

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF LABOR  
MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION

COAL MINE SAFETY AND HEALTH

REPORT OF INVESTIGATION

Surface at Underground Coal Mine

Fatal Powered Haulage  
November 8, 2005

Savage Services Corp (ZP4)  
Salt Lake City UT

at

Mountain View Mine  
Mettiki Coal LLC (WV)  
293 Table Rock Road, Oakland MD 21550  
ID No. 46-09028

Accident Investigator

Okey H. Wolfe  
Mine Safety and Health Inspector

Originating Office  
Mine Safety and Health Administration  
District 3  
604 Cheat Rd.  
Morgantown West Virginia 26508  
Bob E. Cornett, District Manager

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## OVERVIEW

On November 8, 2005, at approximately 12:10 am, the operator of a Mack TX Tandem Haul Truck was fatally injured when the truck left a mine haul road, ran through a guard rail and overturned. The haul road is located between Maryland State Route 90 and West Virginia State Route 93. The truck was being operated by an employee of Savage Industries. MSHA did not investigate the accident at the time it occurred because it was believed MSHA did not have jurisdiction over the road.



## GENERAL INFORMATION

The Mountain View Mine is an underground coal mine owned and operated by Mettiki Coal LLC, which is a subsidiary of Alliance Resource Partners LLC. The mine is located along a privately owned haul road, approximately 6 miles Northeast of Davis, West Virginia on Route 93 in the town of Bayard, Tucker County, West Virginia. Coal is mined from the 7 foot thick Freeport coal seam on two advance continuous mining machine sections.

The raw coal from the mine is loaded into haul trucks supplied and operated by Savage Services Corp., Contractor I.D. No. ZP4. The coal is then transported to a preparation plant (Mettiki General, MSHA ID No. 18-00671) utilizing a privately owned haul to access Maryland State Route 90. The trucks travel a short distance on Maryland State Route 90 and then travel onto Table Rock Road to the preparation plant, unload the raw coal, and pick up a load of clean coal for transportation to the Mount Storm power plant located along West Virginia State Route 93. The clean coal is taken to the Mount Storm power plant by travelling back over Table Rock Road, Maryland State Route 90 and the private road. The private road essentially serves as a “short cut” to West Virginia State Route 93. After unloading the clean coal from the preparation plant at the power plant, a load of waste from the power plant is taken to a refuse area located on mine property using the described routes. At the time of the accident, raw coal was also transported from the Mettiki Mine (MSHA ID No. 18-00621) by conveyor belt to the preparation plant and made up a portion of the clean coal that was transported to the Mount Storm power plant.

At the time of the accident the Mountain View Mine employed 60 underground miners and 4 surface miners. According to the quarterly production reports submitted by the mine operator, the average daily production at the time of the accident was approximately 909 tons. The mine began production on July 18, 2005, and was in the process of developing gate panels for future longwall mining.

Coal is removed from the mine by a belt conveyor system. Diesel-powered haulage equipment, including both rubber-tired and track-mounted vehicles, is used to transport materials and personnel underground.

The principle officers for the Mountain View Mine are:

Alan B. Smith.....	Manager of Underground Operations
Dwight Kreiser.....	Manager of Operations
Horace J. Theriot.....	Manager of Safety and Human Resources
Terry Savage.....	Safety Director

Robert Hovatter.....Site Supervisor for Savage Services Corp.

The last regular inspection of this operation was completed September 9, 2005. A regular inspection was ongoing at the time of the accident. The Non-Fatal Days Lost (NFDL) incident rate for the quarter was 3.32 for the Mountain View Mine. The Non-Fatal Day Lost (NFDL) incident rate for the contractor was 2.34 and the national average for underground coal mines was 5.17.

## **DESCRIPTION OF THE ACCIDENT**

On Thursday, November 8, 2005, at approximately 12:10 a.m., a fatal accident occurred on the haulage road of the Mountain View Mine. The accident occurred in a curve of a private haulage road located between West Virginia State Route 93 and Maryland State Route 90. The haulage road serves as a "short cut" between the two state routes. Haul road traffic is limited to mine employees and persons with access rights to private property adjacent to the road. The haul road is marked "private". The accident involved a 2006 Mack TK cab and dump bottom trailer. The truck was carrying a load of clean coal from the preparation plant and was en route to the Mount Storm power plant. The truck was operated by Chad H. Cook, age 26. The victim had 2 years experience as a haul truck driver and was employed by Savage Services Corp. for approximately 7 weeks.

The accident occurred while the driver was traveling South on the Mountain View Mine road at the number 7 curve (see attachment). According to the official report of the West Virginia State Police who investigated the accident, the roadway was dry at the time of the accident and had a posted speed limit of 40 mph. All the curves are numbered on the haul road to inform other drivers when and where a truck enters curve. As a standard operating procedure, drivers radio the numbers to each other over a CB radio.

The state police report further indicates there were two other trucks in the immediate area at the time of the accident. Each of the trucks was travelling opposite directions, but neither driver witnessed the accident. One of the drivers was traveling North on the road and saw the victim's truck off the road on the left side when viewed facing to the South, after it had exited the road. He warned the next truck traveling South to stop, and went to assess the situation. Upon arriving at the scene, the other driver went to the aid of the victim. Both drivers believed the victim had expired. One of the drivers went back to his truck and radioed the shift foreman about the accident and requested emergency assistance.

The shift foreman dispatched two mine Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) to the scene and called "911." The mine EMTs arrived on the scene approximately 20 minutes after they were dispatched. One of the EMTs believed that a pulse was detected. The EMTs determined that the victim was only held in the truck by the seat belt and they decided to remove the victim by cutting the seat belt. After the victim was extricated from the truck, vital signs were taken and no sign of life was detected. CPR was not started as both EMTs believed the victim had expired. The Garrett/Tucker County Rescue Squad arrived on the scene some time later, assessed the victim, and confirmed that there were no life signs. The medical examiner that had traveled from Elkins, West Virginia, arrived sometime after 1:00 a.m., and determined that the victim had expired as a result of blunt trauma to the head and from loss of blood due to both carotid arteries having been severed. The victim was then transported to a medical facility to await an autopsy.

## **INVESTIGATION OF THE ACCIDENT**

On November 8, 2005, Phillip M. Wilt, Coal Mine Safety and Health Specialist, was informed that an accident had occurred on the mine haul road. Wilt was assigned to determine if the accident had occurred on mine property and if so, to conduct an accident investigation.

The inspector arrived on the scene at approximately 7:30 a.m. He determined that the accident had occurred on a private road that was a short cut between Maryland State Routes 90 and West Virginia State Route 93. His determination was made based on previous inspection jurisdiction over the mine road. Based on this determination, an accident investigation was not initiated, beyond taking photographs.

A legal determination was made at a later date that the accident was under MSHA jurisdiction. An investigation was conducted using the photographs taken by Inspector Wilt and the West Virginia State Police accident report.

## **DISCUSSION**

The WV State Police investigation of the accident indicated that the truck left the roadway to the left and rolled over one time. The report and the sketch indicate the truck began to skid as it entered the turn to the right. The truck then began to overturn to the operator's side. This action caused the truck and trailer to come down on top of the guard rail. There was a drop off in this area of approximately 25 feet. The truck crushing the guard rail down caused the guard rail to separate. The separated end of the guard rail entered the truck cab on the operator's side.

on the operator's side. The guard rail was pushed toward the South, completely breaking free of its ground attachment. The driver sustained the fatal injuries in the rollover accident.

The evidence gathered from photographs and the WEST VIRGINIA State Police Officer's notes indicate the truck was unable to negotiate the number 7 turn due to excessive speed. The victim was not able to control the vehicle and it overturned causing fatal injuries to the victim.

### ROOT CAUSE ANALYSIS

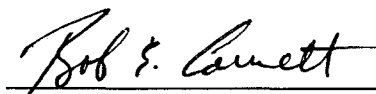
An analysis was conducted to identify the most basic cause of the accident and how to prevent a reoccurrence of a similar accident.

**Root Cause:** The WEST VIRGINIA State Police investigation indicated that excessive speed likely contributed to the accident.

**Corrective Action:** Haulage trucks should be operated at speeds commensurate with environmental conditions and within posted speed limits.

### CONCLUSION

A 26 year old tandem haul truck driver was fatally injured when his vehicle left the road and rolled one complete revolution. The direct cause of the accident was an apparent loss of control of the vehicle which likely resulted from excessive speed. Because MSHA did not conduct a complete investigation at the time of the accident, the lack of any physical evidence in conjunction with the length of time since the accident prevents the making of any recommendations to prevent a future event.



Bob E. Cornett  
District Manager



Date

**APPENDIX A**  
Persons Participating in the Investigation

State of West Virginia

John Meadows.....Inspector-at-Large

Mine Safety and Health Administration

Okey H. Wolfe.....Coal Mine Safety and Health Inspector

West Virginia State Police Accident Report

Trooper S. M. Durrah.....Investigating Officer



# APPENDIX B

## Victim Data Sheet, Form 7000-50

### Accident Investigation Data - Victim Information

U.S. Department of Labor



Event Number: 4 3 5 8 3 9 9

Mine Safety and Health Administration

#### Victim Information: 1

1. Name of Injured/Ill Employee: Chad H. Cook		2. Sex M	3. Victim's Age 26	4. Last Four Digits of SSN:	5. Degree of Injury: 01 Fatal										
6. Date(MM/DD/YY) and Time(24 Hr.) Of Death: a. Date: 11/08/2005 b. Time: 0:10				7. Date and Time Started: a. Date: 11/07/2005 b. Time: 23:00											
8. Regular Job Title: 176 Truck driver			9. Work Activity when Injured: 026 Handling coal, rock waste, or ore		10. Was this work activity part of regular job? Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>										
11. Experience a. This Work Activity:	Years 2	Weeks 0	Days 0	b. Regular Job Title:	Years 2	Weeks 0	Days 0	c. This Mine:	Years 2	Weeks 0	Days 0	d. Total Mining:	Years 2	Weeks 0	Days 0
12. What Directly Inflicted Injury or Illness? 104 Young Buggy/Hwy ore carrier/truck/bus				13. Nature of Injury or Illness: 370 Multiple injuries											
14. Training Deficiencies: Hazard: New/Newly-Employed Experienced Miner: Annual: Task:															
15. Company of Employment: (If different from production operator) Savage Services, Inc. Independent Contractor ID: (if applicable) ZP4															
16. On-site Emergency Medical Treatment: Not Applicable: First-Aid: CPR: EMT: Medical Professional: None: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>															
17. Part 50 Document Control Number: (form 7000-1)			18. Union Affiliation of Victim: 9999 None (No Union Affiliation)												

#### Victim Information:

1. Name of Injured/Ill Employee:		2. Sex	3. Victim's Age	4. Last Four Digits of SSN:	5. Degree of Injury:										
6. Date(MM/DD/YY) and Time(24 Hr.) Of Death:				7. Date and Time Started:											
8. Regular Job Title:			9. Work Activity when Injured:		10. Was this work activity part of regular job? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>										
11. Experience: a. This Work Activity:	Years	Weeks	Days	b. Regular Job Title:	Years	Weeks	Days	c. This Mine:	Years	Weeks	Days	d. Total Mining:	Years	Weeks	Days
12. What Directly Inflicted Injury or Illness?				13. Nature of Injury or Illness:											
14. Training Deficiencies: Hazard: New/Newly-Employed Experienced Miner: Annual: Task:															
15. Company of Employment: (If different from production operator) Independent Contractor ID: (if applicable)															
16. On-site Emergency Medical Treatment: Not Applicable: First-Aid: CPR: EMT: Medical Professional: None:															
17. Part 50 Document Control Number: (form 7000-1)			18. Union Affiliation of Victim:												

#### Victim Information:

1. Name of Injured/Ill Employee:		2. Sex	3. Victim's Age	4. Last Four Digits of SSN:	5. Degree of Injury:										
6. Date(MM/DD/YY) and Time(24 Hr.) Of Death:				7. Date and Time Started:											
8. Regular Job Title:			9. Work Activity when Injured:		10. Was this work activity part of regular job? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>										
11. Experience: a. This Work Activity:	Years	Weeks	Days	b. Regular Job Title:	Years	Weeks	Days	c. This Mine:	Years	Weeks	Days	d. Total Mining:	Years	Weeks	Days
12. What Directly Inflicted Injury or Illness?				13. Nature of Injury or Illness:											
14. Training Deficiencies: Hazard: New/Newly-Employed Experienced Miner: Annual: Task:															
15. Company of Employment: (If different from production operator) Independent Contractor ID: (if applicable)															
16. On-site Emergency Medical Treatment: Not Applicable: First-Aid: CPR: EMT: Medical Professional: None:															
17. Part 50 Document Control Number: (form 7000-1)			18. Union Affiliation of Victim:												