

Underground mining in Waihi

This is what a typical stope looks like as we mine out the ore body in 'virgin ground', that is, rock which has not been mined before. Although the ore body may be much larger, the void (or stope) we create and work in is smaller. As we work we dig out the roof of the stope and fill in the floor, so the area we mine 'moves' through the ore body.

Drill rig bores holes into ore bearing rock. The holes will be loaded with explosives.

After the blast this ore bearing rock will fall to the bottom and be loaded onto trucks. The same trucks will bring surplus rock back down from the surface to fill the void.

This remote control loader is working on top of rock that has been used to fill the previous stope where the ore has already been mined. As the operation continues the open stope will be filled with rock and the operation will move up to the next level.