
BHP given 12 notices to stop work for safety breaches

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Bloomberg reported that BHP Billiton Limited was given 12 notices to stop operations in the past 2 weeks after the Western Australian state government said the world's largest mining company needed to improve its safety record.

Mr Norman Moore the state's mines and petroleum minister of Australia said that the mining company has received almost 70 improvement notices in the past two years. The statement didn't confirm if the 12 prohibition notices had resulted in production shutdowns. Ms Samantha Evans spokeswoman of BHP couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

The Melbourne based company controls 7 iron ore mines in Western Australia's Pilbara region and produced a record 111 million tonnes of the steelmaking material in the year ended June 30. The latest fatality at a BHP mine site in the state occurred March 19, involving a contract worker.

Mr Moore said that "BHP has received 12 prohibition notices since the State Mining Engineer used his discretionary powers to direct inspectors to issue prohibition orders rather than improvement notices about a fortnight ago."

He said that prohibition notices would mean automatic shutdowns at sites until safety hazards were fixed.

Mr Ian Ashby president of BHP Billiton iron ore said that "We apologize to all those affected by the events that have taken place."

Mr Ashby said that "We are deeply saddened by the deaths within our Western Australia iron ore business and we are doing everything we can to identify the causes and take action to prevent further tragedies."

(Sourced from Bloomberg)

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