

In the matter of:  
Prairie State Generating Company, LLC  
Lively Grove Mine  
I.D. No. 11-03193

Petition for Modification  
  
Docket No. M-2009-063-C

### PROPOSED DECISION AND ORDER

On December 4, 2009 a petition was filed seeking a modification of the application of 30 C.F.R. § 75.1909(b)(6) to Petitioner's Lively Grove Mine, located in Washington County, Illinois. The Petitioner proposes an alternative method outlined in the petition that will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded by the standard.

The standard reads, in relevant part,

(b)(6) Service brakes that act on each wheel of the vehicle and that are designed such that failure of any single component, except the brake actuation pedal or other similar actuation device, must not result in a complete loss of service braking capability;

The petitioner proposes an alternate method of modifying the equipment and providing additional training, in lieu of installing brakes on the front two wheels.

MSHA personnel conducted an investigation of the petition and filed a report of their findings with the Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health. After a careful review of the entire record, including the petition and MSHA's investigative report, this Proposed Decision and Order is issued.

### Finding of Fact and Conclusion of Law

The Lively Grove Mine is an underground mine that is owned by Prairie State Generating Company, LLC. The mine is currently in the development stage and will operate in the Herrin No. 6 coal seam and is expected to produce coal on two shifts per day with an employment of 250 miners. The mine currently has 35 contract workers employed at the mine.

Section 75.1909(b)(6) provides that all self-propelled non-permissible diesel-powered equipment must have, in addition to all other requirements, service brakes that act on

each wheel of the vehicle such that failure of any single component, except the brake actuation pedal or other similar actuation device, must not result in complete loss of service braking capability.

Petitioner proposes an alternate method in lieu of the front wheel brakes on the diesel-powered, six-wheeled Getman Roadbuilder, Model RDG-1504S (Serial Number 460-002) used at the Lively Grove Mine. The grader is powered by a Mercedes-Benz diesel engine, Serial No. 0904798170. The MSHA engine approval number is 07-ENA070001.

The grader has dual brake systems on the four rear wheels and is designed to prevent loss of braking due to a single component failure. Each of the brake systems features an accumulator pressure gauge and low-pressure warning light. The grader is also provided with a spring-applied, hydraulic-released wet disc park and supplemental brake, transmission neutralizer and test button for park brake testing. The independent braking systems are designed to operate even when oil, air, electrical or transmission pressure fails. Petitioner proposes to limit the speed of the diesel grader to 10 miles per hour (mph) and to train the grader operators to drop the grader blade to provide additional stopping capability in an emergency.

The alternative method proposed by Prairie State Generating Company, LLC (as amended by the recommendations of MSHA) will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded the miners under 30 C.F.R. § 75.1909(b)(6). The diesel grader will be equipped with devices that limit speed to 10 mph and the grader operator(s) will be trained to lower the moldboard in emergency conditions. These terms and conditions will provide an equivalent level of safety to the standard requirement that each wheel of the grader be equipped with service brakes.

On the basis of the petition and the findings of MSHA's investigation, Prairie State Generating Company, LLC, is granted a modification of the application of 30 C.F.R. § 75.1909(b)(6) to its Lively Grove Mine.

### ORDER

Wherefore, pursuant to the authority delegated by the Secretary of Labor to the Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health, and pursuant to Section 101(c) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, 30 U.S.C. § 811(c), it is ordered that Prairie State Generating Company, LLC's Petition for Modification of the application of 30 C.F.R. § 75.1909(b)(6) in the Lively Grove Mine is hereby:

GRANTED, conditioned upon compliance with the following terms and conditions:

1. This Proposed Decision and Order is limited in application to the diesel-powered, six-wheeled Getman Roadbuilder, Model RDG-1504S (Serial No. 460-002).
2. The maximum speed on the diesel grader shall be limited to 10 mph by:
  - a. Permanently blocking out any gear or any gear ratio that provides higher speeds. The device must limit the vehicle speed in both forward and reverse; and
  - b. Using transmission(s) and differential(s) geared in accordance with the equipment manufacturer that limit(s) the maximum speed to 10 mph.
3. Prior to implementing the alternative method:
  - a. The diesel graders must be inspected by MSHA to determine compliance with the terms and conditions of the Proposed Decision and Order.
  - b. Grader operators must be trained to recognize appropriate levels of speed for different road conditions and slopes.
  - c. Grader operators must be trained to lower the moldboard (grader blade) to provide additional stopping capability in emergencies.
  - d. Grader operators must be trained to recognize the transmission gear blocking device and its proper application and requirements.
4. The grader must comply with all other applicable requirements of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 and the applicable requirements of 30 C.F.R. Parts 75 and 77.
5. Within 60 days after this Proposed Decision and Order becomes final, the Petitioner must submit proposed revisions for its approved 30 C.F.R. Part 48 training plan to the Coal Mine Safety and Health District Manager. These revisions must specify initial and refresher training regarding the terms and conditions stated in the Proposed Decision and Order.

Any party to this action desiring a hearing on this matter must file in accordance with 30 C.F.R. § 44.14, within 30 days. The request for hearing must be filed with the Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health, 1100 Wilson Boulevard, Arlington, Virginia 22209-3939.

If a hearing is requested, the request must contain a concise summary of position on the issues of fact or law desired to be raised by the party requesting the hearing, including specific objections to the proposed decision. A party other than Petitioner who has requested a hearing may also comment upon all issues of fact or law presented in the petition, and any party to this action requesting a hearing may indicate a desired hearing site. If no request for a hearing is filed within 30 days after service thereof, the Decision and Order will become final and must be posted by the operator on the mine bulletin board at the mine.

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Kevin G. Stricklin  
Administrator for  
Coal Mine Safety and Health