List of the principal classes of employees in and about coal mines

New South Wales 1929

Colliery Officials

General Manager or Superintendent, if appointed.

Agent is superior to a Manager under the Coal Mines Regulation Act

# Manager

Is responsible for the control, management and direction of all operations in, at , or about the mine

# Under Manager

In the absence of the manager, has the same duties and responsibilities as the manager

# Engineer

Under the Manager, is in charge of all the machinery in and about the mines (except the electrical portion of the same)

# Mines Electrician

Under the Manager, is in charge of all the electrical plant in and about the colliery.

# Surveyor

Whose duty it is to survey the mine and keep the plans required by the Coal Mines Regulation Act, 1912 accurately drawn to scale

Under Ground employees

# Onsettter and Assistant

The Onsettter and Assistant, attend to the signals at the bottom of the shaft and loads skips filled with coal, etc., on to and unloads supply skips, timber, etc., from off the cages.

# Sprager

A Sprager used sprags (to stop or prop up skips, using sprag) the full skips when they are unclipped from the haulage rope near the shaft bottom or on the gantry generally.

# Clipper

A Clipper, attached and detached by means of clips the full and supply skips to and from the endless haulage roe by means of which they are hauled along the roads of the mine.

# Set-Rider

In main and tail rope systems, set-riders rode on the end of the sets of fully or empty skips on the journey inbye or outby in order to attend to them when they become derailed, etc., and also for the purpose of attaching the sets of skips or detaching them form the haulage rope on the various flats, landings, pit bottoms or at screens etc.

# Rolley Wayman

Rolley Wayman, attended to the haulage road, keeps it in repair: attends to the despatch of coal on the main haulage roads etc.

# Rope Splicer

Rope Splicer, spliced the haulage ropes when required and attends to haulage ropes generally; sometimes combines the duties of Rolley Wayman

# Rope Greaser

A ope Greaser, attended to the greasers automatically or mechanically operated provided on the haulage roads or plans for the purpose of greasing the skip axles on their journey in or out of the mine, and the roe sheaves, pulleys, and tommy dodds(a series of small pulleys, with vertical axles placed between the rails at a curve, so as to keep an endless rope in place.). He also repairs and cleans road.

# Transport Attendant

Transport Attendant (e.g. State Coal Mine), attends to the transport set for conveying miners and other persons, etc., from the shaft at entrance to the mine to within reasonable walking distance of the men’s working places. (Some cases, a whole time job.)

# Flatter

A Flatter was a person in charge of a flat or place where the wheelers bring their full skips, singly or in sets of two or more, in order that they may be sent further outbye to be attached to the main haulage system, whether it be by ropes or electric locomotive, and obtain further supplies of supply skips.

# Doorkeeper or Trapper

Doorkeeper or Trapper, usually a youth stationed at a door or a pair of doors for the purpose of opening and closing it or them in order to allow persons, chiefly wheelers or drivers, to pass through with their sets, so that the ventilation of the mine or district shall be interrupted as little as possible.

# Wheeler

A Wheeler was a young man, strong and active, who exchanges full skips in the miner’s working places for empty skips brought by him from the flats with the aid of a horse. The skips or tubs from one, two, or three miners constitute his set which, when full of coal, are hauled by the horse that is driven out to the flats.

# Bratticer or Brattice Man

A Bratticer or Brattice Man, was the man whose duty it was to erect brattice of hessian or wood by attaching it to vertical props set firmly in line between the roof and floor of a working place, thus dividing it longitudinally into two divisions in such a manner that the air current is conducted into and out of the working place, thus ventilating them.

# Roadman or Raodlayer

A Roadman or Raodlayer, was the man whose duty it was to lay and keep the steel railroads on which the skips run in good order; in addition to laying turns etc.

# Timberman or Timber Cutter

A Timberman or Timber Cutter, was the man who travels round the miners’ working places, and where required cut the props to a suitable length to enable them to be conveniently set by the miners for the support of the roof in their working places, etc.

# Shiftman

A Shiftman, was the man who does various kinds of repair work in the mine, and is paid a daily wage as distinct from the miner who works on contract. They may be first or second class. The former receives the higher daily wage, and does such work as setting timber for the support of roof or seats in dangerous places, drives through stone or fault, coal etc. The second class man cleans up roads, lays roads, hangs brattices and does such work.

# Miner

Miners were employed in the getting and filling coal or driving through stone on contract. Miners can also be shift-men on day wages. Shift-men can be First or second class.

# Shotfirer

Shotfirer, a person holdling a third class or deputy’s c certificate, whose duty it is to fire shots for blasting purposes in gassy mines after he has made a careful examination of the place and prepared it by treating it with inert dust or water if necessary in order to make it safe to do so.

# Machine Man

Machine Man, a man who drives a coal-cutting machine which undercuts the coal before it is shot from its bed to enable it to be filled into the skips. He invariably has an assistant.

# Waterbaler

Waterbaler, whose duty it is to bale the water from the miners’ working places when required.

# Pumpers

Pumpers attended to the pumps used for pumping the water from the colliery workings.

# Motor Drivers

Motor drivers attended and drove the electrically operated haulage engines in the mine.

# Engine Drivers

Engine Drivers attended and drove the steam or compression air-driven haulage engines in or about the mine.

# Pipe Mechanic

Pipe Mechanics extended the compressed air pipes in the working of a mine where coal-cutting machines driven by compressed air are used.

# Horsekeeper or Ostler

The Horsekeeper or Ostler was the man in charge of the horsed in or about the mine. He sometimes had one or more assistants.

# Pickboy

A pickboy arranged the miners’ pick in their respective numbered racks after they have been sharpened ready for the miners to take into their work each morning.

# Deputy

A Deputy was the person in charge of the whole of the employees in a section of the mine, He must be the holder of , at least, a Deputy’s or Third Class Colliery Manager’s Certificate of Competency.

# Assistant Under-Manager or Overman

An Assistant Under-Manager or Overman assisted the Under Manager in the performance of his duties underground.

# Check Inspector

The Check Inspector may be local or district. The Local Check Inspector is a miner appointed by the local Miners’ Lodge for the purpose of making an inspection of the mine in order to ascertain whether it is worked in safely, and so see that the Act and Special Rules are complied with. He invariably accompanies the District Check Inspector, who is a man elected by the miners in the district for the reasons mentioned above. He enters, and signs a report before leaving the mine.

Above Ground employees

# The Surface Foreman

The Surface Foreman was the man in charge of the labours working about the surface loading timber, &C

# Screen Overseer

The Screen overseer was in charge of the men attending to the screening and cleaning of the coal and loading the wagons.

# Weighman

The Weighman was weighs the coal in the skips as it is brought out of the mine.

# Check Weighman

The Check Weighman looked after the workmen’s interest in seeing that the skips are truly weighed.

# Banksmen and Assistants

The Banksmen and Assistants, looked after the signals and took the full skips off and put the empty skips on the cage.

# Winding Engine-driver

The Winding Engine-driver, attended to the engine while the cage is being lowered and raised.

# Fan Engine-driver

The Fan Engine-driver, attended to the engines driving the fan. This is sometimes a whole-time job, but when the fan is electrically driven it is visited only two or three times during the day.

# Fireman

The Fireman, attended to the boilers for the raising of steam to drive the various steam engines at the mines

# Power House Attendant

The Power House Attendant, attended to the Machinery for the generation of electricity for power and lighting in and about the mine: sometimes attends to air compressors also.

# Armature Winder

The Armature Winder, did the winding armatures of the various electric motors at the mine.

# Machine Repairer

The Machine Repairer, repaired various machines e.g., coal-cutters &c.

# Shunters

# Shunters shunted the wagons on the colliery sidings and makes up the trains for the locomotives.

# **Magazine Attendant**

Magazine Attendants, issued explosives out to the miners and keeps account of the same for that miners may be charged for them. He also attends to the cleaning of the magazines and the storage of explosives, in addition to other duties that may be found for him.

# Bath-room Attendant

Bath-room Attendants , cleaned the bath and change house regularly after each shift of workmen have used it and attends to the change house generally.

# Lamp-room Attendant

Lamp-room Attendants examined, repairs, cleans, fills, and lights safety lamps ready for the underground employees at a mine where these lamps are required to be used. He usually has one or more assistants.

# Blacksmiths

Blacksmiths did whatever smithing work is to be done at the mine.

# Horseshoer

The Horseshoer,duty was to attend to the showing of the horses working in or about the mine

# Picksharpener

A Picksharpener sharpened the picks and drills used by the miners and shiftmen

# Fitter

Fitter, who erects or repairs engines and other machinery about the mine.

# Carpenter

Carpenters did the wood work in or about the mine.

# Skip repairer

Skip repairers keep the skips in repair and to build now skips

# Storeman

The Storeman attended to all stores used at the mine.

Age of employees 14+

Source:

Report of the Royal Commission appointed to inquire into and report upon The Coal Industry together with appendices Sydney, Government Printers 10 April 1930,