

STANDARD GUIDANCE

(COP 35) Emergency Response

A. Definitions and applicability

An **Emergency** is an abnormal occurrence that can pose a threat to the Safety or Health of Employees, Contractors, Visitors, customers, or local communities, or which can cause damage to assets or the Environment.

APELL - Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at Local Level - is a framework for the preparation of an emergency response plan, set out in a handbook published by the UNEP.

The **Emergency Response** section of the COP is applicable to Members in the Mining Sector.

B. Issue background

Emergency response is a key issue for Mining Facilities and local communities and one that requires a collaborative approach to planning. Potential types of emergencies may relate to:

- High volume materials management – including tailings and waste rock;
- Ground subsidence;
- Chemical emissions;
- Transportation of product, by-product, waste or supplies;
- Pipelines;
- Natural hazards such as weather and seismic events;
- Non-operational facilities such as closed mine sites;
- Long-term environmental or health impacts;
- Social unrest and other hazards.

C. Key Initiatives

The Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) for Mining program is an initiative of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Its primary purpose is to raise awareness of the need for local communities to be aware of the risks associated with mining operations and to provide guidance on how to effectively engage local communities in emergency preparedness. APELL for Mining was developed in collaboration with the International Council on Mining and the Environment (ICME) and released in 2001 with the aim of enhancing public involvement in emergency response planning. The APELL for Mining Handbook provides guidance to mine management and other stakeholders on how to approach the development of emergency plans.

The International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM), the successor to the ICME, has also collaborated with UNEP to produce the Good Practice on Emergency Preparedness and Response (2005) publication. This publication acts as a companion to UNEP's APELL for Mining (2001) and provides a number of case studies that illustrate application of the APELL process.

While an APELL process can be initiated by any party, companies are expected to take the lead. Establishing a formal Co-ordinating Group is a key part of APELL implementation. The Co-ordinating Group provides a mechanism for interaction and cooperation between the many players involved in preventing or responding to emergencies – mine management, local authorities and emergency response agencies, community leaders and workers representatives. It provides a means to achieve a coordinated approach to emergency response planning and to communications within the community.

D. Suggested Implementation Approach

- **COP 35: Emergency Response:** *Members in the Mining Sector shall develop and maintain emergency response plans in collaboration with potentially affected communities, workers and their representatives, and relevant agencies, pursuant to guidance provided by UNEP on Awareness and Preparedness for Emergencies at the Local Level (APELL) for Mining.*

Points to consider:

- The following steps of APELL are outlined in the APELL for Mining Handbook (2001):
 - Identify the emergency response participants and establish their roles, resources and concerns.
 - Evaluate the risks and hazards that may result in emergency situations in the community and define options for risk reduction.
 - Have participants review their own emergency plan for adequacy relative to a coordinated response, including the adequacy of communication plans.
 - Identify the required response tasks not covered by the existing plans.
 - Match these tasks to the resources available from the identified participants.
 - Make the changes necessary to improve existing plans, integrate them into an overall emergency response and communication plan and gain agreement.
 - Commit the integrated plan to writing and obtain approvals from local governments.
 - Communicate the integrated plan to participating groups and ensure that all emergency responders are trained.
 - Establish procedures for periodic testing, review and updating of the plan.
 - Communicate the integrated plan to the general community.

Source: *APELL for Mining Handbook (2001)*.

Check:

- ✓ Have you established emergency response plans in collaboration with key stakeholders?
- ✓ Does the plan follow the guidance provided by the APELL for Mining?
- ✓ Has a formal Co-ordinating Group been established for APELL implementation?
- ✓ Are procedures in place for testing the plan?
- ✓ Has the plan been communicated to the general community?

E. Further Information

The following websites have further information on health and safety issues:

- APELL for Mining Handbook (available in English, Romanian, Spanish and Swedish) (2001)
www.unep.fr/shared/publications/pdf/WEBx0055xPA-APELLminingEN.pdf
- International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) - Good Practice in Emergency Preparedness and Response (2005)
www.icmm.com/page/1169/library/documents/good-practice-in-emergency-preparedness-and-response
- Mining Association of Canada (MAC) – Crisis Management Guide (2007)
www.mining.ca/www/media_lib/TSM_Documents/TSM_Publications/2007/Crisis_Man_03_2007.pdf
- United National Environment Programme – Resource Efficiency
<http://www.unep.org/resourceefficiency/>