

TRANSFORMING HEALTH AND SAFETY PERFORMANCE THROUGH COMMITTED ACTION

2021 MINESAFE ONLINE CONFERENCE
COMMITMENTS TO FOSTER A RENEWED
FOCUS ON SAFETY IMPROVEMENT



MEDIA STATEMENT

124/2021

MINESAFE 2021 JOINT STAKEHOLDERS STATEMENT

MINING INDUSTRY RECOMMITS TO HEALTH AND SAFETY AS WELL AS TO URGENTLY FOCUS ON ACTIONS TO ADDRESS THE LOSS OF LIFE OF MINE EMPLOYEES

Johannesburg, 6 December 2021. The stakeholders who attended MineSafe 2021 on 25 November have re-committed themselves to working towards the elimination of fatalities, injuries, and occupational diseases on South Africa's mines in pursuit of Zero Harm to ensure that each employee returns from work unharmed every day.

The urgency of interventions to address health and safety and, more specifically, the continued loss of life of the employees in the mining sector cannot be understated. The industry is concerned and shocked by the deaths of 69 people so far this year compared to 48 in the same period last year. This is the second consecutive year of regression in fatalities and the industry's stakeholders have committed to urgently address the unacceptable situation. In 2020, the total number of fatalities was 60, up from the lowest number of 51 in 2019.

To achieve a step change towards transforming health and safety in the mining sector, stakeholders from the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, the Minerals Council South Africa, organised labour, suppliers' organisations, professional associations, the Mine Health and Safety Council and Mining Qualifications Authority have committed to taking full accountability in addressing the challenges besetting the mining sector.

Work is already underway to address falls of ground and transport-related accidents which are the leading sources of fatalities.

At MineSafe 2021 Conference, stakeholders accepted responsibility to assist in ensuring individual and group commitments to improve health and safety performances.

The commitments agreed to at the MineSafe 2021 Conference would complement and help the mining industry to achieve the 2014 Summit Ten-Year Milestones.

The tangible outcomes of the MineSafe 2021 Conference included agreements on the implementation of the following actions:

- Treating all employees with respect, trust and dignity.
- Assisting each other, asking for help and providing guidance to maintain a healthy and safe environment.
- Build the existing relationship by earning the trust of other stakeholders by honouring agreements and upholding commitments while engaging respectfully with each other.
- Adoption of technologies that include modernisation of mine and 4IR-enabled innovations.
- Adoption of safety leading practices such as collision prevention systems to address transport-related risks and mining with nets and bolts to address fall of ground accidents.
- Adoption of production technologies like faster rock-drills to shorten the mining cycle, drilling outside the box cut which reduces risks to operators and promotes Zero Harm production by enabling safe behaviour.
- A priority action to promote the COVID-19 vaccinations to support the physical and mental health of employees and reduce the disruptions to operations, both of which will enable all stakeholders to have a renewed focus on occupational safety.
- The implementation of the five-year R46 million investment on the implementation of Fall of Ground action plan launched at the Minerals Council 's National Day of Health and Safety in Mining held in July 2021.
- Implementation of a holistic, risk-phased plan on collision-prevention systems with ecosystem readiness for industry-wide adoption by December 2023.
- Adoption of safe mining practices including the use of safe equipment to favourably respond to the divergent challenges experienced by some mining operations. Examples of these challenges are inter alia; diminishing ore reserves, ageing infrastructure, unfavourable commodity prices, and travelling long distances underground to areas of work.

- Conducting a statistical analysis of all fatalities over the last decade using international leading practice methodologies and proposing an action plan to eliminate all other risks effectively through for example modern training methods.
- Urgent implementation of an independent assessment study of the Culture Transformation Framework (CTF) priority pillars by the Mine Health and Safety Council. The aim of the assessment should be to identify leading practices that could be promoted and to identify the gaps that still need to be addressed and finalise a revised CTF implementation plan during 2022.
- Transformation of health and safety culture should focus, amongst others, on health and safety campaigns, visible felt leadership, zero tolerance to unsafe behaviour, extra vigilance by all workers, strategies to ensure mineworkers have the knowledge, skills and support to exercise their rights to withdraw or refuse to work under dangerous conditions (as per MHSC guideline), effective supervision by all responsible mine personnel to prevent accidents and create a no blame culture to learn and grow from incidents by, for example, holding Days of Learning.
- Ensure that there are adequate consultations at the mine level. These interactions between management, unions and employees will aid in determining effective measures to enhance health and safety. Further these consultations and engagements will enable a relationship of trust and goodwill amongst all stakeholders.

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