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Johannesburg

Impala Rustenburg 14 Shaft Fire - Update (24 January 2016)

Following the underground fire at Implats’ 14 Shaft on 22 January 2016, in which four employees tragically lost their lives, mine management are continuing the engagement process with the families of the deceased and providing all the support and assistance required at this very difficult time.

The Minister of Mineral Resources, the Honourable Mr Mosebenzi Joseph Zwane, was in attendance at the mine during the afternoon of 24 January 2016 to obtain a full report from mine management. Minister Zwane also met with the deceased employees’ families before addressing the media about this tragedy.

Implats’ CEO, Terence Goodlace, commented, “This is a tragic loss for everybody and our heart-felt condolences are with the families of the deceased. We are all deeply mourning the loss of our colleagues and our immediate concern is being with the family members to provide the support and counselling needed to get them through this difficult time. The support we are receiving from the neighbouring mining community and operations, the Department of Mineral Resources, other levels of government and the leadership of the respective unions is gratefully appreciated. My personal thanks must be made to the many people at Impala Rustenburg that have been working tirelessly through the difficult and demanding time”.

Mine management are continuing efforts to extinguish the fire in the main underground decline at 14 Shaft and will only be able to fully assess the damage that has been caused by the fire when it is safe to do so. Early indications are that extensive damage has been caused to the conveyor, monorail, power and air reticulation systems. While gas readings continue to decrease in the underground working areas, they still remain dangerously high and power has not been restored to the bottom section of the shaft area.

Mr Goodlace added, “Given the tragic loss and need to redouble our efforts to achieve zero harm, we have resolved to close the entire mine to engage the full workforce on our safety readiness and emergency awareness before contemplating reopening the 14 Shaft underground workings again”.

Further updates will be made when information becomes available.

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