



Wednesday, 1 April 2020

Dr Jeanette Young  
Chief Health Officer  
Department of Health  
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BRISBANE QLD 4000

By email to: [CHO\\_CHO@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:CHO_CHO@health.qld.gov.au)  
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**Re: Queensland border restrictions: Mine Surveyors - Critical Resource Sector Employees**

Dear Dr Young

The Australian Institute of Mine Surveyors (AIMS) provides professional representation to government, industry and educational organisations on mine surveying issues around Australia. This is affected by our representatives who hold positions on the Surveying Boards of the three major mining states of Queensland New South Wales and Western Australia.

The reason for this letter is to make you aware of a serious health and safety issue created by restricting access to Queensland mines for interstate mine surveying professionals. We completely understand the need for social distancing and minimising the risk of spreading the COVID19 by restricting travel. During this unprecedented pandemic, our members and the National Board have grave concerns that mine surveyors have been omitted, by oversight, in the list of QLD Critical Resource Sector Employees.

The reasoning for this is, the Appointed Registered Mine Surveyor at every mine site, is responsible for positioning and locating all mining hazards and the mining excavations, that have potential to cause injury or harm to mine workers and also the general public. The location of the workings and hazards change daily.

The requirement to certify the accuracy of the mining hazards is documented in Section 67 of the Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999. The requirement to supervise and provide oversight to survey work on the mine, is contained in the gazetted Recognised Standard 10 Mine Surveying & Drafting (admissible in court under that Act). The Recognised Standard states:

*A Mine Surveyor must be appointed at each mine site by the SSE. The Mine Surveyor's position description shall outline the assigned roles and responsibilities of the position including any legal obligations. The Mine Surveyor is the person responsible for surveying activities at the mine and for certifying the accuracy of the Mine Workings Plan. When a survey is carried out in accordance with this standard, the Mine Surveyor must exercise such immediate oversight and personal direction of the work as is necessary to ensure that they have the knowledge to certify all aspects of the survey and that the survey has been carried out in accordance with sound professional practice and this standard.*

Many of our members are Registered Mine Surveyors who work in Queensland and reside in other states, mainly New South Wales and Victoria. We contend that they cannot execute their safety and health obligations of supervising work and ensuring the accuracy of mine workings and associated hazards to mining if unable to attend site.

Historically many mining disasters resulting in multiple fatalities have occurred due to unknown or incorrectly positioned hazards and mine workings which is why mine surveying requirements are drafted into mine safety law around the world. Mine Workers cannot work safely if they don't know where the hazards are. Applicable to all mines however this is especially the case with underground operations.

We ask that an urgent review of the Critical Resource Sector Personnel list is revised to add Mine Surveyors.

The AIMS Board thanks you for your consideration in this matter relating to health and safety of all Queensland mine workers.

Your Sincerely



Mario Fantin

AIMS President

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