



MINING QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY

TRIPARTITE LEADERSHIP

SUMMIT AGREEMENT IN THE

MINING AND MINERALS SECTOR



MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

BACKGROUND

For decades, the mining sector has been challenged with the prevalence of mine accidents resulting in injuries, diseases and fatalities. Although the numbers have declined over the years, one mine accident resulting in a fatality is one too many. The Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996 was established to ensure that initiatives are in place to transform the sector through training and communication that will contribute to the decline of accidents and improve the general health of employees.

A major challenge facing the South African mining industry continues to be the attainment of sustainable improvements in health and safety performance. Falls of ground and transportation accidents are still major causes of fatalities despite a gradual decrease over recent years. However, fatalities have increased within transportation and machinery, explosives and in general mining operations.

Occupational diseases amongst mineworkers remain unacceptably high and include silicosis (pneumoconiosis), mesothelioma, tuberculosis, and asbestosis. Noise-induced hearing loss continues to be a serious affliction amongst mineworkers.

It is against this background that the Mine Health and Safety Tripartite Leadership Summit Agreement was signed on 5 September 2008.

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA), the Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC), the Department of Minerals Resources (DMR), Employers, Organised Labour and Employees are committed to creating awareness in the sector which will:

- promote a culture of health and safety;
- communicate the learning opportunities available to OHS Representatives and employees in the sector;
- contribute towards building capacity and a consciousness of issues pertaining to health and safety;
- communicate the benefits of increased awareness for a safer and healthier workplace;
- assist in forming partnerships that will ensure that information is disseminated as widely as possible.

VALUES AGREED TO BY STAKEHOLDERS

We as stakeholder leaders fully support the following values:

- Zero harm in the workplace as the only acceptable level of safety and health;
- Zero harm through collaborative action;
- Care, dignity and respect for all – emphasise diversity, elimination of discrimination and recognise the societal impact of occupational health and safety (OHS);
- A learning and participative culture rather than a culture of blame;
- Fair sanction to ensure compliance, but strict on repeat transgressions;
- Honesty, integrity and transparency, which will also lead to more trust; and
- Occupational health and safety as core value of every company and this should take precedence over production.

THE PARTNERSHIP



DME

- Department of Minerals and Energy

MQA

- Mining Qualifications Authority

MHSC

- Mine Health and Safety Council

ORGANISED LABOUR

- NUM, Solidarity and UASA

EMPLOYERS

- Chamber of Mines and others

EMPLOYEES

- All employees in the sector

KEY TRANSFORMATION DRIVERS IN THE SECTOR

THE MINING QUALIFICATIONS AUTHORITY

The Mining Qualifications Authority (MQA) is a statutory body established in terms of the Mine Health and Safety Act No. 29 of 1996 and is a registered Sector Education and Training Authority for the Mining and Minerals Sector in terms of the Skills Development Act No 97 of 1998.

The SAQA Act No 58 of 1995 requires of the MQA to generate Unit Standards and Qualifications and enables the organisation to be an Education and Training Quality Assurance (ETQA) body for the sector. The MQA must support the objectives of the National Skills Development Strategy (NSDS) as determined by the Department of Labour and also support the objectives of the Mining Charter in terms of the Minerals and Petroleum Resources Development Act (No. 29 of 1996).

The organization is responsible for administering a number of skills development initiatives in order to facilitate and support transformation and sustainable growth in the Mining and Minerals Sector.

As part of the Mine Health and Safety Tripartite Leadership Summit it has allocated R54 million to train 40 000 OHS Representatives over five years as required by the Mine Health and Safety Tripartite Leadership Summit Agreement signed on 5 September 2008. Additional funds have also been allocated to identify and implement a suitable training course for Mine Inspectors.

THE MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

The Mine Health and Safety Council is a statutory body established in terms of the Mine Health and Safety Act of 1996.

The Council is made up of equal representation by state, employer and organised labour members under chairmanship of the Chief Inspector of Mines.

The primary function of the MHSC is to advise the Minister of Minerals Resources on research, regulations and occupational health policies to improve occupational health and safety in South African mines. To give effect to the mandate, the Council manages three permanent committees with key responsibilities in health and safety research (SIMRAC), legislation to promote occupational health and safety at mines (MRAC), and monitoring of occupational health at mines (MOHAC).

The Council is also tasked to promote the development of a preventative occupational health and safety culture and to support the achievement of the industry milestones focused on preventing occupational diseases, accidents and injuries.

SECTOR MILESTONES OF THE MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY TRIPARTITE LEADERSHIP SUMMIT AGREEMENT

Zero rate of fatalities and injuries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve safety performance levels in line with international standards • Ensure continuous improvement
Eliminate Silicosis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure 95% of all exposure measurement results will be below the occupational exposure limit for respirable crystalline silica of 0.1 mg/m³ by 2008 • Ensure no new cases of silicosis occur
Eliminate Noise-Induced Hearing Loss	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that no hearing deterioration greater than 10% occur amongst occupationally exposed individuals; • Ensure the total noise emitted by all equipment installed in any workplace must not exceed a sound pressure level of 110 dB
The MQA intends to further contribute towards education on:	
The prevention of HIV/Aids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that employees receive education on HIV and Aids to ensure that the rate of HIV and Aids is drastically reduced in the mining and minerals sector

ZERO RATE OF FATALITIES AND INJURIES

At the release of the Presidential audit report on safety in the mining industry in February 2009, the Minister of Minerals and Energy, Ms Buyelwa Sonjica, stated that the mining industry had achieved an overall score of 66 percent compliance with the relevant requirements of the Mine Health and Safety Act. It was further stated that unsafe working conditions continue to lead to the death of mine workers annually resulting in households losing breadwinners. In some cases mine workers are severely injured resulting in the loss of the ability to earn an income for their families.

The MHSC Safety Research Programme supports the achievement of a zero rate of fatalities and injuries through various Rockfall and Rockburst prevention programmes; and projects on trackless mobile equipment, preventing the ignition of flammable gases and mine fires; electricity accidents; and the development of safety equipment, such as the “mechanical jaws” to prevent rockfalls.

ELIMINATING SILICOSIS

The MHSC is funding a large-scale silicosis control and elimination programme since 2005 in an attempt to remove the scourge of silicosis at our mines.

Silicosis, (also called pneumoconiosis), is an incurable lung disease caused by the inhalation of crystalline silica dust found in hard rock mines, coal mines, quarries, foundries and sand operations. Mineworkers are especially exposed to the inhalation of silica dust and to contracting the dreaded disease, sometimes years after exposure.

The MHSC silicosis research programme is investigating dust measurement, dust monitoring and reporting, environmental engineering and dust control, and promoting the prevention and elimination of the disease through comics, information packages, and awareness roadshows.

ELIMINATE NOISE INDUCED HEARING LOSS

Employees in the mines are responsible to ensure that they wear protective gear in addition to concerted efforts in mines to ensure the total noise emitted by all equipment installed in any workplace must not exceed a sound pressure level of 110 dB.

Current initiatives to address noise-induced hearing loss include research projects on reducing noise levels of machinery and equipment; active noise reduction methods; new technologies for noise controls, including containment of noise inside special machine enclosures; and training programmes to promote the elimination of noise-induced hearing loss.

PREVENTION OF HIV AND AIDS

The key goal in the MQA is to ensure that HIV and Aids is prevented. Education programmes must be ensured so that responsible behaviour is encouraged. Employees who are already affected should receive ongoing education, support and treatment.

COMMITMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders agreed that an action-driven plan is necessary to achieve significant improvements which are required in mine health and safety performance. Such as the actions that the Mine Health and Safety Tripartite Leadership Summit relate to:

- Strengthening the culture of health and safety
- Promoting a learning industry and building capacity
- Making workplaces safer and healthier

EVENTS THAT TAKE PLACE ANNUALLY TO INFORM THE SECTOR

- MHSC Roadshows
- Annual MQA National and Community Roadshows
- Annual MQA Consultative Conference
- Health and Safety Forums
- Various exhibitions and information sessions by the DME
- Various Labour Events

PROJECTS FOCUSING ON MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY AT THE MQA

- The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Representative Development Project was established to train 40 000 OHS Representatives over five years as required by the Mine Health and Safety Tripartite Leadership Summit Agreement signed on 5 September 2008. A budget of R54 million has been established for this project for 2009 to 2010.
- The Mine Inspector Training Project was established to identify and implement a suitable training course for Mine Inspectors. R4,2 million has been budgeted for this project.

WEBSITE ADDRESSES:

- www.mqa.org.za
- www.mhsc.org.za
- www.dme.gov.za
- www.num.org.za
- www.solidaritysa.co.za
- www.usa.org.za
- www.chamberofmines.org.za



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