



March 2011 Newsletter

Guest Column

Robert Baldrige is a native New Mexican and brings 25+ years of industry experience primarily focused in underground mining. His roles have encompassed engineering, production and maintenance involving both drill & blast and continuous miner applications. He currently serves as General Manager of Intrepid Potash's New Mexico operations.



At the Heart of Safety

Little did I know when Terence asked me to write this guest column that I would be the one gaining insight in the process. Just as with each of you, safety is a core component of my job yet I rarely sit down and make time to introspectively review my personal feelings and beliefs about safety. I highly recommend this formalization of your beliefs. "At the Heart of Safety" is the result of this exercise for me.

I believe in two intertwined philosophies regarding safety; there are key components to ensuring our safety and there must be an intentional execution of these components to ensure success. I have identified three components to being safe while executing life's tasks. The first is risk identification. If you can't recognize the risk you can't consistently prevent an accident. Given this fact, we must be vigilant about expanding our knowledge base to improve our ability to recognize and understand risks. Secondly, we must have the proper resources to mitigate the risk. Proper tools, staffing requirements, technical skills and formalized procedures are the obvious ones that fall into this laundry list of resources. And lastly, there must be personal commitment. You can not have true personal commitment without believing in what you are committing to. We will follow policy or procedures when we know there is active accountability but at 2 am when no one is around, it's about be-

lieving.

The intentional execution of these key components is the difference in being lucky and ensuring success. How are you intentionally advancing your personal knowledge, the knowledge of your co-workers or direct reports to ensure the ability to recognize risks? Professional development positively impacts all aspects of our jobs but no area more critically than safety. Are you intentional in the pursuit of proper resources? For the individual in the field this may require stopping or delaying a



crucial job to attain the right tool or additional instruction. As a supervisor, are you intentionally asking for feedback from your employees about their resource needs and are

you open to their responses? Most importantly, when you don't believe in a policy or procedure are you willing to ask someone to help you understand? The core purpose of this intentional action is to eliminate unplanned behavior, actions or events that are the root cause of all accidents. Bottom line, you have to work at being safe. There are no silver bullets! So you have a choice, will you go home at the end of your shift without injury because you were lucky or because you were intentional in the planning and execution of your safety?

Sincerely, your intentional partner in safety
Robert Baldrige

Fatal Equipment Accidents

On November 13, 2010, Dennis L. Speicher, contract mechanic, age 42, died when a front-end loader rolled over him. Speicher had operated the

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loader, then exited the cab. He then was underneath the loader, with the engine running, checking for leaking fluid. The power was not off and the front-end loader was not blocked against hazardous motion. The machine was parked on a slight grade, the bucket was raised off the ground, and the wheels were not chocked. (see complete report at: <http://www.msha.gov/FATALS/2010/FTL10m20.asp>)

This is one of several accidents of this type that have occurred recently. To paraphrase Robert Baldrige's guest column, in these cases was there

"intentional planning and execution of safety" done?

The accident above clearly indicates that planning and execution were lacking. Further, looking at Robert's key components to

ensuring our safety, he listed in part these three: first is risk identification, second proper tools, staffing requirements, technical skills and formalized procedures, and lastly, there must be personal commitment. *"You can not have true personal commitment without believing in what you are committing to. We will follow policy or procedures when we know there is active accountability."* It would appear that the victim failed in all three.

On December 29, 2010, a 41 year- old laborer with 4 years of experience died at a dimension stone operation. The victim was replacing a hydraulic lift arm cylinder on a skid steer loader. The lift arms suddenly lowered, pinning him against the frame of the machine.



The latest fatality occurred on February 12th in Florida when a motor grader operator backed over another employee who was checking his equipment in a staging area.

It is easy to shake our heads at these types of accidents and think it can't happen at our operations. But they are happening at our operations too frequently. Again paraphrasing Robert, bottom line, we all have to work harder every moment at being safe.

New Mexico Mine Health and Safety Conference

We will continue to upgrade our conference program to bring New Mexico's miners information that can be used to make our mines the safest in the nation. We are increasing our emphasis on health topics this year. Sessions will include dust control off the job health, exposure monitoring, and hearing conservation. In addition, we are planning a health fair and the Miners' Colfax mobile unit will be here



for hearing and lung function screening. Please mark your calendars for 2011. Our conference will be held May 2, 3 and 4. The theme for 2011 is **Fo-**

cus 24-7. Our next planning meeting for 2011 will be March 11th in Socorro. We welcome all who would like to contribute to planning our 2011 event. The registration flyer will be transmitted with this newsletter.

Safety Pro in a Box

In January, MSHA added some valuable information on their website titled Safety Pro in a Box. The intent of the information is to provide a single source page for aggregate operators requiring meaningful compliance assistance. It is a great location for training material also. I encourage aggregate operators (others also) to view the site and use the materials found there. The site is: http://www.msha.gov/safetypro_in_a_box/index.asp

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South Central District Conference

MSHA's South Central District is sponsoring its annual spring safety conference in Albuquerque this year, March 22nd to the 24th in Albuquerque. The conference will include workshops, discussion groups and exhibitors. There is also a golf outing the afternoon of the 21st. For more information:

<http://www.utexas.edu/ce/txmshp/about/south-central-health-conference/>

Special Training - Exposure Monitoring

We have been considering a training course for the first half of 2011 on dust instrumentation and exposure monitoring to help educate those having to do field measurements.



However, I have not heard any response from industry. If this is a course that the aggregate industry is interested in, please let me know.

New Mexico Mining Safety Board

The New Mexico Mining Safety Board met in Santa Fe on February 17th. The meeting included the first ever appeal to the MSB of a final decision and penalty by the State Mine Inspector for failure to perform emergency notification. We are waiting for the MSB to write its decision in the case.

Training

The current Training Schedule through March can be found on our web site:

<http://www.bmi.state.nm.us/navTrng.htm>

Please take time to look it over. To schedule a class, please call Chris at (505) 553-1535.

Afterword

I regret to announce that Steve Mills of Chevron Mining-Questa is exiting the mining business and New Mexico to join Chevron's oil and gas business. He won't be too far away in Midland, TX. Many of you know Steve has chaired our NM Mine Health and Safety Conference Committee since its inception. He has also chaired the New Mexico Mining Association's Safety Committee and been a leading advocate for miners' safety in New Mexico. He will be greatly missed. Good luck Steve but keep in mind, the oil business might be sweeter, but in New Mexico the chilies are always hotter!



Let's FOCUS 24/7 on safety in New Mexico!



FOCUS 24/7