

§ 49.4

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or factor materially affecting information submitted in the application for alternative mine rescue capability.

(h)(1) An approved plan for alternative mine rescue capability shall be subject to revocation or modification for cause by MSHA, where it is determined that a condition or factor has changed which would materially alter the operator's mine rescue capability. If such action is contemplated, the operator will be notified, and given an opportunity to be heard before the appropriate District Manager.

(2) If an application for alternative compliance is denied or revoked, the District Manager shall provide the reason for such denial or revocation in writing to the operator. The operator may appeal this decision in writing to the Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health or the Administrator for Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health, as appropriate, 1100 Wilson Blvd., Room 2424 (Coal) or Room 2436 (Metal and Nonmetal), Arlington, Virginia 22209-3939.

[45 FR 47002, July 11, 1980, as amended at 67 FR 38385, June 4, 2002]

§ 49.4 Alternative mine rescue capability for special mining conditions.

(a) If an underground mine is operating under special mining conditions, the operator may provide an alternative mine rescue capability.

(b) An application for alternative mine rescue capability shall be submitted to the District Manager for the district in which the mine is located for review and approval.

(c) To be considered "operating under special mining conditions," the operator must show that all of the following conditions are present:

(1) The mine has multiple adits or entries;

(2) The mined substance is non-combustible and the mining atmosphere nonexplosive;

(3) There are multiple vehicular openings to all active mine areas, sufficient to allow fire and rescue vehicles full access to all parts of the mine in which miners work or travel;

(4) Roadways or other openings are not supported or lined with combustible materials;

(5) The mine shall not have a history of flammable-gas emission or accumulation, and the mined substance shall not have a history associated with flammable or toxic gas problems; and

(6) Any reported gas or oil well or exploratory drill hole shall be plugged to within 100 feet above and below the horizon of the ore body or seam.

(d) Each application shall contain:

(1) An explanation of the special mining conditions;

(2) The number of miners employed underground at the mine on each shift;

(3) The distances from the two nearest mine rescue stations;

(4) The operator's mine fire history;

(5) The operator's established escape and evacuation plan;

(6) The operator's alternative plan for assuring that a suitable mine rescue capability is provided at all times when miners are underground; and

(7) Other relevant information about the operator's mine which may be requested by the District Manager.

(e) A copy of the operator's application shall be posted at the mine. Where a miners' representative has been designated, the operator shall also provide the representative with a copy of the application.

(f) In determining whether to approve an application for alternative compliance, the District Manager shall consider:

(1) The individual circumstances of the mine operating under special mining conditions;

(2) Comments submitted by, or on behalf of, any affected miner; and

(3) Whether the alternative mine rescue plan provides a suitable rescue capability at the operator's mine.

(g) Where alternative compliance is approved by MSHA the operator shall adopt the alternative plan and post a copy of the approved plan (with appropriate MSHA mine emergency telephone numbers) at the mine for the miners' information. Where a miners' representative has been designated, the operator shall also provide the representative with a copy of the alternative plan.

(h) The operator shall notify the District Manager of any changed condition

or factor materially affecting information submitted in the application for alternative mine rescue capability.

(i)(1) An approved plan for alternative mine rescue capability shall be subject to revocation or modification by MSHA, where it is determined that a condition or factor has changed which would materially alter the operator's mine rescue capability. If such action is contemplated, the operator will be notified and given an opportunity to be heard before the appropriate District Manager.

(2) If an application for alternative compliance is denied or revoked, the District Manager shall provide the reason for such denial or revocation in writing to the operator. The operator may appeal this decision in writing to the Administrator for Coal Mine Safety and Health or the Administrator for Metal and Nonmetal Mine Safety and Health, as appropriate, 1100 Wilson Blvd., Room 2424 (Coal) or Room 2436 (Metal and Nonmetal), Arlington, Virginia 22209-3939.

[45 FR 47002, July 11, 1980, as amended at 67 FR 38385, June 4, 2002]

§ 49.5 Mine rescue station.

(a) Except where alternative compliance is permitted, every operator of an underground mine shall designate, in advance, the location of the mine rescue station serving the mine.

(b) Mine rescue stations are to provide a centralized storage location for rescue equipment. This centralized storage location may be either at the mine site, affiliated mines, or a separate mine rescue structure.

(c) Mine rescue stations shall provide a proper storage environment to assure equipment readiness for immediate use.

(d) Authorized representatives of the Secretary shall have the right of entry to inspect any designated mine rescue station.

§ 49.6 Equipment and maintenance requirements.

(a) Each mine rescue station shall be provided with at least the following equipment:

(1) Twelve self-contained oxygen breathing apparatus, each with a minimum of 2 hours capacity (approved by

MSHA and NIOSH under 42 CFR part 84, subpart H), and any necessary equipment for testing such breathing apparatus;

(2) A portable supply of liquid air, liquid oxygen, pressurized oxygen, oxygen generating or carbon dioxide absorbant chemicals, as applicable to the supplied breathing apparatus and sufficient to sustain each team for six hours while using the breathing apparatus during rescue operations;

(3) One extra oxygen bottle (fully charged) for every six self-contained compressed oxygen breathing apparatus;

(4) One oxygen pump or a cascading system, compatible with the supplied breathing apparatus;

(5) Twelve permissible cap lamps and a charging rack;

(6) Two gas detectors appropriate for each type of gas which may be encountered at the mines served;

(7) Two oxygen indicators or two flame safety lamps;

(8) One portable mine rescue communication system (approved under part 23 of this title) or a sound-powered communication system. The wires or cable to the communication system shall be of sufficient tensile strength to be used as a manual communication system. These communication systems shall be at least 1,000 feet in length; and

(9) Necessary spare parts and tools for repairing the breathing apparatus and communication system.

(b) Mine rescue apparatus and equipment shall be maintained in a manner that will ensure readiness for immediate use. A person trained in the use and care of breathing apparatus shall inspect and test the apparatus at intervals not exceeding 30 days and shall certify by signature and date that the inspections and tests were done. When the inspection indicates that a corrective action is necessary, the corrective action shall be made and the person shall record the corrective action taken. The certification and the record of corrective action shall be maintained at the mine rescue station for a period of one year and made available