

MEDIA STATEMENT

MINERALS COUNCIL AND LABOUR UNIONS COMMITTED TO WORK TOGETHER TO ADDRESS COVID-19 TO SAVE LIVES AND LIVELIHOODS

Urge employees to vaccinate as soon as they have the opportunity to do so

Johannesburg, 3 June 2021: The Minerals Council South Africa and labour unions, the Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU), the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), Solidarity and UASA have reconfirmed their support for South Africa's national vaccination programme, and have urged all industry employees to get vaccinated as soon as they have the opportunity to do so.

The Minerals Council has been working closely with B4SA in supporting government's vaccination roll-out plan, and is committed to playing its part in getting as many 'jabs in arms' as soon as possible, so that we can save lives and livelihoods. (B4SA is an alliance of South African volunteers working with the South African government, and other social partners, as well as various stakeholders to mobilise business resources and capacity to combat the Covid-19 pandemic).

After a detailed assessment process, 55 mining sites have applied to register as primary vaccination sites, and a further 76 sites as secondary sites. These sites will cover around 433,000 employees. There is a very detailed process that each site has to undergo in order to be registered, and this is undertaken by the Department of Health (DoH). Five sites have received the requisite permits from the DoH. One site is currently operational, that is, it has vaccines and is vaccinating.

Workplace vaccination will be undertaken in line with the national priorities. The DoH has adopted a strategy of age-based prioritisation, targeting those most at risk of death and severe illness. This means that, currently, only the over-60s (around 6,000 industry employees) and remaining healthcare workers are eligible. The next phase of vaccinations –



when the over- 50 and over-40 age categories are invited to participate – will be most critical to the industry.

The industry's vaccination registration process will be integrated with the national Electronic Vaccine Data System (EVDS), with the only difference from the national campaign being the companies' ability to bulk upload employee information, and to facilitate scheduling at a mine-based sites.

The Minerals Council has confirmed the industry's intention to support the vaccination of employees and community members, and is engaging with the authorities on how this can best be done, either through vaccination centres, or in kind support.

The Minerals Council has collaborated with unions in running an intensive communications campaign among employees to get those over 60 registered and vaccinated, and to encourage all employees to assist their family and community members to get vaccinated, and this is being intensified. This is further supported by an ongoing massive communication campaign aimed at equipping employees with the information they need to be able to make an informed decision and #ChooseToVaccinate including information about the vaccine and its benefits, as well as how to deal with potential side-effects. Importantly, however, the continuation of non-medical interventions – wearing masks, sanitising, social distancing – remains inculcated into the way we work.

For further queries:

Charmane Russell

Tel: +27 (0)11 880 3924 or Mobile: +27 (0) 82 372 5816

Email: charmane@rasc.co.za

Web: www.mineralscouncil.org.za