

Taranaki District

Mangapahi State Colliery.—Top East Levels: The fault which was struck in the main level has been proved by a dip drive which has been extended 2 chains beyond it, the coal being of good quality and 20 ft. thick. A crosscut has been driven in the coal between the twin levels beyond the fault, and further development is proceeding.

Nos. 1, 2, and 3 panels to the rise have completed development to the 10 ft. downthrow fault which runs almost parallel to the main east level and some $7\frac{1}{2}$ chains from it. The top coal has been extracted above the workings of Nos. 1 and 2 panels. It is intended to undertake further development, beyond the fault bounding Nos. 2 and 3 panels, by stone drives piercing the fault in extension of No. 3 panel entries, as it has been shown by survey that there is probably an area of some acres of workable coal beyond the fault and between it and the outcrop of the seam.

Bottom East Levels: The level faces are in troubled country at 15 chains from the main haulage, and are being driven further to test the seam in this direction. A panel is being developed to the rise of these panels.

Top West Section: Development was completed in 1942, and no further work has been done in this section.

Bottom West Section: The seam at 10 chains west of the main haulage has become thin and the coal stony and of poor quality. Further driving in this direction has been stopped, and development of the panel to the rise is approaching completion.

A great improvement to the main dip has been made by brushing and arching the coal roof for a considerable distance. The lower part of the dip has been reopened and retimbered with a view to prospecting the disturbed area in which extension of the main drive was stopped in 1939. Driving has been continued a short distance beyond the original face of the dip and a seam of coal 3 ft. 3 in. thick is showing in the present face.

A new bathhouse is being erected near the mine mouth, and a new haulage road into the mine has been planned, and work on this is proceeding.

An average of eighteen pairs of miners has been employed at this colliery during the year.

Tatu State Colliery, Ohura.—Development of workings to the north-west of the main headings has been stopped owing to faulting at about 16 chains from the main drive. A panel has been formed to the right of the north-west development headings, workings here having been driven to a distance of 11 chains from the headings, at which point the workings have reached the line of the high sandstone bluffs showing on the surface. It is proposed by the management to proceed with the second working of this north panel by splitting the pillars.

The south-west headings in continuation of the line of the main drives have been advanced to a distance of 30 chains from the mine entrance. Bad roof conditions have slowed down development in this direction, though the coal-seam continues to be of good quality and thickness, while the haulage from the north-west headings to this section also caused considerable delay owing to heaving floor and bad roof conditions having to be dealt with.

A pair of development headings has been driven 7 chains south from a point 6 chains from the present face of the south-west headings. These are in good coal from 8 ft. thick. Another pair of headings has been driven north-west from approximately the same point and has gone about 6 chains in good coal. A start has been made in continuing the main headings of the mine on the three-drive system.

Connection of the main headings through the fault has not yet been made, but work on this is proceeding. Extension of the main haulage to the new developments to the south-west will greatly assist rapid extension of the mine workings in this direction.

Considerable improvement at the surface was carried out during the year, a large bathhouse of modern design and many other buildings having been erected and brought into use. A substation is being equipped at the mine, and electric supply to the mine-mouth has been provided and will be used in future mining operations.

A village has been built about one mile from the mine-mouth, and further accommodation has been erected for miners at Ohura, which is twelve miles away.

Stockman Colliery.—Work at this mine continued throughout the year, the coal being brought by launch to Mokau from twenty-seven miles up the Mokau River.

Aria Colliery.—Work was resumed in October, the main drive having been retimbered and a small fan installed. A small but regular output is being obtained and sold locally.

State Opencast Mining.—Late in the year consideration was given to the production of coal by opencasting in several areas in the Waikato and other parts of the North Island. Surveys and boring were carried out, and stripping of the first area to come into production, some 7 acres near Glen Afton, was commenced with modern machinery, and by the end of the year was well forward. This area is now producing.

RESCUE-STATION

During 1943 Mr. A. Lennox, Superintendent of the District Rescue Station situated in Rotowaro Township, continued the training of rescue brigades. In addition to two-monthly refresher courses for the forty-nine fully-trained men, twenty-five fresh men were trained and certificated during the year. Twelve additional men applied for training during 1944 and are now taking the course.

Two visits were made by Mr. Lennox to Benneydale to conduct refresher courses for men working there.

The greater part of the refresher training consists of visits of the trained men to as many mines as possible in the district and the use of the apparatus in these mines. This part of the training is most valuable, as it gives members of brigades first-hand knowledge of the lay-out of mines other than the ones in which they work.

In several cases teams have been asked by mine-managers to assist in the construction of stoppings and in exploration of old workings, using the rescue apparatus. These occasions are used by Mr. Lennox as opportunities for training in what approximates to emergency conditions, and thanks are due to the mine-managers concerned in making such opportunities available whenever possible.

Members of the teams have given of their best in such work and have benefited by increased confidence in themselves and in the apparatus, which in every case has functioned perfectly.

HUNTLY SCHOOL OF MINES

Regular classes were held at Huntly, Rotowaro, and Glen Massey throughout the year, and some forty-five students took advantage of these.

FATALITIES

James Innes Tipton, a trucker employed at No. 4 Mine, Kamo Collieries, received fatal injuries when struck by an iron jig-brake handle on 31st May, 1943. It is thought that he pushed a race over the brow and ran back to the brake handle. When the brake was put on hard, the bracket holding down the brake gear and handle became detached and allowed the handle to fly up, striking deceased on the side and causing the injuries. Through bolts and a stopper have since been fitted to this brake to prevent a recurrence.