

MINUTES OF MEETING
OF
ILLINOIS STATE MINING BOARD
BENTON, ILLINOIS
NOVEMBER 15, 2006

The following State Mining Board members were present:

Jerry Cross
Ken Fritzsche
Don Stewart
George Teegarden
Dave Webb
Joe Angleton, Executive Officer

Executive Officer Joe Angleton called the meeting to order at 10:08 am. A roll call of board members was made with all members present with the exception of Don Orso. Having a quorum of board members present, Executive Officer Angleton proceeded with the meeting.

The first item of business was approval by the Board of the minutes for the October 12, 2006 State Mining Board meeting.

The next item on the agenda was a presentation from Matrix Design Group regarding the hoist installation at the Wabash Mine Holding Company, Wabash Mine Cowling Slope. A representative from Matrix Design Group outlined the parameters of the hoist. A camera system was to be mounted at the portal, bottom and hoist house for display to the hoist operator. Also, during construction of slope it would be manual operation from a console in the hoist house. After construction is complete, it will be an automatic hoist but can be operated manually. The representative described the various components of the hoist system. Board member Cross, following discussion on the hoist and suggestions by Board member Webb, made a motion to accept the proposal. Board member Webb seconded the motion and was adopted by the board.

Discussion on the recommendations from the Mine Technology Task Force was the next item on the agenda. Executive Officer Angleton stated what was provided by the Task Force were non-binding recommendations and neither the Task Force nor the Mining Board could change the law or the provision contained within the new mining laws. He indicated Mike Woods would be outlining the recommendations found in the Task Force's report.

Mr. Woods briefly covered each of the recommendations. The first being mine rescue teams. Mine Rescue Supervisors Bill Patterson and John Smith discussed the expansion of mine rescue stations on the east and west regions of the state. Mr. Woods and Executive Officer Angleton stated it was still unclear as to what one hour response meant as it was written in the 2006 Miner

Act. This question was being raised as the Black Beauty Coal, Vermilion Grove Mine fell outside the one hour travel time from the Springfield Mine Rescue Station and MSHA could not answer how this situation would be addressed pursuant to the new act. The agency would be looking possibly to getting a variance to the one hour response for operations such as Vermilion Grove.

Mr. Woods briefly discussed some of the recommendations such as removing the requirement for strobe lights, number of Self-contained Self-rescuers required, mine plan submittals, delaying rescue chambers, spacing of SCSR storage caches and wireless communication and tracking devices.

Executive Officer Angleton described how the agency did actual SCSR testing using degraded vision. This test replicated conditions an escaping mine could face when walking through heavy smoking and having to rely on a lifeline to find his or her way to safety. The tests proved the importance of taglines. Even with only three individuals doing the tests, there was a problem of separation between the three that would be solved with taglines. Also, the group went 400 feet further in 5 foot coal than in 6 foot coal. In real life emergency factors can come into play that can slow ones escape. In the tests the state conducted the highest coal seam operation rib rash and debris along the rib created treacherous footing. This was not the problem in the five foot seam and as a result walker further. In the lowest seam mine, which was 48 inches, it was found once could overuse the SCSR. The group took off at a fast pace and after about 10 minutes of walking were all having breathing difficulty, extreme breathing resistance and excessive sweating. After this the group slowed their pace and the problems slowly began to diminish. This particular test shows we may be teaching our miners incorrectly in saying get out of the mine as quickly as possible. If one were to do this we could have a miner out breathe the unit and possibly could die. One must work within the SCSR's ability to provide oxygen. We must train people for that. He stated the distances set by MSHA of 5,700 feet and 4,400 feet as they are both attainable based on the agency's field tests.

Executive Office Angleton also stated that rescue chambers can save lives. For example, he felt cutting into the solid would be an excellent method of creating a chamber.

Executive Office closed the discussion on the Task Force recommendations and Board member Fritzsche made a motion to accept the recommendations and a second from Board member Webb. Board members asked for clarification on a few points such as location of rescue chambers as it related to suitable distances and the deletion of the section on spacing of 3,000 feet. Also, the Board discussed the difference in distance between caches state law and federal regulations. Illinois was more restrictive and did not take into allowance coal seam height. Unless legislative changes were made, all Illinois coal mines would have to abide by the 4,000 distance. Following discussion on these points, the Board adopted the motion to accept the recommendations.

Having no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

_____, Executive Officer

_____, Secretary

