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PROGRAM POLICY LETTER NO. P14-IV-02

FROM: MARVIN LICHTENFELS
 Acting Administrator for Metal and Nonmetal
 Mine Safety and Health

SUBJECT: Reissue of P12-IV-01 Safety Belts and Lines (30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005)

Scope

This Program Policy Letter (PPL) applies to surface and underground metal and nonmetal mine operators, contractors, equipment manufacturers, miners, miners' representatives, and Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health enforcement personnel.

Purpose

The purpose of this PPL is to clarify compliance with safety belts and lines as required under 30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005 to enhance consistency and protection of miners.

Policy

MSHA standards at 30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005 require that safety belts and lines be worn when persons work where there is danger of falling; a second person must tend the lifeline when bins, tanks or other dangerous areas are entered. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA's) fall protection standard at 29 C.F.R. §1926.501(b)(1), Unprotected sides and edges, states that "Each employee on a walking/working surface (horizontal and vertical surface) with an unprotected side or edge which is 6 feet (1.8 m) or more above a lower level shall be protected from falling by the use of guardrail systems, safety net systems, or personal fall arrest systems." In many cases, compliance with OSHA's fall protection standard will satisfy the requirements of MSHA's 30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005 standard. MSHA will evaluate all work area hazards to ensure appropriate fall protection provisions are in place to protect miners from fall hazards.

Background

This policy letter clarifies the Agency's application of 30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005, Safety belts and lines. Operators have raised questions regarding what factors MSHA takes into consideration when applying §§ 56/57.15005.

Authority

The Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977, as amended, 30 U.S.C. § 801 et seq.; 30 C.F.R. §§ 56/57.15005.

Internet Availability

This program policy letter may be viewed on the [MSHA home page](#) by choosing "Compliance Info" and "Program Policy Letters."

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