

MINUTES OF MEETING
OF
ILLINOIS STATE MINING BOARD
BENTON, ILLINOIS
OCTOBER 18, 2007

The following State Mining Board members were present:

Jerry Cross
Fred Frederking
Ken Fritzsche
Don Stewart
George Teegarden
Dave Webb
Joe Angleton, Executive Officer

Executive Officer Joe Angleton called the meeting to order. A roll call of board members was made with all members. Having a quorum of board members present, Executive Officer Angleton proceeded with the meeting.

First item was the suspension of certification of mine examiner at the Black Beauty Coal, Vermilion Grove Mine. The examiner was not walking the belt line as required in state law. The mine examiner, Steve Phillips was dismissed by the company and State Mine Inspector Roger Spresser took action to temporarily suspend his examiner certification until today's meeting. Mr. Phillips was not in attendance and Board member Stewart made the motion to continue the suspension of Mr. Phillips certification until such time as he comes before the board. Following a second by Board member Cross the motion was adopted on a unanimous vote.

The next item on the agenda was presentations by the state's underground operators pursuant to their mine plan submittals.

The first company to appear before the Board was ICG, Viper Mine. This mine would be using the A.L. Lee Chembio units for rescue chambers. This is an inflatable rescue chamber. Expect delivery by end of 2007. These are 35 man units and measure 25 feet long by 13 feet wide. Their tracking system would be the Varis leaking feeder system. Board member Stewart as if any additional roof control or support was to be used.

Executive Officer Angleton indicated he had looked at the use of inflatable chambers and felt additional roof support such as wire mesh be placed above the chambers. He asked for discussion from the board and Board member Stewart made the motion that for any inflatable chamber, the area where it would be placed has wire mesh or some form of additional roof

support approved by the state mine inspector for the mine. Board member Cross seconded the motion and was adopted on a unanimous vote.

The next company to present was American Coal Company, Galatia Mine. The company would be using the Strata Air/Barricade Skids, which are 11 and 32 man capacity. Skids are ordered and expect delivery in spring 2008. The 32 man skids in working sections and 11 man skids in outby areas on two mile centers. The skids will contain purge air and barricade material. Cribbing will be inby and outby the back stopping wall. Anticipate about 40 feet of length will be barricaded.

The company's scsr distribution plan was described and locations given.

For personnel tracking, the company is using the Matrix System. This is zonal reading and readers are located on belt drives. Tags are on hard hats with 200 – 400 foot range for tags.

Questions were asked by the board regarding the monitoring of atmosphere inside and outside. They will not be monitoring outside by Board member Stewart indicated that is required. The manufactured chambers all have outside atmosphere monitoring. It was recommended a tube could be placed in the block stopping with a valve and periodic sampling of outside air could be performed through this tube. Also, asked why placed on the return side and ventilation was the primary reason. Accessibility after barricade is built was asked and Mr. Kraus indicated the block stopping would have an airlock called a doghouse that will allow later access to chamber.

Knight Hawk Coal LLC was next appearing before the board. The Prairie Eagle U/G Mine has not advanced far enough to require a rescue chamber, not until early 2008 would this occur. They have looked at rescue chambers but are taking the attitude similar to American Coal and it would be built off the solid on the intake side. The Knight Hawk Coal plan calls for 24 hours of breathable air. They will have pre-arranged and pre-surveyed location for rescue chambers, depth on 100 feet and will have drill rig on site within an hour. More than one drill rig is available due to surface mine close to the mine. Drilling 8 inch hole would take less than an hour. Using barricading and drilling a hole would be best for their operation as they would have a continuous supply of fresh air. No choice on another option and would not need a chamber until February or March of 2008. MSHA has approved their concept within the ERP. Need approval from state before they proceed.

Board members questioned having only 24 hours of oxygen versus the 48 hours as required in the Mine Act. MSHA has approved the 24 hour oxygen but the Illinois law must be considered. This will meet the criteria for a hardened room. Question asked about pre-drilling a hole and the company indicated property owners may prevent this from being possible.

Executive Officer Angleton stated the initial rescue chamber the company is requesting has 24 hours. He indicated the company must provide proof of property owner permission and the fact that chamber is suitable otherwise go to the 96 hour oxygen requirement.

Board member Webb stated his concern over drilling a hole. Board member Teegarden asked questions regarding the unconsolidated material and if the mud or clay could collapse the hole

once drill removed. Company stated they would try to encase the hole as soon as possible. If problems occur then a second hole would be immediately drilled. Several Board members continued to voice concern over having less than the mandated 48 hours. Bill Sanders, safety director for Knight Hawk Coal, indicated the company could expand the amount of oxygen available.

Board member Webb stated all the other plans had chambers ready to go this one would require action and was concerned with having to rely on taking action to supply oxygen. Executive Officer asked about airlock capability and chemical toilets. He wanted to review their ERP that was approved by MSHA before making a decision on their plan.

The tracking system would be via the telephone as miners entering the mine notify the warehouseman and as they move to a new zone area call out. Location is moved on a board. Looking at other systems but waiting to get a clear definition of wireless system before proceeding.

Mach Mining LLC came before the Board and presented their plan. The Pond Creek Mine would be utilizing the Kennedy Rescue Chamber. These chambers are 12-man capacity. Three chambers are already delivered with the rest expected by May 2008. The chamber has an exoskeleton system, which provides protection. Chambers are 21 feet long and 10 feet wide. They are still unsure about the effect of heat within the chamber. Additional support is planned above the chamber.

Tracking will be by the Matrix System, which has already been discussed. The company also has a leaky feeder system in use.

Monterey Coal Company was the next company before the board. The company would be using the Strata Fresh Air Bay with a 30 person capacity. Delivery is not expected until the first quarter 2008.

The company is using the dispatcher system for tracking employees. One person tracks the movement of everyone underground and a pager phone or leaky feeder system is used.

In regards to barricading material, Monterey Coal will have Kennedy stopping panels available for barricading and use additional support to add stability to the stoppings.

The Black Beauty Coal operations were all presented together. All four operations would be utilizing the Strata Fresh Air Bay as the rescue chambers. The chambers would be either 20 or 30 person chambers based on their placement in the mine. Training would be provided to all persons underground on the deployment and use of these chambers.

The Black Beauty Coal operations would be using a call out system that is being maintained through each mine's security personnel. Only the Willow Lake Mine has gone to computer entry for tracking movement, the other operations maintain hand written tracking. Peabody is working with an Australian company on a truly wireless system but until one is developed do not feel the need to go beyond the call out system.

Springfield Coal, formerly Freeman Energy, proposed to also barricade versus a manufactured chamber; however, they are proposing using an inflatable barricade called the Heintzmann Life Curtain. This inflatable barricade could be inflated and in position within a minute or slightly more and could be made airtight by using foam. A feature on the Heintzmann is a zippered door that will allow access once it is in place. There would be two Heintzmann Life Curtains on each emergency air skid. The skids would have enough air for purging three times for a typical crosscut and 96 hours of oxygen for 44 miners. Stopping built in crosscut and supply skid will be in the crosscut with the air skid out in the entry to provide more room for miners. Lines brought into crosscut from air skid.

The tracking will be a modified 911 system which is an automated system. It is computerized and monitors five radio systems and automatically records all calls. Voice activated and all communication is recorded and backed up on DVD. It has a filter system for playback. Can select what is played back such as length of call or words used. The word "operator" is used by all when moving from one location to another. It as with all other call out systems will depend on the miner calling out when he or she changes location.

Questions were asked by the Board regarding the amount of overpressure the barricade will withstand and how much heat it will withstand, is it heat resistant.

White County Coal was the last operator to do a presentation on their plan submittal. They will also be doing barricading using their "Quick Deployable Barricade Unit". These units will either be a 16 person or 32 person units. The company will place a unit in front of an existing stopping and will construct a brattice cloth barricade in front of the unit trailer. Purge air and breathable oxygen will be stored on the units.

The company will be using the Matrix System for personnel tracking.

Executive Officer Angleton thanked the companies for their presentations and indicated the Board would review the plan submittals and re-convene to announce the approval of plans.