



**Genwal Resources Inc  
Crandall Canyon Mine  
Mine ID: 4201715**

**Questions and Answers**

**Question:** What is a Significant and Substantial (S&S) violation? How serious is this?

**Answer:** An S&S violation is one which could reasonably be expected to lead to a serious injury or illness. MSHA, however, takes every violation of mine safety and health laws seriously, regardless of whether or not it is an S&S violation.

**Question:** MSHA cites about 80 violations of safety and health standards at this mine each year. Is this a lot?

**Answer:** No. The violation incident rate for a mine of this classification (underground bituminous coal mines) is below the national average.

**Question:** How serious are the violations found? How does this record compare to similar operations?

**Answer:** Crandall Canyon has consistently been below the National Average for S&S in the past years (12% to 20%).

**Question:** Have any of the violations involved problems that could result in a roof collapse?

**Answer:** MSHA's accident investigation team will review the past violations issued at the mine and establish the conditions that existed at the mine prior to the accident. The accident investigation report will determine the root cause of the accident and whether there were any contributory violations that led to the accident.

**Question:** Have there been problems supporting the roof at this mine?

**Answer :** No roof falls have been reported since 1998.

**Question:** Does the mine have many injuries?

**Answer:** The operator's "fatal injury" and "total incident" rates at this mine have been below the national average for the last 10 years.

**Question:** Does the mine pay its fines?

**Answer:** Yes.

**Question:** When was MSHA's last visit to the mine?

**Answer:** The last inspection day underground was July 18, during a regular inspection. Although an inspector was at the mine on July 23, 2007, it was for the abatement of surface citations as part of a regular inspection.

**Question:** How often is the mine inspected?

**Answer:** The mine is inspected on a quarterly basis, at a minimum, as mandated by the Mine Act. So far, during this regular inspection, MSHA has issued 11 citations and 1 order.

**Question:** Is MSHA in charge of the rescue operation or is the operator?

**Answer:** According to the provisions of the Mine Act, MSHA is charged with overseeing all rescue and recovery operations in the aftermath of a mine accident. The mine operator is responsible for carrying out the rescue operations with oversight and approval by MSHA. MSHA is working cooperatively with the mine operator and other parties on the rescue effort. Mine rescue plans are submitted in writing by the mine operator to MSHA, and the agency must approve these plans prior to implementation to make sure the rescue is conducted safely.

**Question:** What is MSHA's role in communicating with the public?

**Answer:** The MINER Act mandates that MSHA be the primary communicator with the media, operator, families and the public regarding the accident. In addition to regular on-site briefings, MSHA's website is updated regularly to provide additional information.

**Question:** Did an earthquake cause this accident?

**Answer:** MSHA will not be able to make this determination until we are able to conduct a full investigation into the cause of this accident. At this time, MSHA is focused on rescuing the trapped miners and will formally begin its investigation of this accident afterward.

**Question:** Do these miners have self-contained self rescuer devices (SCSRs)? How do they work?

**Answer:** The miners who are trapped by the accident have at least two SCSRs for use in the area in which they were working. Each SCSR provides a one-hour

supply of oxygen.

**Question:** Is retreat mining a particularly dangerous mining method? Are there any regulations in place regarding retreat mining that MSHA enforces to make it safer?

**Answer:** All mining methods can be dangerous if applicable laws, regulations and approved plans are not followed. Retreat, or secondary mining, can be conducted safely if approved mining plans and proper safety precautions are followed. Retreat mining involves removing portions of the previously unmined coal pillars (large blocks) that were left in place to support the mine roof as the mine entries were developed and advanced earlier. As mining activity retreats, a portion of those pillars can be mined out. Eventually, after the mining activity has pulled back or retreated, the remaining areas of the mine collapse, including the coal pillars.

**Question:** Don't the miners have tracking and communications devices that allow them to communicate with the surface? Didn't the MINER Act require these devices?

**Answer:** The mine did have redundant communications systems for the miners as required by the MINER Act. However, these are "hard-wired" communications systems that were apparently damaged from the force of the accident. The accident has apparently destroyed both systems. Truly wireless communications are not yet available and approved for use in underground mines.

**Question:** How many MSHA officials are on site?

**Answer:** MSHA has been engaged in the rescue effort since it was notified of the accident at 3:30a.m. MDT on Monday, Aug. 6, 2007. MSHA's Field Office Supervisor from the Price (Utah) Field Office and its District Manager from Denver, Colorado were immediately dispatched to the mine site. MSHA also had two inspectors on-site. MSHA participated in regular media briefings beginning with the first briefing on Monday. On Tuesday, Aug. 7, 2007, Assistant Secretary of Labor Richard E. Stickler; Coal Mine Safety and Health Administrator Kevin Stricklin and Coal Mine Safety and Health Accident Investigations Program Manager Bill Crocco traveled from MSHA Headquarters to the mine site. As of Aug. 8, MSHA has 54 personnel on site.