



Energy
Mineral Resources

Media statement

To all media

31 March 2020

MINISTER MANTASHE CONDUCTS UNANNOUNCED VISITS TO COAL MINES IN MPUMALANGA

The Minister of Mineral Resources and Energy Mr Gwede Mantashe (MP) today, 31 March 2020, conducted unannounced mine visits at three colliers in Mpumalanga which supply coal to Eskom. This was done to assess compliance by mining companies to the nationwide lockdown regulations.

The Minister also used the visits to assess the implementation of the directive and guiding principles issued by the Department to all mines on how to manage risks associated with COVID-19 at an operational level, in line with provisions in the Mine Health and Safety Act.

All mines are required to - among others - conduct a risk-based assessment covering all workings at mines, reduce numbers of employees transported on common transport per shift, and where applicable, reduce the number of shifts per day.

“The primary objective of our interventions is to ensure that as many people as possible are protected from COVID-19, and that the sector is able to bounce back from this challenge when the lockdown is lifted,” Minister Mantashe said.

There are currently three confirmed cases of COVID-19 in the mining and energy sectors - one each in Gauteng, Mpumalanga and Western Cape.

“The mines are not at the same level in terms of their state of readiness to deal with the pandemic. We are encouraging all mines to work together - employers and labour unions - to share best practice and ensure their systems are complementary, in order to proactively manage risks beyond each mine,” the Minister said.

The mines visited by the Minister today are Glencore’s Impunzi Colliery, Exxaro’s Matla Coal and Seriti’s Kriel Colliery.

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