MINING AND MINERALS SECTOR
Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET)
STATEMENT OF INTENT

MINING QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

1. PREAMBLE

This Statement of Intent confirms MQA stakeholder commitment to the delivery of Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) to workers who are insufficiently equipped to participate in the ABET 4/ NQF Level 1 qualification.

Stakeholders also acknowledge the objectives set in both the Mining Charter and the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) and commit themselves to align available resources to support these within their own constituencies.

The Mining Charter requires that *"Companies should offer every employee the opportunity to be functionally literate and numerate by 2005"*.

The 2005-2010 National Skills Development Strategy, indicator 2.7 requires that *"By March 2010 at least 700 000 workers have achieved at least ABET level 4"*. The target for the Mining and Minerals Sector is 31 310 over the five year period.

The majority (67%) of the nearly 460 000 workers left school at Grade 9 or lower. A substantial proportion of workers (25%) have no formal schooling. The balance have formal schooling in the General Education and Training (GET) band.

Stakeholders expressed their concern with the ability of companies within the Mining and Minerals Sector to achieve these targets and requested the MQA to research:

- Reasons for slow uptake of learners into ABET programmes;
- Current constraints to employers in providing ABET to workers in the Mining and Minerals Sector;
- Worker perceptions on ABET;
- Current status of ABET provision and delivery in the Mining and Minerals Sector; and
- The impact of the MQA grants incentives in ABET provision delivery.

The research was done and a formal report was tabled at the July 2006 Board meeting.

2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

From the research findings the following key themes and issues were identified by the MQA Board:

- The lack of reliable data hampers accurate analysis and reporting;
- Both full time and part time participation have inherent structural obstacles;
- Provision of support and resources are directly linked to company size and location;
- Employee motivation not linked to career paths beyond NQF level 1 qualifications;
- The lack of a Sector wide skills audit hampers resource planning and support;
- The Recognition of Prior Learning (RPL) Assessment toolkit is not fully utilised;
- Insufficient incentives available to encourage both employers and employees to support ABET delivery and participation;
- The lack of ABET 4 and NQF1 provision hampers learner participation.

3. STAKEHOLDER UNDERTAKINGS

All stakeholders commit themselves to take account of the issues in 2 above in their implementation of ABET programmes.

All stakeholders commit themselves to utilise available company resources to promote ABET in their respective operations.

Where possible and where it makes economic sense to do so, companies will be encouraged to share ABET facilities.

More specifically, stakeholders will be encouraged to:

- Intensify the provision and delivery, by employers, of ABET opportunities to employees - with particular emphasis on the number of employees participating in ABET Level 4;
- Submit company Annual Training Reports (ATR) to enable the MQA to more accurately analyse and report on ABET participation in the Mining and Minerals Sector, and further coordinate information sharing between the Department of Minerals and Energy (DME) and the MQA;
- Identify and address, on a company basis, the structural obstacles affecting participation of learners. This could include issues such as the releasing and incentivising of employees to attend ABET programmes,language of ABET provision and the establishing of appropriate ABET good practices, processes and systems;
- Minimize the impact of company size and location on the provision and support of ABET provision – investigate linkup with other providers of ABET in the local area where company size and location inhibits ABET provision;
- Motivate employees by linking the achievement of the ABET 4 certificate to career paths beyond NQF level 1 qualifications. Also linking ABET to health and safety, productivity, transformation and individual well-being;
- Participate in the planned MQA Sector wide skills analysis;
- Implement the practice of RPL and utilise the available MQA RPL assessment toolkit;
- Through stakeholder professional organisations, forums and bodies, lobby the National Skills Fund (NSF) to support and encourage ABET delivery;
- Where ABET is not provided within a company, identify alternative providers (e.g. Further Education and Training Colleges) of ABET 4 and NQF1 and promote the utilisation of these alternative providers to increase ABET learner participation.

4. MONITORING AND REVIEWING OF UNDERTAKINGS

Stakeholders further commit themselves to report on progress in terms of the nine undertakings given in paragraph 3 above.

Monitoring of progress will be through an addendum to the existing Annual Training Report (ATR). The information obtained in this way will be incorporated into the MQA *"Annual review of WSP and ATR Analysis Report"* and will be distributed to stakeholders at the MQA Annual Consultative Conference.

Stakeholders also commit themselves to review progress in 2008 and again in 2010. Such review will be planned and organized by the MQA.

Signed on this day, the 09 November 2006, in Johannesburg.

For the State

Minister of Minerals and Energy

For Labour Stakeholders

President: National Union of Mineworkers

For Employer Stakeholders

President: Chamber of Mines