

One mine worker's story

"On the days following the event, I reflected on how my loss would have affected my wife and two children, who were both under 5 years. It was a very sobering thought!" John (not his real name)

John's story is a sobering one. While working in a West Coast coal mine some years ago, the light vehicle he was driving was struck by a reversing dump truck. Temporary traffic arrangements at the mine saw light vehicles being individually ushered through a tip head where reversing trucks were dumping. *"I had been signalled to cross through the work area by the tip head operator, when the stationary dump truck started to reverse towards me without warning."*



The dump truck ran over the front of the Ute (not 'struck' or 'hit' – the large tyres literally stamped on the bonnet). The cabin of the vehicle was fortunately unaffected, and John sustained no injury at all. *"Had my vehicle been a half metre further forward, I probably would have had my legs crushed. One metre further forward and I would have died for sure. It was so close that the driver's side mirror was stripped by the truck tyre."*

"...the thing that I take away from the incident is that you don't have to be expecting danger for a high consequence, low likelihood event to make an appearance and kill someone."

Far too many incidents occur due to the interaction of heavy vehicles with light vehicles and pedestrians. You need to ensure that your traffic management plans and procedures include:

- **Separation of heavy vehicles, light vehicles and pedestrians wherever possible**
- **Procedures that require heavy vehicles to stop operating when light vehicles and pedestrians enter work areas**
- **Supervision, physical checks, and inspections to ensure safe work procedures are being followed and are effective**
- **Training, and regular reinforcement, to ensure workers are aware of procedures around interaction of heavy vehicles, light vehicles and pedestrians**

Let's work together to keep ourselves and our workers safe. Thanks for your story "John".

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