' Compensation
Health and Safety Board

Commission de la santé et de la
sécurité au travail du Yukon

**Preliminary Findings
into the October 19, 2009 Workplace Fatality at
Yukon Zinc's Wolverine Mine**



PURPOSE:

These initial findings are being released to provide information into the direct causes of this fatality. It is hoped that providing this information will encourage others to review these causes and examine their own workplaces to ensure similar conditions either do not exist or, if they do, are immediately corrected.

INTRODUCTION:

On the morning of October 19, 2009 a 20 year old worker employed by Procon Mining and Tunnelling, drove a 2004 Toyota Land Cruiser pickup into the underground workings at Yukon Zinc's Wolverine Mine site. As required on all mobile equipment being used in underground workings, the Land Cruiser was fitted with an emergency brake in addition to the regular parking brake.

The young worker proceeded down a 15% decline to deliver a part for a piece of underground equipment to another worker. Part way down the ramp, He came upon a piece of mobile equipment parked in the ramp. He stopped the vehicle he was driving up slope from this piece of mobile equipment. The young worker left his vehicle in neutral and applied the emergency brake, but did not apply the parking brake. He then exited his vehicle and walked down the ramp towards the parked mobile equipment.

The emergency brake did not hold and the vehicle rolled down the decline, striking the young worker from behind. The vehicle came to a stop approximately 20 meters from where it was originally parked, when it collided with the second piece of equipment.

DIRECT CAUSES:

Preliminary findings indicate that the direct causes of this fatality are a result of the vehicle being parked in neutral on a 15% slope and relying on an emergency brake that was unable to hold it in place. The vehicle rolled down the slope, striking the worker and causing internal injuries serious enough to result in the worker's death.

PREVENTION:

The Yukon Workers' Compensation Health and Safety Board remind all workplace parties to ensure the equipment they are operating is in sound mechanical condition. Prior to operating equipment, operators should test critical



systems and, if defects are observed, immediately remove the equipment from service and report to a supervisor or person responsible.

When parking on a slope, workers operating vehicles with a standard transmission should shut the engine off, put the transmission into first gear or reverse and apply the parking brake(s). When operating vehicles with an automatic transmission, the transmission should be placed in park, the engine shut off and the parking brake(s) applied. It is also advisable to chock the tires when on a steep slope.

Employers are also reminded that they are required to provide workers with proper training and instruction on the work they are performing. Critical procedures need to be developed and reviewed to ensure workers understand the hazards of their work and how to perform the work safely. Critical procedures must also be enforced to ensure they are being followed.