



MAR 29 2002

Dr. Lewis V. Wade
Associate Director for Mining
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW., Mail Stop P-12
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. Wade:

Although the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) have a process for identifying projects which we believe can help reduce specific injuries and illnesses in mining, I am writing to ask your assistance with a more broadly scoped project that would be an important contribution to MSHA's accident analyses. In 1988, NIOSH's Bruceton Research Center, then part of the Bureau of Mines, published two Information Circulars (IC) which were demographic studies of the mining industry: Characterization of the 1986 Coal Mining Workforce (IC 9192) and Characterization of the 1986 Metal and Nonmetal Mining Workforce (IC 9193). I am writing to ask that these studies be updated. I am also enclosing copies of the reports for your convenience.

These two ICs have been an indispensable part of MSHA's analyses of accident trends. They contain information about age, gender, education, occupation, employment, and work experience, to name a few categories of data. The ICs have let us look at mining injuries and determine which facets are significant. As one example among many, several years ago when the studies were reasonably fresh, a number of fatal injuries involved haul truck drivers slipping and falling from their equipment. We began to look at nonfatal days-lost injuries as well. The Characterization of the 1986 Metal and Nonmetal Workforce helped us see that these injuries were disproportionate to the percentage of the work force comprised of haul truck drivers. We subsequently altered our policy and developed training materials for industry about hazards of accessing haul trucks and helped to reduce these injuries. The ICs were part of the foundation of that analysis, but also the making of a cogent case to industry about the reasons for that altered policy.

The information in these studies is now dated and, consequently, their usefulness has been diminished. I would appreciate your support to have these ICs updated. The ICs

are certainly valuable to us at MSHA, but I think that you also would be serving a larger need in the mining community as a whole. If you would like to discuss this further, please contact Jeffrey Duncan, Director for Educational Policy and Development, at 703-235-1515 or by e-mail at duncan-jeffrey@msha.gov

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John R. Caylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "C".

John R. Caylor
Deputy Assistant Secretary of Labor for
Mine Safety and Health

Enclosure