

Form Name: Phase I Focus Group Questions

I. BACKGROUND/INTRODUCTIONS

Moderator will:

- Introduce yourself and thank participants for agreeing to participate.
 - *Thank you for volunteering your time. I am {NAME}. I work for the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health commonly referred to as NIOSH. I'll be moderating our discussion today.*

- Explain group guidelines and tell how long the focus group will last
 - *We have the discussion scheduled for 45 minutes to one hour. During this time, we want to get your reaction to the new kneepad and body weight support worn at the ankle that we are developing at NIOSH.*
 - *I am here just to facilitate the session today. Please do not be afraid to hurt my feelings. We want your honest opinion about the products. We are interested in your point of view even if it is different from what others have expressed.*
 - *I'm going to make every effort to keep the discussion focused and within our time frame. If too much time is being spent on one question or topic, I may move the conversation along so we can cover all of the questions.*

- Address confidentiality
 - *We will be audio-taping the discussion because we don't want to miss any comments. But, we will only be using first names today and there will not be any names attached to the comments on the final report. You may be assured complete confidentiality.*

Participant introduction:

- *On that note, please tell us your first name and how long you have been in low-seam mining.*

II. DISCUSSION TOPICS

EXPLAIN PROCESS:

Great. Our topic of discussion today is a new kneepad and body weight support being developed at NIOSH. The idea is to develop kneel-assist devices that will reduce the stresses at the knee while being comfortable and durable enough to withstand the harsh mining environment. Your feedback is important to NIOSH. Depending on what you say, we will either make changes to the kneepad and body weight support or will begin doing

a large scale field study that will hopefully demonstrate the superior performance of these prototypes compared to what is currently available in the industry. We would like to get your feedback on these new products before beginning such a large study.

- *Introductory questions*
 - *What are the benefits of wearing kneepads?*
 - *Probing question*
 - *How effective were your kneepads at achieving the benefits we just described?*
 - *What problems do you think kneepads help you avoid?*
 - *Have you encountered any problems while wearing kneepads?*
 - *Probing question*
 - *What are some of the negative aspects of wearing kneepads?*
 - *What concerns do you have about wearing kneepads?*
- *Transition question*
 - *What are you looking for in a kneepad?*
 - *Probing questions*
 - *What features of kneepads do you like?*
 - *What are the features of a kneepad that are most important to you?*
 - *What are your expectations for a kneepad?*
- *Key questions*
 - *Think back to when you first received the new kneepad, what were your initial thoughts?*
 - *Probing questions*
 - *How would you describe your level of comfort when you put it on?*
 - *Did you find it pleasing to the eye?*
 - *Did you think this was something you would consider wearing?*
 - *Now that you have worn the new kneepad for a while, what are your thoughts?*
 - *Probing questions*
 - *How would you describe your level of comfort when you put it on?*
 - *Do you find it pleasing to the eye?*
 - *Do you think they are durable enough?*
 - *Do you think this is something you would continue wearing?*
 - *If you could make any changes to the new kneepad that you want, what would they be?*
 - *Probing question*
 - *Have you made any changes to the new kneepad that have made you more comfortable or that have made it more usable?*

- *If you were a member of the advertizing team for this new kneepad, what key words or phrases would you recommend they include when describing it?*
 - *Probing question*
 - *Do you think it would be important to talk about comfort, durability, overall quality, or ease of use?*
- *Now, think back to when you were using the body weight support. How would you describe this experience?*
 - *Probing questions*
 - *Were you comfortable?*
 - *Did you find it to be confusing or awkward?*
 - *Did you feel sudden relief of stress on your body?*
- *If you could make any changes to the body weight support that you want, what would they be?*
 - *Probing question*
 - *Have you made any changes to the new body weight support that have made you more comfortable or have improved its usability?*
- *Closing questions*
 - *Of all the needs we discussed, which one is most important to you?*
 - *Is there anything that we should have talked about but didn't?*

III.CLOSING

Moderator will:

- *Thank the group for their participation and feedback.*
 - *We have covered all of the topics and are out of time. I would like to thank you again for your time and participation in our efforts to design kneel-assist devices such as kneepads and the body weight support. The information you have provided will help improve the quality of our design and will hopefully result in a successful product.*