

Lessons from a dam incident

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SYNOPSIS. Panel Engineers learn much when they are called out to deal with dam incidents. This paper attempts to share the lessons from an incident at an anonymous dam. Fifteen lessons are identified, which if followed, will lead to a greater understanding of the properties of dams and their behaviour if failure threatens. It is recommended that this knowledge be used to compile 'emergency handbooks' to equip those handling emergencies to take previously planned measures to minimise the risks to lives and property downstream and to release water quickly from threatened dams.