

First Watch

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Promoting health and safety initiatives in the resources sector

Learning Hub - Chamber of Mines of South Africa

Project Summary

The Chamber of Mines of South Africa (the Chamber) identified that learning from 'pockets of excellence' was a cost-efficient and fast way of sharing health and safety initiatives across the industry. However, it also discovered that adopting, rather than sharing, of leading practice was the greater challenge.

An adoption system was implemented by the Chamber on a pilot basis, following which its members agreed to establish a Learning Hub to provide a more permanent system to support adoption of leading practice.

Location

The Chamber of Mines of South Africa was founded in Johannesburg in 1889.

Chamber of Mines of South Africa Number of employees

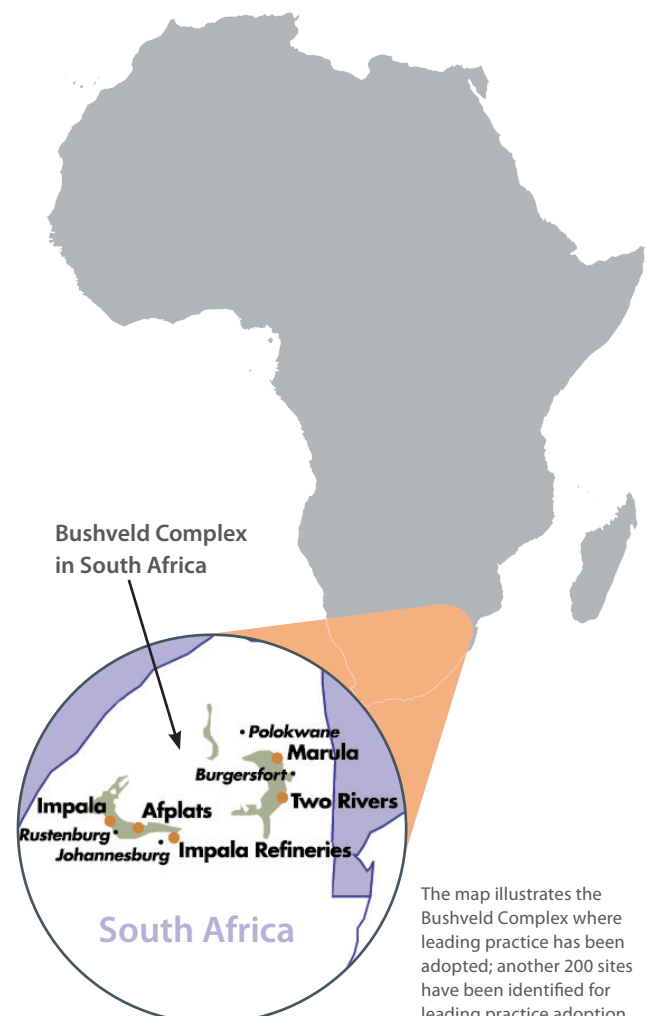
Members of the Chamber of Mines of South Africa employ more than 400,000 workers.

Key Learning

- Learning from 'pockets of excellence' improves health and safety faster and more cost-effectively.
- Adoption of leading practice, not sharing, is the key challenge.
- Adoption of leading practice is about leadership and employee involvement.
- Adoption of leading practice is applicable to many industries.



Chamber of Mines of South Africa



The map illustrates the Bushveld Complex where leading practice has been adopted; another 200 sites have been identified for leading practice adoption.



FirstWatch case studies are produced by the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia to highlight occupational health and safety innovation and best practice in the WA resources sector. For more information, or to nominate a project, contact the CME Executive Officer – Occupational Safety and Health on (08) 9325 2955. Find the complete collection online at www.cmewa.com.au



South African crews visited the Bushveld Complex in South Africa where leading practice for examination and making safe was developed.

The Challenge

Mining leaders in South Africa adopted the Roadmap towards Zero Harm in 2008, at which point they committed to a culture of learning in order to create a workplace free of injury and incident.

The Chamber added its support and agreed to a trial of a Learning Hub, a platform on which to shift the emphasis from sharing information to the more practical task of promoting the adoption of leading practice.

The role of the Hub would further include help for smaller operators, by providing expertise in health and safety challenges, and capacity in scarce skill areas through training opportunities.

The Learning Hub would adopt the following values:

- *People:* Care for people drives continued effort to achieve zero harm.
- *Empathy:* Demonstrated alignment with people's values for safety and health.
- *Excellence:* Goals to be consistent with worldwide standards for health and safety performance.
- *Involvement:* Employee input into the design and implementation of best practices.

The Solution

The Chamber's Learning Hub approach to leading practice adoption differs from similar initiatives in several ways. In the first instance, information transfer is guided by specially structured interviews to establish the knowledge and belief gaps of employees about issues related to the leading practice.

Employees then have the opportunity to identify the behaviour required of their peers and superiors for the successful adoption of a leading practice, shown to improve their safety and wellbeing.

Each adoption is led by two industry representatives and supported by a specialist employed by the secretariat that forms the core of the Learning Hub.

As a 'by industry, for industry' initiative, the Hub is a source of guidance and continuity for leading practice adoption as it relates to technology and people issues.

The Results

To date, three leading practice adoption teams have been established in the areas of Noise, Dust and Fall of Ground, with a fourth underway for Transport and Machinery.

The Chamber said the industry's willingness to adopt these practices, establish these teams, and collectively carry the costs of the teams and their work, demonstrates the high level acceptance that the adoption system holds with industry.

Recognition that sharing leading practice is not enough is imperative. It is the adoption of leading practice that determines whether original or breakthrough ideas succeed.

The leader of the Noise Adoption Team tries out the electric rock drill identified by his team as a leading practice for reducing noise induced hearing loss.

