

# 4 THE MINE RECOVERY

To allow for an investigation of the Sago Mine Disaster, ventilation in the mine had to be restored, the underground power repaired, the water pumped, and the mine examined to assure it was safe for people to enter. This activity was called the recovery of the mine.

The recovery of the mine presented several challenges. The initial focus was to develop ways to safely ventilate areas of the mine utilizing a Blowing System of ventilation.

A series of boreholes were drilled from the surface into areas of the mine to create a positive airflow through these areas. These boreholes functioned as the return side for areas that required ventilation. Some of the boreholes were used to allow atmospheric samples to be collected and analyzed. Other boreholes were used to dewater the area in by the destroyed seals.

To fully recover the mine, it was necessary to reestablish the electrical power system throughout the mine. This allowed for the dewatering of pooled areas of water and helped maintain the integrity of the return entries. The reestablished electrical system also permitted the use of the rail transport system to provide transportation for members of the recovery teams and for the transportation of supplies necessary to repair damaged ventilation controls.

To recover the mine, trained persons performed examinations of the mine, repaired damaged ventilation controls, and repaired or replaced damaged equipment. This was accomplished following plans developed by Anker West Virginia Mining Company and approved by the Mine Safety and Health Administration and the West Virginia Office of Miners' Health, Safety and Training.

# **4 THE MINE RECOVERY**

**4.1 Approved Recovery Plans**

**4.2 Record of Mine Recovery**

## 4.1 Approved recovery plans

The “Recovery of the Mine” followed plans that were developed by officials of Anker West Virginia Mining Company (ICG) and approved by representatives of MSHA and WVMHS&T.

*Approved plans are included in the Appendix 4.2*

Summary of submitted recovery plans:

- |   |                  |  |                  |
|---|------------------|--|------------------|
| * | January 05, 2006 | Submittal #1-R   | Approved 1/05/06 |
|   |                  | Request to complete the drilling of borehole #2 on 1 <sup>st</sup> . Left. |                  |
| * | January 06, 2006 | Submittal #R-2   | Approved 1/06/06 |
|   |                  | Request to remove the power from the mine CO system.                       |                  |
| * | January 06, 2006 | Submittal #R-3   | Approved 1/06/06 |
|   |                  | Request to complete the drilling of borehole #4.                           |                  |
| * | January 07, 2006 | Submittal #R-4a  | Approved 1/07/06 |
|   |                  | Request to drill a 24” borehole #5.  |                  |
| * | January 08, 2006 | Submittal #R-5   | Approved 1/08/06 |
|   |                  | Request to install 8” PVC pipe on top of hole #4.                          |                  |
| * | January 09, 2006 | Submittal #R-5a  | Approved 1/09/06 |
|   |                  | Request to change size of sampling tube.                                   |                  |
| * | January 08, 2006 | Submittal #R-6   | Approved 1/09/06 |
|   |                  | Request to drill borehole #5.  |                  |
| * | January 09, 2006 | Submittal #R-7   | Approved 1/09/06 |
|   |                  | Request to drill borehole #6.  |                  |
| * | January 12, 2006 | Submittal #R-7   | Not Approved     |
|   |                  | Recovery Plan Outline.   |                  |

- \* January 12, 2006 Submittal #R-8 Approved 1/12/06  
Recovery Plan Outline.
- \* January 12, 2006 Submittal #R-9 Approved 1/12/06  
Request to re-drill and clean borehole #4.
- \* January 14, 2006 Submittal #R-10 Approved 1/14/06  
Request to drill borehole #7.
- \* January 17, 2006 Submittal #R-10a Approved 1/17/06  
Replaces request #R-10 changed to 16 inch hole #7.
- \* January 18, 2006 Submittal #R-11 Approved 1/18/06  
Request to ventilate the #4 borehole with air line.
- \* January 19, 2006 Submittal #R-12 Approved 1/19/06  
Request to use the #4 borehole for ventilation.
- \* January 20, 2006 Submittal #R-7e Phase 1 Approved 1/20/06
- \* January 20, 2006 Submittal #R-7d Phase 2 Approved 1/20/06
- \* January 20, 2006 Submittal #R-7d Phase 3 Approved 1/20/06
- \* January 20, 2006 Submittal #R-7d Phase 4 Approved 1/20/06
- \* January 20, 2006 Submittal #R-7d Phase 5 Approved 1/20/06
- \* January 21, 2006 Submittal #R-7e-(1) Amendment Approved 1/21/06
- \* January 22, 2006 Submittal #R-7d-(1) Amendment Approved 1/22/06
- \* January 22, 2006 Submittal #R-7d-(2) Amendment Approved 1/22/06
- \* January 22, 2006 Submittal #R-7e-(2) Amendment Approved 1/22/06

## 4.2 Record of mine recovery

The “Recovery of the Mine” utilizing mine recovery teams underground and representatives of Anker West Virginia Mining Company (ICG), MSHA and WVMHS&T at the Command Center began on the morning of January 21, 2006.

*A record of the Command Center notes taken by representatives of WVMHS&T are included in **Appendix 4: Command Center Notes.***