

Ministerial Council on Minerals	2001 CONFERENCE OF CHIEF INSPECTORS OF MINES Melbourne, Vic	22 – 26 October 2001
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Communiqué

Chief Inspectors of Mines from all States, Northern Territory, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea met in Melbourne from 22 - 26 October 2001 for the 43rd annual Conference of Chief Inspectors of Mines (CCIM). Tim Gosling, Assistant Director, Engineering and Technical Support, Mines and Energy (NT) chaired the conference, which was organised by Victoria's Department of Natural Resources and Environment.

At the start of the conference, the Chief Inspectors had the pleasure of meeting the Hon. Bob Cameron, Victoria's Minister for Workplace Relations. This provided an informal opportunity to discuss a range of safety and health issues relating to mining and the Minister's portfolio. The Government's progress towards bringing Victoria's mining legislation under the OH&S Act was a matter of particular interest to the Chief Inspectors.

Pre-conference

Conference sessions were preceded by meetings with management and safety officials from Esso Australia in Melbourne and visits to CSR's Oaklands Junction Quarry and the brown coal operations in the La Trobe Valley owned by Yallourn Energy and Loy Yang Power. The half-day session with Esso Australia provided an opportunity to review implementation of its offshore safety case regime, and to hear about methods by which a facility's risks are controlled or managed through ExxonMobil's Operations Integrity Management System. The site visits provided an overview of Oakland Junction's mining and rehabilitation activities, and first-hand understanding of productivity and safety issues affecting the brown coal operations as they seek to introduce new work practices and technology. The Chief Inspectors also received presentations on the application of safety case methodology to managing risk in mining and the results of Stawell Gold Mines' innovative safety and environmental programs.

Once again, the Chief Inspectors were able to have open and frank discussions with senior management and operating personnel on wide ranging matters affecting the safety, environmental and economic performance of a range of mining operations and related activities in a particular jurisdiction. The Chief Inspectors thank all involved with the above and in particular extended their appreciation for the hospitality and effort put in by Dave Tyler, Michael Greenwood, Colin Turner and John Hayes (Esso Australia); Gary Pirie (CSR – Construction Materials); Charlie Spiers (Loy Yang Power); Lindsay Ward and Ron Mether (Yallourn Energy), Tony Pooley (Quest); and Richard Carlton and Brian Phillips (Stawell Gold Mines).

Strategic Mine Safety Framework

The CCIM completed a final review of the paper entitled “*Realising a Safe and Healthy Mining Industry – the Contribution of Government*”, which sets out a uniform approach to the development of a strategic mine safety framework. The framework has been developed to underpin efficient, effective and equitable action by government through legislative consistency, support for innovation and improvement, and remove duplication of effort. In accordance with direction from the Standing Committee of Officials meeting of 25 July 2001, the paper will now go forward to officials with a recommendation that it be launched by the Ministerial Council on Mineral and Petroleum Resources.

The strategies outlined in the framework will be further developed in consultation with stakeholders in each jurisdiction. This will be driven by the CCIM with a view to developing an agreed program for consideration by the Council.

CCIM website

The CCIM’s website is at www.ga.gov.au/ccim. The site is maintained by Geoscience Australia and provides links to all jurisdictional mineral/mining agencies, and other sites that are concerned with occupational safety and health in the minerals industry. The conference resolved to continue with the arrangement wherein Geoscience Australia maintains and updates the site on its behalf with costs being met by the jurisdictions.

Tasks/projects 2001/02

In accordance with endorsement of its proposed work program by officials (31 May 2001) and actions agreed at this conference, the CCIM will:

- submit to officials, through Victoria, the final version of the Strategic Mine Safety Framework paper
- identify and recommend to officials appropriate action to be taken in regard to its future involvement or otherwise in the ongoing production of new/updated content for the *Safe Mining Manual* published by CCH Australia
- update institutional arrangements and legislative developments within each jurisdiction for posting on its website;
- scope a draft national guideline on major hazard management for mines
- liaise with Professor Jim Joy (Director, Minerals Industry Safety & Health Centre, Uni. of Qld) in regard to converting Queensland’s Mining Hazards Information System into a relational database with significantly increased content to be provided by jurisdictions and accessible via the internet*
- prepare a status summary of each jurisdictions current approach/involvement with the mining industry’s training advisory body network in support of the development of uniform competency standards that ensure OSH competencies are maintained*
- note and report on safety-related research and strategies to support effective research into safety and health in the mining industry*

* Relate to goals and actions in the Strategic Mine Safety Framework



**Hon. Bob Cameron, Minister for Workplace Relations, Victoria,
Government officials and Chief Inspectors of Mines,
Melbourne, October 2001**

Right to left (standing): Bill McKay (Com), Kee Hah (NT), Scott Ashby (Vic), John Mitas (Vic), Fred Sears (Tas), Roger Bancroft (Qld), Martin Knee (WA), Hon. Bob Cameron, Roger Billingham (Qld), Graeme McLaughlan (Vic), Peter Morris (PNG), Graham Terrey (NSW); *(L to R seated)* Greg Marshall (SA), George Munro (NZ), John Marcus (PNG), Rob King (Vic) and Tim Gosling (NT).

W J McKay

for Tim Gosling
CCIM Chair 2002
Assistant Director, Engineering and Technical Support
Mines and Energy (NT)
November 2001