



## **MSHA Releases New Guide for Miners' Representatives**

Insights

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MSHA announced on September 25, 2013, the release of a new Guide for Miners' Representatives. According to MSHA, this Guide is a "comprehensive tool" that expands upon the Guide to Miners' Rights and Responsibilities, released in June 2011. Assistant Secretary Joseph A. Main stated "A good safety and health program depends upon the active participation and interest of everyone at the worksite. In order to help decrease workplace deaths, injuries, and illnesses, miners and their representatives must have sufficient knowledge of their rights so that they can fully and properly exercise them." MSHA provided more detailed information about: reporting hazardous conditions and imminent dangers, accident investigations, understanding the elements of discrimination under Section 105(c) of the Mine Act, health and safety training, petitions for modification of a safety standard, rights to information and records, civil penalties and requests under the Freedom of Information Act.

The Guide provides a lot of useful information regarding miners' rights and who can be a miners' representative. To be a miners' representative, you need to be designated by at least two miners from the mine and file the proper paperwork with the District Manager. According to MSHA, the miners' representative does not need to be employed at the mine or in the mining industry to become a miners' representative. Therefore, if you would prefer having an employee as a miners' representative, you should discuss this with your employees and have them designate a miners' representative employed by your mine.