
STATUTORY RULES OF NORTHERN IRELAND

2016 No. 427

The Mines Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2016

PART 3

CONTROL OF MAJOR HAZARDS

Explosive atmospheres

Application of regulations 22 and 23

21. Regulations 22 and 23 apply below ground in mines in which places have been classified as hazardous under regulation 7(1) of DSEAR.

Explosive atmospheres

22.—(1) The mine operator shall ensure that—

- (a) there are in place in the zones classified under regulation 7(1) of DSEAR, specific arrangements to detect the presence, and monitor the concentration, of flammable gas; and
- (b) measures are taken to reduce the level of flammable gas in any zone in which it has been detected to as low a level as is reasonably practicable.

(2) The measures referred to in paragraph (1)(b) shall include (where necessary) drainage, removal and dilution.

Ignition risks

23.—(1) The mine operator shall ensure that when in any zone, or at any place within a zone, classified in accordance with regulation 7(1) of DSEAR—

- (a) the concentration of a flammable gas exceeds 25% by volume of the lower explosive limit of that gas in the general body of air, all activities that present a significant ignition risk are halted until the concentration is reduced so that it is below that level; and
- (b) in the event that the concentration exceeds 40% by volume of the lower explosive limit of that gas in the general body of air, persons are withdrawn from that place or zone until the concentration has been reduced so that it is below that level.

(2) The mine operator shall ensure that none of the following is taken below ground—

- (a) tobacco or other materials for smoking; or
- (b) objects used to produce a flame for the purposes of smoking.

Application of regulations 25 and 26

24. Regulations 25 and 26 apply below ground in coal mines.

Burning and welding in coal mines

25. The mine operator shall ensure that—
- (a) no burning or welding equipment is used except in a shaft or inset; and
 - (b) before using any such equipment in a shaft or inset, an appropriate assessment is made of the risks of the proposed operation and appropriate steps are taken to mitigate the risks identified.

Risks of explosion in coal mines

26. The mine operator shall ensure that (where necessary) there are in place—
- (a) adequate arrangements to ensure that there is sufficient inert content in dust in roadways in the mine to ensure that risks of explosion are controlled; and
 - (b) suitable and effective barriers against the spread of explosion.