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PROCEDURE INSTRUCTION LETTER NO. I06-V-10

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SUBJECT: Weekend E01 Inspections

Scope

This Procedure Instruction Letter (PIL) applies to Coal Mine Safety and Health (CMS&H) enforcement personnel.

Purpose

An important aspect of regular inspections is the physical presence of the inspector during active mining. The inspector's presence, visibility, and interaction with the miners promotes improved attitudes towards health and safety which can result in reduced accident and injury rates.

During regular safety and health inspections (E01 formerly AAA) at coal mines, the inspector should plan to visit the miners on each shift to assess their work practices and procedures. This also permits miners on each shift to talk with the inspector concerning safety and health issues. The Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) intends that inspectors have a presence on all regular working shifts. The current General Inspection Procedures Handbook states that during a regular inspection, the inspector must "... selectively travel at least once on each working shift with the mine examiner, and observe at least one mantrip into and out of the mine."

Procedure Instruction

In mines where regular weekend production occurs, a representative number of regular E01 inspection days should be allocated for weekend inspections. Accordingly, at mines which regularly (more than two weekends per month) produce coal on Saturday and/or Sunday, at least one Saturday or one Sunday should be included in each regular inspection. At small mines requiring relatively few E01 inspection days, a representative number of weekend inspection days should be allocated over the course of each year if production regularly occurs on weekends.

This step is intended to ensure that all production shifts and crews are observed and inspected by the regular inspector during E01 inspections. Application of this is mandatory only to the extent that resources are available within the district for the resulting overtime costs.

Background

Currently, many surface and underground coal mines regularly schedule compacted weekend production work. Some miners work exclusively two or three extended-length shifts per week. Production often begins Friday or Saturday and ends Sunday night. It is possible that no inspection of this activity could occur for considerable periods where regular inspections are limited to on-site days of Monday through Thursday. As a result, distinct crews and shifts involved in weekend work may not be observed by an inspector during regular inspections.

Authority

Section 103(a), Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977.

Filing Instructions

This Procedure Instruction Letter should be filed behind the tab marked "Procedure Instruction Letters" in the binder entitled MSHA Program Handbooks and Procedure Instruction Letters.

Issuing Office and Contact Person

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