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PRESS RELEASE

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TMM solutions for surface mines

Mining association, Aspasa, is working closely with Government and role players to ensure its members understand and adhere to new requirements relating to proximity detection systems (PDS) for mobile machines in surface mining operations.

New legislation promulgated by the Department of Mineral Resources requires mines to take steps within the next two years to physically prevent contact between mobile machines and humans or to install PDS on trackless mobile machinery (TMM) for effective collision management. These measures need to be in place by no later than December 2020 failing which severe action will be brought against responsible parties and mine owners.

Thys Greyvenstein of the Minerals Council South Africa says, "This is not as straightforward as it may seem as proper risk assessments need to be done first in order to know how to comply and it is precisely for this reason that Aspasa is holding workshops and developing documentation that will guide our surface mines in future."

Thys explains that in order to comply mines' management teams need to understand how to do effective risk assessments, they also need to understand PDS control systems' effectiveness and how to implement traffic management plans that remove people from harm's way. They must also understand that by the time TMM or alternatives become mandatory where risk exists, the technology will still not be fool-proof and mine owners will still need to look at other ways to reduce the risk.

"With fatalities on mines increasing, there is no way the industry can ignore the requirement but should rather to embrace it and find the right solutions that will work on individual mines. It is also important to know that there are alternatives to expensive technology if mines do proper traffic management plans and implement them effectively.

"In our ongoing efforts to ensure compliance across all sectors in the industry, as well as among big and small operators alike, we are encouraging active participation discussions and trials that are being run by the industry to determine the exact requirements for surface mining. Also, we encourage miners to attend Aspasa's workshops and make use of the information and documentation that is available to its members in order to learn more and become compliant before the deadline," Thys concludes.

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