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QUARRYING 2007 – ABSTRACT
BRUCE HUTCHINSON

Innovations at Tasmania's largest "quarry" - The Savage River Mine

Australian Bulk Minerals operate the Savage River Mine on the west coast of Tasmania. The mine has experienced large scale wall instabilities throughout its 40 year life. More recently smaller scale rockfalls have created new hazards on the steep eastern wall of North Pit. A major portion of this 280m high wall is cut at 63° through brittle carbonate-chlorite schist. Small blocks of rock have fallen from this wall down into the working area creating unacceptable risks to men and equipment.

ABM has therefore proceeded along several paths to reduce and hopefully eliminate these risks. A \$1.6M high energy catch fence was installed along several benches, which in turn necessitated an intense cable bolting programme to support the bench crests along which the catch fences were placed. This reduced risks significantly but did not completely eliminate rockfall events.

It is almost impossible to prevent rockfalls in the semi-temperate rainforest environment. In our situation the best way to mitigate risk would be to remove the personnel from the high risk areas. ABM therefore embarked on a long term project to remove personnel from a 20m zone at the base of the high wall. To date all scaling and clean up along the high wall is done by a long reach excavator that remains about 15 m from the toe of the slope, two Atlas Copco L8 drills have been changed to remote configurations and a remote explosive loading project is underway. This presentation shall describe these various activities and achievements to date.