

# MSHA COMMUNICATION AND TRACKING APPROVAL ACTIVITIES

*NIOSH Communications  
Partnership Meeting  
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# 2006 MINER Act (Current Requirements)

- A redundant means of communication with the surface for persons underground, such as secondary telephone or equivalent two-way communication.
- Consistent with commercially available technology and with physical constraints of the mine, above ground personnel must be able to determine the current or immediately pre-accident location of all underground personnel.

# 2006 MINER Act (June 2009 Requirements)

- Post accident communication must be provided between underground and surface personnel via a wireless two-way medium.
- An electronic tracking system must be provided that permits surface personnel to determine the location of any persons trapped underground.

# MINER Act Compliance Issues

- Definition of “wireless”
- Back-up power supply capacity
- Survivability requirements
- Tracking precision
- Mine coverage

# A&CC IN-HOUSE C&T APPROVAL APPLICATIONS

- 51 applications currently under investigation include:
  - 18 RFID Tags
  - 7 Leaky Feeders
  - 7 Portable Radios
  - 8 Wireless Mesh
  - 3 Messenger Systems
  - 1 medium frequency radio
  - 7 Misc. (page phones, longwall face phones)

# RECENT APPROVALS ISSUED

- 12 Approvals in 2006 including
  - Portable radio
  - Several tracking tags
  - RAMPs (approval modifications)
- 17 in 2007
  - Tracking tags
  - Leaky feeder system
  - RAMPs (approval modifications)

# MSHA PRIORITIZATION POLICY

- MSHA A&CC is prioritizing all communication and tracking approval applications
- Overtime is authorized for processing priority applications
- Shifted other Technical Support resources into communication and tracking approval evaluations

# C&T APPROVAL TURNAROUND TIMES

- Of 51 in-house c&t approval applications, only 9 are older than 1 year
  - They are all complex communication or tracking systems
  - We expect 4 or 5 of those to be issued before the end of the year