**Anglo cops record fine**

**Mines Commissioner says miner accountable for contractor death in 2014.**

**Wednesday 24 May 2017**

The Brisbane Magistrates Court has fined Anglo-American $284,000, and a conviction has been recorded, over their role in the death of coal mining contractor Ian Downes in 2014.

It's the first time a conviction against a coal mine operator has been recorded by the court, and the largest fine ever imposed for an offence of its type.

In December 2014 Grasstree underground mine was shut for nearly a month when 45-year-old Mr Downes was killed just before midnight when a wall he was pressure grouting gave way and crushed him.

He was given medical attention at the scene and brought to the surface, but rescue workers could not revive him.

NSW-based contractor, Valley Longwall International employed Mr Downes. However, the Queensland Commissioner for Mine Safety  Kate du Preez said mine operators are accountable for the safety of their workers.

“Prosecution is usually a last resort under our regulatory enforcement framework,” Ms du Preez said.

“However, it is important mine operators are held publicly accountable for the safety of their workers, and we believe strong action needs to be taken as a deterrent.

“Queensland has an enviable safety and health record in the resources industry, and it is among the safest in the world.

“Our role is to focus the attention of resources industry management and workers on safety and health priorities.

“As this tragic incident shows, there is no room for complacency when it comes to safety.”

In response, Anglo American Country Head David Diamond told Shift Miner they accept the court’s decision.

“In the Brisbane Industrial Magistrates Court, the company pleaded guilty to failing to provide a safe workplace at Grasstree Mine in relation to the death of Mr Downes,” he said.

“ As a company, we can never and will never accept that any worker who comes to work at our operations is injured or tragically loses his or her life.

“I, on behalf of the company, offer our sincere condolences to Mr Downes family.

“This loss of life should not have happened and we are absolutely committed to ensuring such an event never occurs again at any of our operations and we have made significant changes to the way we operate since this tragic event.

“Through our Elimination of Fatalities Programme and critical control work, we are absolutely committed to delivering safe workplaces for all.”