Promoting decent work in mining

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International Labour Office
Introduction

- International Labour Organization
  - UN specialised agency
    - “Decent work”
  - Unique tripartite structure
    - Workers
    - Employers
    - Governments
  - Seeks the promotion of social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights
ILO - main areas of work

- International Labour Standards
  - International standards
- Employment
- Social protection
  - Occupational safety and health
    - Coal methane as a very important aspect, as demonstrated by the statement made by the Secretary-General of ICEM during the International Labour Conference 2010
- Social dialogue
  - Sectoral social dialogue
ILO and mining

- International Labour Conferences
  - Minimum Age (Industry) Convention, 1919 (No.5)
  - Hours of Work (Coal Mines) Convention, 1931 (No.31)

- Industrial committees
  - 1944 decision to establish seven industrial committees
    - Textiles; Coalmining; Inland transport; Iron and steel production; Metal trades; Petroleum production and refining; Building, civil engineering and public works

- Tripartite sectoral meetings
  - Tripartite Meeting on Social and Labour Issues in Small-scale Mines, 1999
  - Meeting of Experts on Safety and Health in Coalmines, 2006
In order to assist its constituents in improving working conditions, the ILO uses a number of different instruments or means of action:

- International Labour Standards
  - Conventions
  - Recommendations
- Guidance/reference materials
- Technical assistance
International Labour Standards

- **Conventions**
  - International treaties, subject to ratification by ILO member States
  - Create binding obligations under International Law
  - Might require Member States to amend their national legislation

- **Recommendations**
  - Set out guidelines which can orient national policy and action
  - Often complement Conventions
Specific ILS for mining

- Safety and Health in Mines Convention, 1995 (No.176) and its accompanying Recommendation No.183

- Others:
  - Medical examination of Young Persons (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No.124)
  - Minimum Age (Underground Work) Convention, 1965 (No.123)
Other instruments

- Codes of practice
- Guidelines
  - HIV/AIDS guidelines for the mining sector (in development)
- Manuals
- Other reference materials
  - ILO's International Classification of Radiographs of Pneumoconioses
  - ILO Encyclopaedia of Occupational Health and Safety
Convention No. 176

- Adopted in 1995
- In force since 1998
- 24 ratifications

- Recommendation No. 183
  - Complements C.176
  - Provides more detailed guidance (not binding)
Ratifying countries

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C.176 - main features

- Basis for a coherent OSH policy in mines
- Aims to ensure effective implementation
  - Designation of “competent authority”
  - Reporting and investigating procedures
  - National record of accidents and incidents
- Suspension or restriction of work on OSH grounds
- Right to worker participation and consultation
- Hierarchy of measures:
  - Eliminate the risk
  - Control the risk
  - Minimize the risk
  - Provide PPE (only as a last resort)
C.176

- Provides a floor
  - Minimum requirements for safe and healthy mining
  - Clear roles and responsibilities

- Links in with the Occupational Safety and Health Convention, 1981 (No.155)
  - Ratified by 50 Member States

- Implementation matters
How can ILO help?

- Committee of Experts
  - Impartial evaluation of the state of application of international labour standards
- Technical assistance (eg. by building capacity)
  - Regional workshops on mine safety and health
- Technical cooperation projects
- Tools!
Tools?

- Codes of practice
- Guidelines
- Manuals
- Training tools
Codes of practice

- Voluntary, practical guidance
- Contain general principles and specific guidance
- Provide a basis for prevention and protective measures
- ILO technical standards in occupational safety and health
- Not designed to replace national laws or regulations or accepted standards
Codes of practice - examples

- Safety and health in opencast mines, 1991
- Safety and health in underground coalmines, 2008

- Ambient factors in the workplace, 2001
- HIV/AIDS and the world of work, 2001
- OSH management systems, 2001

- Recording and notification of occupational accidents and diseases, 1996
- Protection of workers’ personal data, 1997
Meeting of experts on safety and health in underground coal mines
- Geneva, 8-13 May 2006
- 23 Government, Employer and Worker experts
- Revised and adopted new code of practice on safety and health in underground coal mines

The code provides important practical guidance in support of the provisions of C.176 R.183.
- Translated into Chinese, English, French, Hindi, Polish, Russian, and Spanish
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<th>Part II</th>
<th>Part III</th>
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<td>National framework</td>
<td>Methodology for identifying risks and addressing hazards</td>
<td>Provisions for safe underground coalmining operations</td>
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General provisions, Glossary

Bibliography, Annexes
Other ILO work

- Mining-specific guidelines on HIV/AIDS
- International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
- Projects on small-scale mining
Thank you

For further information

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