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US Labor Department's MSHA announces online tool enabling mine operators to self-monitor for POV screening

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor's Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced the availability of an online service that enables mine operators, miners and others to monitor a mining operation to determine if it could be subject to a potential pattern of violations.

MSHA developed the monitoring tool based on feedback from the mining industry and others, as well as recommendations from a POV audit report issued last September by the Labor Department's Office of Inspector General. During the course of the audit, the OIG reviewed MSHA's policy, criteria, regulations and information systems to establish whether they were reliable and effective in determining and sanctioning habitual violators.

"We are making the process more transparent," said Joseph A. Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. "We have worked hard to improve the pattern of violations process, and I am confident we have developed a tool to better serve the mining community. This self-monitoring tool will be an extremely effective way for mine operators to continuously track their compliance history and make the changes necessary to ultimately keep miners safe and healthy."

The newly developed POV monitoring tool, available at <http://www.msha.gov/POV/POVsinglesource.asp>, permits mine operators, miners, the media and the public to determine, based on the most recent data available, how a specific mine matches up with the criteria for a potential pattern of violations. The enforcement data, upon which the pattern of violations criteria are based, will be refreshed monthly.

There are two sets of criteria used to perform the initial screening required under 30 Code of Federal Regulations Part 104.2. Mines must meet either set to be further considered for exhibiting a potential pattern of violations. The POV screening criteria are available at <http://www.msha.gov/POV/POVScreeningCriteria2010.pdf>.

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