

MINUTES OF MEETING  
OF  
ILLINOIS STATE MINING BOARD  
INA, ILLINOIS  
OCTOBER 21, 2010

The following State Mining Board members were present:

Jerry Cross  
William McClusky  
Tim Kirkpatrick  
Don Stewart  
George Teegarden  
Dave Webb  
Joe Angleton, Executive Officer

The meeting was called to order by Executive Officer Joe Angleton. A roll call of board members was made with all members in attendance. Having a quorum of board members present, Mr. Angleton proceeded with the meeting.

The minutes from the April 22, 2010 State Mining Board meeting was reviewed and accepted as presented.

The first item on the agenda was a presentation by Peabody Midwest, Gateway Mine on their installation of an emergency hoist over a newly constructed airshaft. The fourteen feet diameter shaft is 98 feet in depth. A new emergency hoist will evacuate approximately eleven persons per trip with an estimated travel time to surface of five to six minutes. It was projected 110-132 could be evacuated in an hour. The mine typically has approximately 56 underground on any shift and even with hot seat change-out the mine could still be evacuated within one hour. Coalfield Services has the contract to construct the emergency hoist and have recently completed an emergency hoist for M-Class Mining.

Mike Houseman for Coalfield Services gave a brief description of the hoist describing the design and how it would meet state requirements. The shaft was in an isolated area so a six foot fence with barbed wire encircled the shaft area.

The cage would sit in a frame structure five feet above the collar and since the shaft was in remote location the gate to the cage is locked, however, locking mechanism is disengaged when cage is called. The sliding gate must be closed and locked before it will function. Board member Kirkpatrick questioned the locking of the gate for security reasons but understood the company's reasoning. The cage cannot be called back until the sliding gate is closed so it was suggested that a horn or siren be installed and would sound until the gate was closed.

No further questions were asked and Board member Webb made a motion to accept the emergency hoist plan as submitted with the second by Board member Teegarden and the motion passed.

The second item on the agenda was an update on future mine development of the Knight Hawk Coal, LLC, Prairie Eagle South Mine based on drilling and seismic surveys of past mining activity surrounding the mine. Tom Hasenstab presented the overview of the mine plan stating the company worked to establish clear lines for future mining. The following abandoned mines surrounded the Prairie Eagle South Mine; Kathleen Mine, Whippoorwill Mine, Bernard Mine, Maynard Mine and Willis #6 Mine.

A new contractor was hired to perform the seismic survey and numerous checks were performed to ensure the accuracy of his findings.

The Prairie Eagle South Mine is a single super section mine with two production shifts and is currently mining west and at the end of this year will turn south. The mine projects by 2013 reach the end of this block's reserves.

Using a combination of drilling and a new subsurface seismic survey the mine made a number of changes to its mine plans with the biggest being a shortening of its east panels as it worked south. The orientation of several panels were done to avoid the Bernard Mine. Also, the mine increased the buffer zones around the abandoned mines.

Inspector at large Don McBride stated to the Board the company's development changes (head on versus parallel) had definitely reduced the risk of repeating their early incident.

The next item on the agenda was surface certification and Don McBride indicated there was a developing problem with the agency's two new certifications (General Surface Supervisor and Independent Contractor Supervisor). Mr. McBride briefly outlined the intent of both certifications. It is felt within the agency that there are people being certified under these two certifications that do not need the certification and some actually do not meet the intent of the law. Mr. McBride gave the example of a paper shredding project and the company being required to have independent contractor certification. It has come to the point where coal operators want everyone certified no matter what their function will be or whether they meet the requirements for certification.

The intent of the law was directed toward activities related to using heavy equipment or more directly involved in mine operations or construction and a qualified certified person was felt needed for these activities. While operators may be looking at certification from a liability standpoint, and the agency may have been too accommodating in issuing certification we should be looking at what actually is the criteria for certification and when is it required.

Mr. McBride stated there is the question of how many has the agency already certified who are not actually qualified and how we can in the future determine who is or is not qualified. He admitted that would be a difficult question to answer.

It was discussed by the Board with Mr. McBride that the agency should not let the requirements of a company in respect of bidding out a job dictate our certification of people. The agency should look at each vendor and based on the intent of the law determine the need for certification. It was agreed the state mine inspector will often know whether certification is required or needed. The agency would be setting up criteria for future certification and how to address this issue in the future.

The final item was not on the agenda but was presented to the Board by Executive Officer Angleton. An inquiry had been made as to the qualifications of an individual at M-Class Mining and whether he was qualified for the certification. He had taken an exam this past April. A question was raised after reviewing the documentation the individual (Michael Lilly) had submitted prior to testing as to what his actual job duties were at the mines he had previously been employed. Calls to this company enabled agency staff to determine not all the time at this mine was underground with the majority of his time was working on the surface. The Board felt none of the time should count unless a company can verify his underground experience. The time reported at this company was 17 months and he would have even be short by 2 months at the April 2011 exams. He will be eligible at the following exams in October but should re-submit letters with specific dates to confirm his experience.

Meeting was adjourned following the above discussion.

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Joe Angleton, Executive Officer

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Jerry Cross, Secretary