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## PRESS RELEASE

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### **ASPASA takes a strategic leap with its new Blasting Audit**

*Hot on the heels of new audits to assist members with compliance to mining charter, technical and quality requirements, and besides its mandatory health, safety and environment audits, surface mining industry association Aspasa is further extending its strategic service to members in the form of a new blasting audit.*

According to director, Nico Pienaar, Aspasa has decided to offer Blasting Audits to members due to our mining industry facing numerous practical-legal challenges since the Mine Health and Safety Act's (MHSA) new explosives regulations came into effect on 14 December 2018. Then there have also been various demands made by affected communities and Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) officials.

"Whilst some of these demands are not provided for in legislation and others are simply impractical, they are having an impact on the running of mining operations. A Blasting Audit that's in line with all new requirements of the MHSA, is a positive step toward clarifying and endorsing the legal parameters of mining operations, and particularly when it comes to the use of explosives," says Pienaar.

To develop the audit, Aspasa has tasked an explosives solutions company, that manages explosives related legal challenges, blasting engineering improvement initiatives, and independent investigations to undertake audits of members sites.

#### *Aspasa's Blasting Audit*

Whilst the Audit's objective is primarily to prevent explosives-related incidents, accidents and legal stoppages, it does employ a more comprehensive examination.

Basically, it covers operational-legal compliance to the Explosives Act and to MHSA explosives regulations, as well as regulations relevant to:

- licenses, permits, approvals, etc.
- operational implemented systems, measures, procedures and risk assessments
- physical inspection of explosives facilities and blasting processes

The Audit's management strategy will achieve its objectives through focusing on the following main areas of the audited mining operation:

- its explosives responsibility structure,
- an evaluation of its explosives technology,
- an assessment of product requirements and supplier contracts,
- and explosives quality control and quality assurance.

Moreover, mining operations will receive advice and assistance regarding various explosives-related challenges such as legal stoppages, complaints from the public related to blasting (whether caused by vibrations, noise, dust or debris), independent investigations into explosives related accidents or incidents, and even applications to the DMR.

In short, the aim is to provide all Aspasa members with a highly relevant service at an affordable cost. This service includes the formal audit submitted to the mining operation, detailed feedback on all areas of non-compliance, and recommendations to ensure compliance.

According to Pienaar, the audit functions on the same basis as Aspasa's Health, Safety and Environment audits.

"The Blasting Audit's cost is a fixed fee that's in line with the other audits. Unfortunately, non-Aspasa members don't qualify for this special fee, as well as members who are not paid up to date."

Pienaar emphasises that this new service to Aspasa members is a crucial step toward ensuring mining operations function well within the law.

"Not only will the law be complied with, communities will be shown that the operation adheres to legislation, and DMR officials can be made to understand the specific mining operation is progressive in its compliancy."

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#### Caption

Explosives experts Corrie Rautenbach and William Mlanje will be assisting and conducting explosives audits on behalf of Aspasa.

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