

MEDIA STATEMENT

THE MINERALS COUNCIL SOUTH AFRICA INTERVENES AS THE MINING INDUSTRY'S SAFETY PERFORMANCE REGRESSES AFTER ENCOURAGING FIRST SEVEN MONTHS OF 2022

Johannesburg, 20 September 2022. The Minerals Council South Africa convened a special Board meeting to urgently address an unacceptable regression in the mining industry's safety performance in August and to implement a range of interventions to ensure safer working environments.

The industry recorded eight fatalities in August. In the year to date the total number of deaths is 36 compared to 36 in the same period in 2021, which is deeply disappointing after the industry's safety interventions delivered an encouraging performance in the first seven months of the year, with record safety achievements in fall of ground and trackless mobile machinery-related fatalities.

We are fully cognisant of the heartbreak and tragedy that is visited on the families, friends and colleagues of every single person who has died. We affirm our ongoing commitment to the achievement of zero harm in the industry and that our members are proactively addressing the deterioration in safety with all the seriousness and urgency that it deserves.

Given our unwavering commitment to the goal of zero harm, the industry's August safety performance – the worst month of the year – was a red flag we could not ignore, and which demanded an immediate proactive response. The Minerals Council called a special Board meeting on 9 September to agree revitalised safety interventions in the sector as it heads into the final three months of the year, which are historically the period associated with an increasing number of fatalities.

While the Board members agreed on the need for increased and impactful visible felt leadership safety campaigns and mass meetings in the last months of the year, the Board emphasised that it was equally important to address the potential impact of COVID-19, mental



health and external environmental factors, which include economic pressures, crime in communities and gender-based violence, on the safety of employees in mining operations.

Through increased visible leadership and CEO-ship, the Board members agreed on the following actions for the prevention of fatalities in the last months of the year:

1. Re-commitment to the eight measures agreed at the special Board meeting on safety in December 2021.
2. Planning and resourcing: ensuring proper planning, supervisory oversight and adequate team resourcing in people, materials and equipment.
3. Winches proposal: the Minerals Council establishes a multi-disciplinary team to explore alternative ways of cleaning broken ore from working areas.
4. Trackless mobile machinery: ensuring controls such as proximity detection systems and/or collision prevention systems are effective.

While the industry has seen reductions in fall of ground and transport-related causes of accidents in recent years, a worrying trend has been observed regarding winch-related fatalities in the mining industry.

On 15 September, the Minerals Council hosted the Scraper Winches Day of Learning to share learnings, leading practices and technologies to address the challenges associated with using underground winches which are used to scrape broken ore out of working areas to haul to the surface for processing.

One of the outcomes of the session was the endorsement of the recommendation made by the Minerals Council Special Board meeting on the establishment of a multi-disciplinary team to explore alternative ways of collecting the broken ore in conventional mines besides scrapers and winches.

The Minerals Council is committed to zero harm and will continue to collaborate tirelessly with the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, organised labour and other stakeholders to ensure every mineworker returns from work unharmed.

The Minerals Council held a special Board meeting in December 2021 after two successive years of safety regressions and it agreed eight interventions that would be urgently implemented. In the first seven months of 2022, there were encouraging trends in the

industry's safety performance, with records achieved in fall of ground-related fatalities as well as trackless mobile machinery-related deaths.

The eight commitments agreed to in December 2021 can be found here:
<https://www.mineralscouncil.org.za/industry-news/media-releases/2021/send/76-2021/1793-minerals-council-board-urgent-safety-intervention>

For further queries:

Allan Seccombe

Head Communications

Tel: 064 650 4636

Email: aseccombe@mineralscouncil.org.za

Web: www.mineralscouncil.org.za