



MHSC

MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL

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JOURNEY

THE MINE HEALTH AND SAFETY COUNCIL'S OFFICIAL e-NEWSLETTER

EXPLOSIVES REGULATIONS AMENDMENT NOTE



The safety of mine workers is our priority as it is every mine worker's right to work in a safe environment. The Department of Mineral Resources and Energy (DMRE) together with the Mine Health and Safety Council (MHSC) are working to ensure that the number of occupational injuries and fatalities decreases in South African mines. The DMRE and the MHSC are striving for the journey to Zero Harm where by every mine worker returns home from work unharmed every day.

It is against this background that the Minister of DMRE amended the Explosives Regulations, as found in Chapter 4 of the Mine Health and Safety Act, by notice in the South African Government Gazette on the 14th of September 2018. The key objectives of this amendment is in relation with the mandate of MHSC which is to advise the Minister of DMRE on occupational health and safety legislation and research outcomes focussed on improving and promoting occupational health and safety in South African mines.

Explosive regulations affect everyone who uses explosives in their line of duty. As a result, these new regulations need to be implemented by the employers and the employees who utilize explosives. Safety compliance is crucial.

The previous explosives legislation promulgated by Government Notice No. 38970 dated the 10 July 2015 dealt with the risks and hazards associated with more sensitive Nitroglycerin based explosives and open flame initiation systems in comparison to today's less sensitive Ammonium Nitrate - based explosives and closed flame initiation systems. Accordingly, the broad variety of explosives and methods of initiation have different requirements which varies from mine to mine as it is determined by the explosives manufacturers and or supplier's recommendations from time to time based on parameters such as blast design.

The amended regulations as promulgated by Government Notice No. 41904 dated 14 September 2018 deal with the following aspects:

1. Definitions relating to explosives;
2. Destruction of explosives;
3. Precautionary measures before initiating explosive charges;
4. Precautionary measures for misfires, sockets and old explosives;
5. Precautionary measures for marking, drilling and blasting;
6. Precautionary measures for stemming and tamping of shot holes;
7. Blasting within 500m of any structure;
8. Insertion of more than one detonator into an explosive charge; and
9. Definition of Competent person

The regulations came into operation three months after the date of publication in the Government Gazette, and were as such enforceable from the 15th of December 2018.