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Contact: Amy Louviere

Phone: 202-693-9423

Email: louviere.amy@dol.gov

MSHA announces results of January impact inspections *Numbers demonstrate initiative is working, says Main*

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration today announced that federal inspectors issued 245 citations and 13 orders during special impact inspections conducted at nine coal mines and six metal/nonmetal mines last month.

The monthly inspections, which began in force in April 2010 following the explosion at the Upper Big Branch Mine, involve mines that merit increased agency attention and enforcement due to their poor compliance history or particular compliance concerns. These matters include high numbers of violations or closure orders; frequent hazard complaints or hotline calls; plan compliance issues; inadequate workplace examinations; a high number of accidents, injuries or illnesses; fatalities; adverse conditions such as increased methane liberation, faulty roof conditions and inadequate ventilation; and respirable dust.

“We believe that the impact inspection initiative has made mines safer,” said Joseph A Main, assistant secretary of labor for mine safety and health. “According to a recent evaluation of mines targeted in this special enforcement program, there have clearly been improvements.”

From April 2010 through December 2012, total violations (per 100 on-site inspection hours) decreased 15 percent in coal mines and 13 percent in metal/nonmetal mines, significant and substantial violations decreased 19 percent in coal mines and 33 percent in metal/nonmetal mines, unwarrantable failure violations decreased 43 percent in coal mines and 60 percent in metal/nonmetal mines, and operator-reported lost-time injuries per 200,000 hours worked decreased 8 percent in coal mines and 14 percent in metal/nonmetal mines.

“However, as we have also said, some mines still don’t get it, and we will not hesitate to use our enforcement tools when we identify those mines,” said Main.

As an example from last month, MSHA conducted an impact inspection Jan. 15 at Rain Coal Co. LLC’s No. 1 Mine in Floyd County, Ky. Immediately upon arrival, MSHA personnel secured the mine’s communication system to prevent advance notice of the inspection. Inspectors traveled from the surface to the section along three routes – the primary escapeway, where they inspected the air course and seals along the intake, the conveyor belt entry and the alternate escapeway. They issued 54 citations and five orders that resulted in closure of the mine until Jan. 23. This impact inspection was the first conducted at this mine.

The impact inspection was conducted in part to investigate an anonymous hazardous condition complaint, which resulted in some of the enforcement actions. MSHA enforcement personnel issued 13 citations and orders related to permissibility, section equipment and non-compliance with approved plans. The mine was issued a 104(d)(1) citation for failure to drill in advance of mining in the #1 and #2 entries when mining within 200 feet of an adjacent mine. Prior to MSHA’s inspection, miners were permitted to continue working on the section, risking exposure to an inundation of water, blackdamp or explosive gases when mining into the adjacent mine works.

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The mine operator failed to comply with the approved ventilation plan by using the wrong sprayer heads on the continuous mining machine and failing to maintain proper water pressure to control respirable dust and to suppress sparking that could potentially cause an ignition. When tested, water pressure was 20 pounds per square inch; the ventilation plan required 50-100 psi. This inspection marked the 12th time in two years that MSHA has cited the operator for failing to follow the approved ventilation plan.

The operator also was cited for failing to conduct weekly and on-shift examinations, including required examinations of a shuttle car, a continuous mining machine, a mobile face drill and a roof bolter. Had these examinations occurred, the operator should have identified the hazards MSHA cited.

The operator placed the mine in non-producing status on Feb. 11.

Since April 2010, MSHA has conducted 565 impact inspections and issued 9,840 citations, 922 orders and 40 safeguards.

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MSHA Monthly Impact Inspection List

(January 2013)

January 2013

Coal

Mine Information						Type of Issuance				S&S Information				Issuances - Type of Action									Justifications																	
District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non-S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions	9. Respirable Dust Issues						
District 03	WV	4605589	Kristopher C Lilly	Red Bone Mining Company	Crawdad No 1 Mine	3	0	0	3	1	2	3	33.33%	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3														
District 04	WV	4604236	Walter Energy Incorporated	Maple Coal Co.	Maple Eagle No. 1 Mine	10	0	0	10	7	3	10	70.00%	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10		1												
District 05	VA	4407104	Omega Holdings LLC	Omega Mining Hatfield, LLC	Mine #1	25	0	0	25	14	11	25	56.00%	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25		1												
District 06	KY	1512908	Jeremy Bryant; Justin Bryant	Rain Coal Company LLC	No 1	54	5	0	59	29	29	58	50.00%	53	1	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	59		1								1					
District 07	KY	1518565	TECO Energy Inc	Perry County Coal Corporation	E4-1	31	0	0	31	9	22	31	29.03%	31	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	31			1												
District 09	MT	2401950	Global Mining Group LLC	Signal Peak Energy LLC	Bull Mountains Mine No 1	5	3	0	8	3	5	8	37.50%	5	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	8					1					1					
District 10	KY	1519535	Armstrong Energy Corporation LLC	Armstrong Coal Company	Kronos Mine	16	0	0	16	5	11	16	31.25%	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	16							1								
District 11	AL	0102901	Drummond Company Inc	Drummond Company Inc	Shoal Creek Mine	14	2	0	16	8	8	16	50.00%	14	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	16					1	1									
District 12	WV	4609340	Dennis B Hagerman	JJ&E Coal Corporation	Horse Creek Mine No 2	34	1	0	35	8	27	35	22.86%	34	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	35							1								
9						National Totals				192 11 0 203				84 118 202 41.58%									191 1 1 4 6 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 203									0 3 1 0 3 1 6 1 2								

January 2013

Metal Nonmetal

Mine Information						Type of Issuance				S&S Information				Issuances - Type of Action									Justifications																	
District	State	Mine ID	Controller Name	Operator Name	Mine Name	Cit	Orders	Safe -guards (Coal only)	Total	S&S	Non-S&S	Total	S&S Rate	104(a)	104(b)	104(d)(1) Citation	104(d)(1) Order	104(d)(2)	104(e)(2) Order	314(b)	103(k)	104(g)(1)	103(j)	107(a)	Total	1. Operator Tactics	2. Hazard Complaints /Hotline Calls	3. Plan Compliance Issues	4. Inadequate Exams	5. Accidents, Injuries, Illnesses	6. Fatal Accidents	7. Enforcement History	8. Adverse Conditions	9. Respirable Dust Issues						
SE	GA	0900114	Oil Dri Corp. of America	Oil-Dri of Georgia	Simpson	10	0	0	10	7	3	10	70.00%	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10															
NE	WV	4600007	Italcementi Spa	Riverton Investment Corp.	Essroc Cement Corp.	11	0	0	11	4	7	11	36.36%	11	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	11		1													
NC	WI	4700398	Timothy A Buechel	Buechel Stone Corp	Chilton Quarry	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0															
SC	MO	2300217	Summit Materials LLC	Continental Cement Company LLC	Hannibal Plant	30	2	0	32	13	19	32	40.63%	30	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	32						1									
SC	MO	2302434	Summit Materials LLC	Continental Cement Company, LLC	Hannibal Underground	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0.00%	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0						1					1				
RM	NE	2500998	Martin Marietta Materials Inc	Martin Marietta Materials Inc	#273 Weeping Water Mine	2	0	0	2	1	1	2	50.00%	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2							1								
6						National Totals				53 2 0 55				25 30 55 45.45%									53 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 2 0 55									1 0 0 1 4 1 2 0 1								
Total		15				National Totals				245 13 0 258				109 148 257 42.41%				244 1 1 4 6 0 0 0 2 0 0 258									1 3 1 1 7 2 8 1 3													