

MEDIA STATEMENT

SOUTH AFRICAN MINING SAFETY INTERVENTIONS, LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION LEADS TO RECORD FATALITY-REDUCTION IN THE FIRST HALF OF 2022

Johannesburg, 20 July. South Africa achieved a record six months without a mining fatality caused by a fall-of-ground (FOG) in gold and platinum mines, says the Minerals Council South Africa.

Building on the record performance in the first three months of 2022 when a single person was killed in a fall of ground incident in the coal sector, the leadership initiatives and the implementation of strategies, leading practices, and the Minerals Council-led FOG Action Plan to mitigate incidents have resulted in no fatalities in the gold and platinum mines for the first six months of the year.

The entire industry was FOG fatality-free in the second quarter of the year. This is significant because gold and platinum mines have not had a FOG-fatality free first six months of the year in the history of South African mining, says Minerals Council's Head of Safety Dr Sizwe Phakathi. There were 11 FOG fatalities by the end of June last year.

In the past three years, including the industry's record safety performance in 2019, FOG fatalities accounted for at least 20 deaths in each of those three years.

"The Minerals Council commends all stakeholders including mining companies, unions, employees, mine professional associations, the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy, suppliers, research institutions, the Mine Health and Safety Council, and the Mining Qualifications Authority who have all worked tirelessly and collaboratively to ensure that every mine employee can return from work unharmed," says Dr Phakathi.

The Minerals Council Board held a special meeting in December 2021 to agree on, and urgently implement, eight interventions to halt two years of regression in safety performances



in the mining industry and then to reverse the trend. In 2020 and 2021, the industry reported 60 and 74 fatalities respectively, compared to the all-time low of 51 in 2019.

According to data available to the Minerals Council, 23 employees have died in the year to date (18 July) compared to 29 in the same period a year earlier, marking a 21% reduction and the best rate of reduction in fatalities in the first six months of a year.

“We are undertaking a comprehensive review to understand what went well and what we can learn from the past six months. The review will be done by the Minerals Council in collaboration with other stakeholders,” says Dr Phakathi.

The results of the review will be unveiled during the National Day on Health and Safety in Mining on 3 August 2022.

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