

ABC's Of Inspecting

Accountability

Inspectors are Safety and Health Professionals

MSHA inspectors must demonstrate through their words and actions that they are ethical, honest, knowledgeable, respectful, credible, and professional. They must be committed to protecting the safety and health of our nation's most precious resource - the miner.

Inspectors should never forget that they are accountable every moment on their job to the following:

- A) Miners, who are counting on them to ensure they have a safe work place
- B) The operator, who expect a fair, through inspection
- C) The Tax payer, who pays taxes which funds the Federal worker
- D) Their supervisor, who signs off on their performance and time
- E) Their Family, who depends on them to make a living and return home safely
- F) Lastly their self, the inspectors should have pride and passion in what they're doing.

Basics

Conducting Efficient and Effective Inspections

As federal employees, MSHA personnel are expected and required to utilize their time efficiently and effectively. To accomplish these goals, inspectors should determine if any portion of a mine inspection or on-site enforcement activity can be conducted differently so that redundant, ineffective, or overlapping activities can be reduced or eliminated without compromising the requirements of the Mine Act or miners' safety and health.

Risk Assessments While Conducting Enforcement Activities

In addition to eliminating hazards, ensuring compliance of mandatory standards, regulations of the Mine Act during inspections, inspectors should continually assess workplace conditions, practices, and mine activities for safety and health hazards that may expose miners to risk. Inspectors should take appropriate action to address these risks even if a violation of the Mine Act or mandatory standard or regulation is not present. Risks identified and steps taken to address them should be documented by inspectors in their notes.

Inspectors should also take every opportunity to discuss risk reduction with miners and mine operators, just as they communicate information regarding violations. Inspectors should always encourage mine operators and miners to work towards continual improvement in workplace safety and health that goes beyond regulatory compliance.

Credibility

Ethics

MSHA employees represent the Federal Government and are required to act ethically at all times. MSHA employees are to avoid any action that may be construed as an attempt to influence or give preferential treatment to a mine employee, mine operator, industry labor organization, or industry association. Employees should discuss concerns in this area with their supervisor or an MSHA ethics counselor.

Addressing All Safety and Health Concerns

Safety and health concerns brought to an inspector's attention shall be appropriately documented and addressed in accordance with established Agency policies or procedures. Every effort should be made by inspectors to talk with a reasonable number of miners about safety or health concerns they may have during the course of every inspection or investigation. Inspectors should also have ongoing discussions with mine management throughout the course of on-site activities to determine the effectiveness of the mine's safety and health programs. Inspectors should follow procedures in MSHA's Hazard Complaint Procedures Handbook if they learn of or are informed of a hazardous condition during these conversations.

Inspectors should always rely on the best available information, in conjunction with their training and experience, to reach fact-based, impartial decisions in safety and health matters involving miners.