



TASMANIA FIRE SERVICE

Fire Investigation Report

Fire Incident

555 Freestone Point Road Triabunna

8th February 2014

TFS Incident Number: 214181

TFS Incident Number:

214181

Incident address:

555 Freestone Point Road Triabunna

Date and time investigated:

8th February 2014 at 1730hrs

Fire Investigation Officer:

Regional Fire Investigator Matthew LOWE

TechSafe Inspector:

[REDACTED]

Police

Attending Police Officers:

Officers [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]

Attending C.I.B. Officers:

N/A

Attending Forensics Officers:

N/A

Details Of Occupier/Owner

Occupier:

[REDACTED]

Phone number:

Unknown

Owner/ Lease holder

Triabunna Investments wood chip mill

Address:

[REDACTED]

Municipality:

Glamorgan/Spring Bay

Phone number:

[REDACTED]

Discovery Details

Fire discovered by whom:

Direct Brigade Alarm

Address:

N/A

Phone:

N/A

Insurance Details

Owner/Building:

Damage to plant/machinery, Insurance Unknown

Owner/Contents:

N/A

Occupier/Contents:

N/A

Estimate of Damage

Plant and machinery:

\$150,000 +

Contents:

\$N/A

Other:

\$N/A

Total:

\$150,000 (*estimate only*)

Fire Cause Determination: UNDETERMINED

Responding Fire Brigade

Brigade name/s:

Triabunna, Runnymede, Buckland

Person/s Interviewed

| Name | Address | Date |
|------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| ██████████ | Tasmania Fire Service Volunteer | 08/02/2014 |
| ██████████ | ████████████████████ | 08/02/2014 |
| ██████████ | ██████████ | 08/02/2014 |
| | | |

Summary of Investigation Findings

I Matthew LOWE, Regional Fire Investigator Officer South was requested by District Officer ██████████ to attend a Fire Incident at 555 Freestone Point Road Triabunna, for the purpose of determining the cause and origin of the fire which occurred at approximately 1224hrs on the 8th February 2014.

Upon arrival I was met by the Incident Controller, Triabunna Brigade Chief ██████████. ██████████ was the Crew Leader of the first arriving Volunteer appliance.

██████████ provided me with an overview of the incident including actions taken by firefighters.

██████████ then walked me around the incident stating that upon the Brigades arrival the conveyor belt was burning freely in both directions and the woodchips in the hopper and around the hopper were burning. (see photographs)

Present during the fire investigation was Tech Safe inspector ██████████.

The fire area of origin has been identified through the physical fire language indicators of;

Most overhead damage was evident to the timber platform containing the main switchboard for the hopper. (see photographs 1, 10 and 11)

The lowest point of burning was evident by the heat damage to the retaining wall below the timber platform. (See photographs 7 and 8). The wiring conduit in photograph 9 clearly shows less damage to the upper areas of the conduit indicating the fire has originated below the bottom of the wiring.

There was a V pattern on the metal retaining wall below the timber platform travelling in an upward and outward direction. (see photograph 7 and 8)

Upon inspection of the main switchboard ██████████ discounted electrical fault originating from the switchboard as a cause. Electricity was live to the switch board but the main switch had been isolated. The indicators on the box also indicated fire from the outside not within.

■■■■■ a maintenance electrician at the site and ■■■■■ the site caretaker confirmed that the power was isolated at the switchboard and that the plant had not been used for approximately four years.

A family of burnt possums were found and had been occupying the hopper at the time of the fire, ■■■■■ thought it unlikely they may have interfered with the cabling and caused the fire as the shielding to the wiring was heavy duty.

CONCLUSION

Considering the timeline of events preceding the fire, information obtained from persons at the scene, and the physical fire language indicators present, this fire has originated below the platform where the main switchboard was located, at the base of the steel retaining wall.

At no time during the investigation was there evidence found to suggest a chemical, mechanical, accidental or natural ignition or any evidence to suggest the cause of the fire to be deliberate.

The cause of this fire is therefore to be classified as **UNDETERMINED**

NOTE: This report is based upon the evidence and information which was available at the time of investigation, and does not preclude other possible sources of ignition, given the production of additional factors or evidence after that date.

Signed: Matthew LOWE

Date: 21st February 2014

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PHOTOGRAPH: 1. Timbers from platform



PHOTOGRAPH: 2.



PHOTOGRAPH: 3.



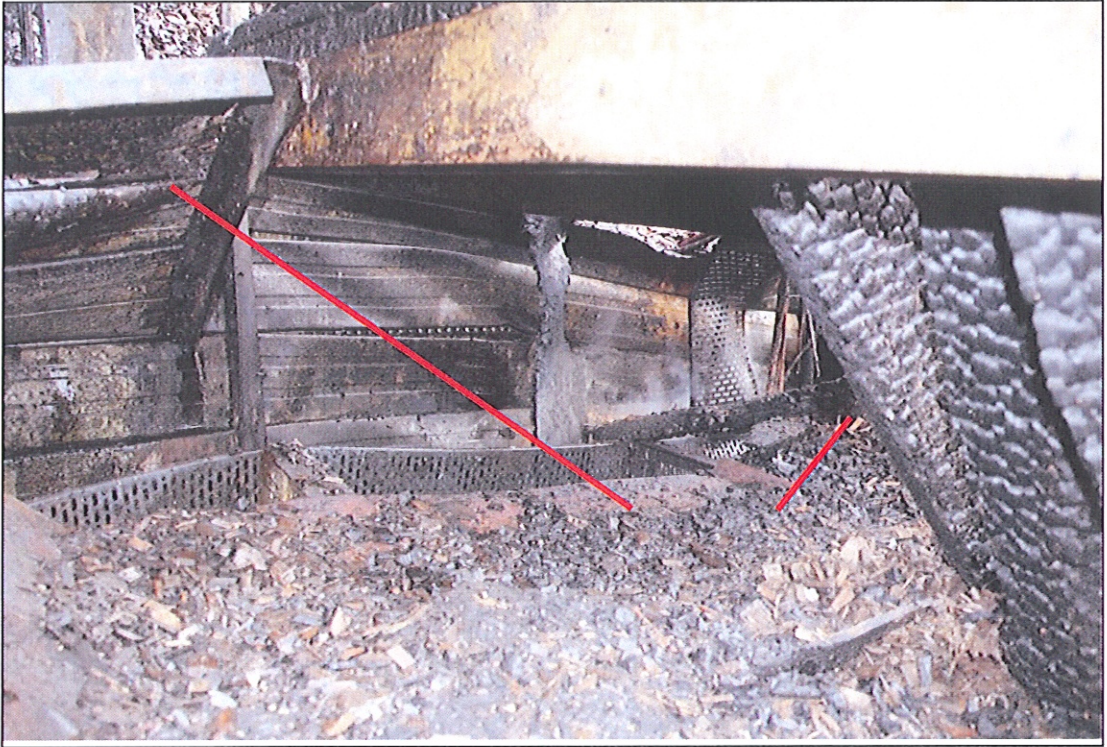
PHOTOGRAPH: 4. Lowest point of heat damage to retaining wall



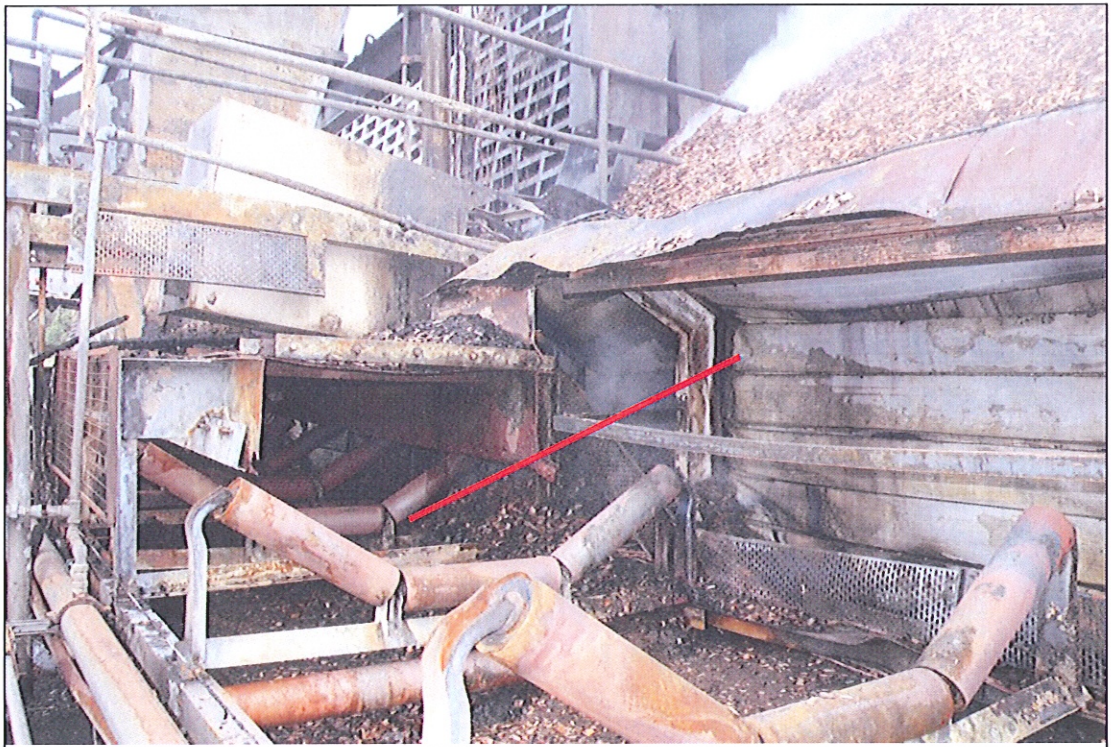
PHOTOGRAPH: 5.



PHOTOGRAPH: 6. Approximate area of fire origin.



PHOTOGRAPH: 7 Partial V Pattern from lowest point of burning



PHOTOGRAPH: 8 Partial V Pattern



PHOTOGRAPH: 9

Remains of conduit at top of cabling, bottom of conduit has been totally consumed by fire.



PHOTOGRAPH: 10



PHOTOGRAPH: 11 Main switch above area of origin. Most overhead damage to timber platform



Fire Investigation Vegetation Fire

TFS Incident Number: 215766
Incident Address: 555 Freestone Point Road Triabunna
Incident Grid Reference: GR 766891
Date & Time investigated: 21st March 2014 at 0900hrs
Fire Investigation Officer: Regional Fire Investigator Matthew LOWE

Details of Occupier/Owner

Occupier/Owner: Triabunna Investments wood chip mill
Phone Number: [REDACTED]

Discovery Details

Fire Discovered by whom: [REDACTED]
Address: Unknown
Phone: [REDACTED]

Person/s Interviewed

| Name | Address | Date |
|------------|---------------------------|------------|
| [REDACTED] | C/O Tasmania Fire Service | 21/03/2014 |
| [REDACTED] | C/O Tasmania Police | 21/03/2014 |
| [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] | 21/03/2014 |
| | | |

Weather Conditions

Location: Orford (no BOM readings for the 20th March 2014)
Temperature: Unknown
Relative Humidity: Unknown

Wind Speed:

Unknown

Wind Direction:

Unknown

Fire Cause Determination:

ACCIDENTAL

Responding Fire Brigade:

Triabunna, Mayfield, Buckland, Runnymede

Summary of Investigation

I Matthew LOWE Regional Fire Investigation Officer South was requested by Acting District Officer [REDACTED] to attend a vegetation fire at 555 Freestone Point Road Triabunna for the purpose of determining the cause and origin of the fire which occurred at approximately 1543hrs on the 20th March 2014.

The two fires when extinguished had burnt approximately one hectare of wood chips, grass and bushland on the site of the Triabunna woodchip mill.

Upon arrival at the fire ground, I was met by Volunteer Group Office [REDACTED] who described the Brigades actions on arrival.

I was also met by [REDACTED] the site caretaker, who stated that workmen under the direction of [REDACTED] had been grinding and cutting steel in the area of the fire. [REDACTED] also stated that the contractors had started a few small fires in the day that he had extinguished.

Upon inspection of the fire scene it was evident there were two areas of fire origin. One fire had originated on the southern end of the conveyor belt frame and one on the northern end of the conveyor belt frame where a section of approximately twenty meters had been removed. (see photograph 8) It is most likely sparks from a grinder has caused the grass to ignite.

This fire is therefore deemed ACCIDENTAL, caused by work practices.

Matthew LOWE

30th March 2014

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PHOTOGRAPH: 1. Fire origin on Southern end of conveyor belt frame.



PHOTOGRAPH: 2. Fire origin on Southern end of conveyor belt frame.



PHOTOGRAPH: 3.



PHOTOGRAPH: 4.



PHOTOGRAPH: 5. Fire origin on northern end of conveyor belt frame.



PHOTOGRAPH: 6. Fire origin on northern end of conveyor belt frame.



PHOTOGRAPH: 7. Area of removed conveyor belt frame.



PHOTOGRAPH: 8