
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

1999 No. 173

**Escape and Rescue from Mines
Regulations (Northern Ireland) 1999**

PART IV

RESCUE TEAM AND CONDUCT OF RESCUE OPERATIONS

Rescue team

15. Each rescue team shall comprise five rescue team members one of whom shall be the rescue team captain.

Rescue team member

16.—(1) The manager of every mine shall, where there are suitable employees at the mine to act as rescue team members, select an appropriate number of them to so act and shall ensure that they are properly trained as rescue team members and are available to act in that capacity.

(2) A person, whether an employee at a mine or otherwise, shall not serve as a rescue team member unless he is suitably qualified and experienced and he has, within the last preceding twelve months—

- (a)** been certified by a suitably qualified and registered medical practitioner, after thorough examination, to be fit to undertake rescue work using breathing apparatus; and
- (b)** attended a suitable course of initial or further training and practice in rescue work and he has been certified, by the person in charge of the course, to be proficient and to be able to undertake rescue work with breathing apparatus.

Training in use of breathing apparatus

17. Only competent and suitably experienced persons may train rescue team members for rescue operations involving the use of breathing apparatus.

Medical examination in connection with breathing apparatus

18.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2) the manager of every mine shall ensure that—

- (a)** rescue team members are examined by a suitably qualified and registered medical practitioner before each wearing of breathing apparatus in an irrespirable atmosphere other than such a wearing for training purposes; and
- (b)** rescue team members do not wear breathing apparatus unless they are found fit to do so by the registered medical practitioner referred to in sub-paragraph (a).

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not apply in any situation where the carrying out of an examination referred to in paragraph (1)(a) would prejudice an attempt to save life.

Fitness to undertake rescue work

19. Each rescue team member shall at once report to the appropriate person at the mine if at any time the rescue team member is aware of any reason why he may not be fit to undertake rescue work.

Records

20. The manager of every mine shall—

- (a) take effective steps to ensure that records of medical examinations and of training provided to the rescue team members who are employees at the mine are maintained; and
- (b) provide each such rescue team member with a document bearing a recent photograph of that rescue team member and setting out the results of the medical examinations undergone by that rescue team member and a summary of the training and practices undertaken by that rescue team member.

Rescue team captain

21.—(1) At all times during a rescue operation the rescue team shall be under the immediate control of the rescue team captain.

(2) Every rescue team captain shall during a rescue operation direct the rescue team and use his best endeavours to secure its safety.

Rescue officer

22.—(1) Subject to paragraph (2), the manager of every mine shall ensure that any operation during which it is reasonably foreseeable that breathing apparatus could be required is undertaken under the direction of a rescue officer acting under the overall control of the manager.

(2) Paragraph (1) shall not prevent rescue team members from carrying out operations wearing breathing apparatus in the absence of such a rescue officer in circumstances where in the opinion of the manager, which is reasonably held in the circumstances, a delay would endanger life.

Role of rescue officer

23. Every rescue officer or other person in charge of operations involving rescue team members wearing breathing apparatus shall work to secure the safety of rescue team members and to ensure that the operations are carried out with due regard to the safety of the rescue team members.

Manager to have regard to advice of rescue officers

24. The manager of every mine shall consult the rescue officers during any operation which requires any member of a rescue team to wear breathing apparatus at the mine and shall give due consideration to any recommendation received from any of the rescue officers.

Qualification and experience of rescue officers

25. A person shall not be permitted to serve as a rescue officer unless that person is a suitably experienced, competent and qualified individual.

Breathing apparatus

26.—(1) A person at a mine shall not wear breathing apparatus unless trained and certified fit to do so in accordance with regulation 16(2)(a).

(2) The owner of every mine shall make effective arrangements to ensure that—

- (a) breathing apparatus is not issued for use or worn unless—
 - (i) it is suitable for its intended purpose; and
 - (ii) it has been properly maintained and regularly tested by an authorised competent person; and
- (b) breathing apparatus is stored in a suitable place.

(3) The manager of every mine shall take effective steps to ensure that there is kept, in a suitable permanent form, a record of all testing, analysis, service and maintenance carried out on the breathing apparatus in pursuance of these Regulations.

(4) Each rescue team member shall carry out a suitable test or examination on receiving breathing apparatus, before going underground and before going beyond any fresh air base and shall inform a rescue officer forthwith if in the opinion of the rescue team member the breathing apparatus is not in full working order.

(5) A rescue officer informed that breathing apparatus is not in full working order under paragraph (4) shall either withdraw the breathing apparatus from service or rectify the fault and satisfy himself that the apparatus is in full working order.

Signals

27.—(1) In rescue work and training for rescue work the number of audible signals specified in the Schedule and no other shall be used between the members of a rescue team below ground for the purposes specified in relation thereto in the Schedule.

(2) The signals referred to in paragraph (1) are to be effected by a whistle or other device which produces clearly audible signals.