

Mining companies collaborate to achieve Zero Harm

The launch of the International Mining Safety Hub (IMS Hub) will assist the mining industry to achieve the goal of Zero Fatalities and ultimately Zero Harm. The Hub is significant as its founding partners have come together to achieve the common goal of reducing fatalities and serious incidents in mining.



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"This is a collaboration by industry, for the industry. For too long have I witnessed the industry working in silos, individually investing substantial effort and resources in essentially just duplicating work already developed by their peers. The IMS Hub will change that," says Stephen Eichstadt, IMS Hub cofounder.

The hub founding partners include Anglo American, AngloGold Ashanti, Harmony Gold, Impala Platinum, Sibanye-Stillwater, Teck Resources and the Minerals Council South Africa.

Shared value

The spirit of the IMS Hub is shared value aimed at making the mining industry safer, and partners only need to contribute information to participate.

Founding partners are encouraging other mining operations to join in and contribute valuable knowledge on the fatal hazard themes they would specialise in based on their operation.

Developing content

The founding partners have played a significant role in developing the content for the initial launch which includes fatal hazard themes relating to FOG, Light and heavy vehicle interaction, underground fires, cranes and lifting, member LFI submissions with more added by all companies involved.

Each founding partner contributes two suites of materials around key fatal or catastrophic risks at their operations to the hub.

Once transformed into simplified visual tools, these tools are shared on the hub for the use and adaptation of all other partners.

The tools being developed include:

- Highly visual operator-focused safety standards are taken from complex technical documents and transformed into technically-accurate illustrations and infographics which improve understanding, help workers to retain information better and breakthrough language and literacy barriers.
- Critical Controls state the most important preventative and mitigative controls most critical to saving lives and include the associated risk bowties in only a couple of pages.
- Control Checklists target all levels of an organisation with specifically illustrated checklists for managers, supervisors and operators to review each critical control, perform tasks safely and managing all risks involved every step of the way. These can be downloaded as 'text' files to be used in mobile device auditing applications.
- Toolbox Talks for supervisors reinforces Critical Controls, a visual toolbox facilitating two-way engagement with workers and refreshing supervisor understanding, posters are also made available for the workspace
- Learning from Incidents (LFI) include Lesson Learned Summary Incident Reports with 3D animations that focus on the cause and learnings as well as review the effectiveness of the relevant controls.
- Virtual Reality content will be an exciting addition to the IMS Hub further down the line as well as e-learning courses created from repurposed content.

Creating a learning space

The IMS Hub goes the extra mile by portraying the themes and standards as easy to understand visuals.

"Safety is the top priority for all industry leaders in mining, having simple visual information on hand goes a long way in ensuring all employees on the ground know how to keep themselves safe," says Pieter Bezuidenhout, acting safety and technology executive, Harmony Gold.

The hub supplies tools which are best-in-class and aligned to evolving legislation requirements. It creates a space of learning where the mining industry is challenged to do better and work together to achieve Zero Harm.

George Coetzee, Group Safety VP at AngloGold Ashanti emphasised the need for the hub to develop the industry further. "Some companies have progressed further in their safety journeys and bring maturity and learning from those journeys.

"This allows those companies, still in the early stages of the journey, to tap into the lessons learnt and wealth of knowledge gained. Ultimately, we will all gain from this in our ultimate goal of working places free from injury and harm," he says.

The online hub is powered by Jincom, a global visual health and safety communication specialist agency.

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