

Comment Summary for the Proposed Information Collection Request; Safety Standards for Underground Coal Mine Ventilation - Belt Entry Used as an Intake Air Course to Ventilate Working Sections and Areas Where Mechanized Mining Equipment Is Being Installed or Removed

Section 103(h) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act), 30 U.S.C. § 813, authorizes MSHA to collect information necessary to carryout its duty in protecting the safety and health of miners.

The Safety Standards for Underground Coal Mine Ventilation - Belt Entry rule provides safety requirements for the use of the conveyor belt entry as a ventilation intake to course fresh air to working sections and areas where mechanized mining equipment is being installed or removed in mines with three or more entries.

75.350 discuss belt air course ventilation which specifies the requirements when the belt entry is used as an intake air course to ventilate working areas. The commenter mentioned that this requirement is an important part of the mine ventilation plan and must be maintained for the safe operation of the mine, all information must continued to be reported and recorded as it has been in the past, the mine ventilation plan should not be considered a paperwork burden and is necessary for the proper performance of the functions of the agency and does have practical utility. If the coal operator chooses to submit information electronically, the commenter would not have an issue as long as the information is retained and made available to all interested persons and copies provided to miners representative.

75.351 discuss atmospheric monitoring systems and mentions the mine operator must designate an AMS (Atmospheric Monitoring Systems), operator to monitor and promptly respond to all AMS signals. The posting at the surface location of an up-to-date map or schematic showing air flow directions and the location and type of all Atmospheric Monitoring System (AMS) sensors is required.

The commenter mentions that these specifications are necessary for the agency, company, miners and all involved parties to assure that the AMS is operating properly and suggests that no change be made to this standard.

Sections 75.352(a) and 75.352(b) require the designated AMS operator or other appropriate personnel to take actions promptly when malfunction, alert, or alarm signals are received. The commenter mentions that these specifications are necessary for the agency, company, miners and all involved parties to assure that the AMS is operating properly and suggests that no change be made to this standard.

75.371 discusses the mine ventilation plan and contents such as the mine name, company name, mine identification number, and the name of the individual submitting the plan information, planned main mine fan stoppages, type of device to be used for monitoring main mine fan pressure, methods of protecting main mine fans and associated components from the forces of an underground explosion, the locations and operating conditions of booster fans installed in anthracite mines, etc. The commenter mentions that this plan is one of the most important mine plans required by the standards and is necessary for the health and safety of the mine and miners. The plan is a standard part of a mine operation, is not a burden to the mine operator and the information required in the plan should not be changed and is necessary for the functions of the agency.