



Mines and Quarries Act 1954

1954 CHAPTER 70

PART III

SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELFARE (MINES)

Fire Precautions and Provisions as to Rescue

70 Fire precautions in case of workings served by single intake airway

- (1) Subject to the provisions of this section, it shall not be lawful for more than one hundred persons to be employed below ground in a mine of coal in circumstances in which, if there were a fire in any length of intake airway through which, the air supply to all of those persons passes, none of them would be able to withdraw from the mine without either passing through the fire or following a way out to the surface in which, or in any part of which, the air would or might become so contaminated by the products of combustion generated by the fire as to prejudice seriously the possibility of the withdrawal of persons through it in safety, unless—
- (a) that length of intake airway and everything with which it is equipped are so constructed or treated, and so maintained and used, that that length of airway is, so far as can be reasonably foreseen, free from the risk that any fire that might break out therein would so develop as to prevent or endanger the withdrawal from the mine of those persons; or
 - (b) means are provided for securing that, in the event of a fire in that length of intake airway, those persons will be able to withdraw in safety.

In computing, for the purposes of this subsection, the number of persons employed in such circumstances as aforesaid, a person going to or from his working place at the beginning or end of his shift shall, unless it is otherwise prescribed (either generally or in relation to any particular circumstances), be left out of account.

- (2) Until the expiration of the period of five years beginning with the commencement of this Act, so much of any road or other passage serving as an airway as was made before the commencement of this Act shall be disregarded for the purposes of the foregoing subsection.

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (3) Regulations may provide for exempting from the provisions of subsection (1) of this section any prescribed class of mines of coal and an inspector may, by notice served on the manager of a particular mine of coal, exempt the mine or any part thereof from those provisions.
- (4) Regulations may provide that the foregoing provisions of this section shall—
 - (a) apply to mines other than of coal with the substitution, for the reference in subsection (2) to the expiration of the period of five years beginning with the commencement of this Act, of a reference to the expiration of such period beginning with the date on which the regulations come into operation as may be prescribed ;
 - (b) have effect, in their application to mines of a prescribed class (whether mines of coal or not), with the substitution, for the reference in subsection (1) to one hundred, of a reference to such less number as may be prescribed.

71 Provisions for introduction of compulsory use of approved brattice sheeting and conveyor belting

- (1) The Minister may by order appoint for the purposes of this subsection a day in relation to a class of mines specified in the order, and where a day is appointed under this subsection in relation to a class of mines it shall not, after that day, be lawful to use below ground in a mine of that class brattice sheeting other than of a type for the time being approved by the Minister for use in mines of that class.
- (2) The Minister may by order appoint for the purposes of this subsection a day in relation to a class of mines specified in the order or to parts specified in the order of mines of a class so specified (being parts below ground) and—
 - (a) where a day is appointed under this subsection in relation to a class of mines, it shall not, after that day, be lawful to use below ground in a mine of that class conveyor belting other than of a type approved by the Minister for use in mines of that class;
 - (b) where a day is so appointed in relation to specified parts of mines of a specified class, it shall not, after that day, be lawful to use in any such part of a mine of that class conveyor belting other than of a type approved by the Minister for use in mines of that class.

72 Fire-fighting and rescue operations

Regulations may require the making of such provision as may be prescribed for all or any of the following purposes, namely, the prevention, detection and combating of outbreaks of fire at, and spontaneous heating occurring in, mines and the securing of the efficient conduct (as well in an atmosphere dangerous to life as in an atmosphere not dangerous to life) of such operations for the rescue of persons as it may be necessary to conduct at mines in consequence of the occurrence thereof of outbreaks of fire, explosions or other accidents of whatsoever kind, and in particular, but without prejudice to the foregoing provisions of this section, regulations may make provision—

- (a) for the establishment and maintenance at mines of such organisations of persons as may be necessary for any of the purposes aforesaid and the provision and maintenance at mines of suitable and sufficient apparatus for any of those purposes, and, in particular, the provision at mines of adequate supplies of water for use in case of fire ;

Status: This is the original version (as it was originally enacted).

- (b) for requiring owners of mines to provide and maintain stations (hereafter in this Act referred to as " central rescue stations ") for the purpose of providing facilities common to a number of mines for the conduct of such operations as aforesaid, and for the establishment and maintenance at such stations of such organisations of persons as may be necessary for the purpose of conducting such operations and the provision and maintenance thereof of suitable and sufficient apparatus for that purpose; and
- (c) for securing the efficient training of the members of any organisation of persons maintained in pursuance of the regulations.

73 Means of escape from rooms in which there is special risk of fire, and c

It shall not be lawful for a person to be employed at a mine in a room, chamber, or similar confined space in which, owing to the nature of any machinery or apparatus installed therein or of any materials stored therein, there is a risk of the outbreak of a dangerous fire or the escape of steam in substantial quantity or of noxious gas in a dangerous concentration, unless either such steps are taken (whether by the provision of two or more exits or otherwise) as are necessary for the purpose of minimising the risk of his being trapped therein in any such event or the circumstances in which he is employed are themselves such as to minimise the risk of his being so trapped.