

Sibanye-Stillwater commits to safety after poor accident record

After a half-year plagued by mine accidents in which more than 20 workers have died, Sibanye-Stillwater says it has come up with a plan of action, along with other stakeholders, to address health and safety at its operations.



Photo: Sibanye-Stillwater

The mining house convened its second Safety and Health Summit with the Department of Mineral Resources and organised labour comprising Association of Mineworkers and Construction Union (AMCU), National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), Solidarity and United Association of South African (UASA), at which all parties committed to collaborating to make the workplaces safer and protect jobs. They also developed a safety pledge, which establishes the scope and spirit in which stakeholders agree to work further towards achieving Zero Harm.

Health and Safety Plan of Action

- Enabling safe workplaces, compliance and the right of employees to withdraw from unsafe workplaces
- Leadership effectiveness, values and culture transformation
- Review of safety structures
- Training and development
- Research and development (technology, systems and processes)
- Review of incentive schemes and recognition programmes
- Trust building, effective engagement and communication

Further engagements to involve all the relevant role players are planned with operational leadership teams across all Sibanye-Stillwater operations and cross-sector working groups will be put in place to monitor the implementation of the plan of action. The parties also agreed to partner with Sibanye-Stillwater and its workers to return those operations to acceptable levels of safety.

"We are encouraged by the commitment by all the stakeholders to addressing the safety challenges at our operations. This process is continuation of activities that are on-going at the operations, to ensure a step change in safety. The recognition of the shared responsibility on health and safety, and the collaboration of all stakeholders towards a common goal, is a significant step towards building an industry that is sustainable, and can deliver value safely," Neal Froneman, Sibanye-Stillwater CEO said.

Class-action lawsuit

Meanwhile, Sibanye-Stillwater is facing a potential lawsuit by shareholders who have accused it of putting short-term profits above safety. US law firm Bernstein Liebhard said that it had filed a securities class action on suit on behalf of shareholders who bought Sibanye Gold Limited shares between April 2017 and 26 June 2018. However, no suit has been certified by a US court yet, until it is, it is not legal.

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