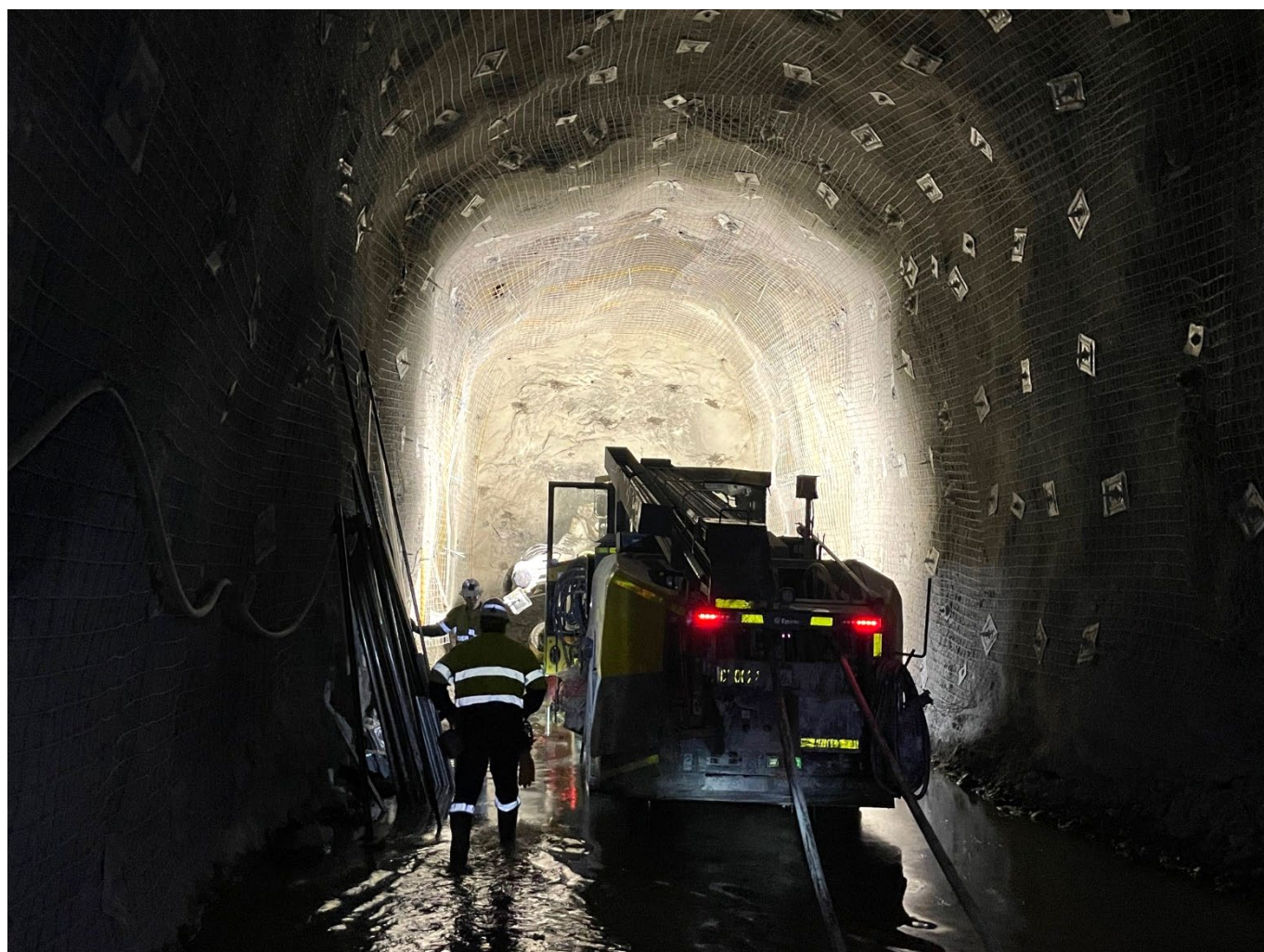


## Compliance priority report

### Risk management and supervision – metals and extractives

January 2025 to June 2025



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# Executive summary

A crucial part of the Resources Regulator’s incident prevention strategy for mines and petroleum sites involves:

- targeted assessments and planned inspection programs – focusing on assessing an operation’s control of critical risks by evaluating the effectiveness of control measures in the mine’s safety management system
- priority programs – proactively assessing a topic that is an emerging risk throughout the industry, which is determined primarily from incident data as well as evolving industry trends.

Incidents reported to the Regulator between May 2023 and May 2024 included 31 incidents at open-cut and underground mines (coal, metalliferous and extractives sites) that identified inadequate hazard identification and control or supervision as contributing factors to the incident.

Over the same time, Regulator assessments resulted in 80 notices being issued to mine operators that referenced the topics of supervision or risk management.

This report summarises the compliance priority program undertaken at surface and underground metalliferous mines and surface extractives sites (METEX) for reviewing risk management and supervision between January 2025 and June 2025. The assessment program included unannounced backshift and weekend inspections to review work tasks undertaken outside of production areas and target plant or machine shut-down work tasks.

The 7 surface metalliferous and extractives sites and 15 underground metalliferous mines assessed consisted of:

- 3 surface construction materials extractives mines
- 2 surface industrial minerals extractives mines
- 1 surface metalliferous processing site
- 1 surface mineral sands mine
- 15 underground metals mines.

The Regulator developed 6 assessment criteria to review risk management and supervision at METEX sites. This report provides information on assessment findings and recommendations for operators of surface and underground METEX sites.

In summary, of the 22 METEX sites assessed, a total of 41 compliance notices were issued to 19 METEX sites.

- 10 compliance notices were issued to all 7 surface METEX sites assessed
- 31 compliance notices were issued to 12 of the 15 underground METEX sites assessed.

Explanatory notes on the assessment system are in Appendix A.

## Assessment criteria for assessments

The Regulator developed 6 assessment criteria to review risk management and supervision at METEX sites.

A table detailing the criteria for the review of risk management and supervision at METEX sites is in Table 1.

Table 1: Criteria for risk management and supervision – METEX sites

Criteria number	Criteria
1	Evaluate workers' understanding of risk management requirements through interviews or assessments, verifying that they are aware of what is required to manage hazards in their work area.
2	Conduct on-site inspections to evaluate the workers' knowledge of being able to identify the hazards in their work area and what controls are required to manage the hazards through interviews or assessments.
3	Conduct interactions with workers to discuss site procedures and supervision
4	Observations of the work area.
5	Evaluate the supervisors' understanding of inspection areas, their responsibilities, inspection requirements, recording inspections, knowledge of work being conducted in their area, who is conducting the work through interviews or assessments,
6	Change management questions.

## Assessment findings for METEX sites

Overall, the assessment findings for 22 METEX sites assessed were:

- 3 surface construction materials extractives mines
- 2 surface industrial minerals extractives mines
- one surface metalliferous processing site
- one surface mineral sands mine
- 15 underground metals mines
- 132 individual findings for the assessed criteria
- 41 compliance notices were issued to:
  - 10 compliance notices were issued to all 7 surface METEX sites assessed
  - 31 compliance notices were issued to 12 of the 15 underground METEX sites assessed.

## Assessment overall ratings for METEX sites

In summary the overall assessment findings for METEX sites assessed were:

- 89% assessment overall finding for the 6 criteria assessed.

Figure 1 provides a summary assessment of the overall findings by criteria for METEX sites (surface and underground sites combined).

Figure 1: Summary assessment findings by criteria for METEX sites (surface and underground combined)

1	Evaluate workers understanding of risk management requirements through interviews or assessments, verifying that they are aware of what is required to manage hazards in their work area	82%
2	Conduct on-site inspections to evaluate the workers knowledge of being able to identify the hazards in their work area and what controls are required to manage the hazards through interviews or assessments	85%
3	Conduct interactions with workers to discuss	92%
4	Observations of the work area	89%
5	Evaluate the Supervisors understanding of Inspection areas their responsibilities, inspection requirements, recording inspections, knowledge of work being conducted in their area, who is conducting the work through interviews or assessments	92%
6	Change management questions	92%
Grand Total		89%

- Green (=100%)
- Yellow (>= 80% and <100%)
- Orange (>= 65% and <80%)
- Red (<65%)
- Not applicable

In summary, the overall assessment ratings were 86% documented and implemented, 9% documented but not implemented, 5% not documented and not implemented and 1% were not applicable.

Figure 2 provides an overall assessment findings ratings for METEX sites assessed.

Figure 2: Overall assessment findings ratings for METEX sites assessed (surface and underground combined)

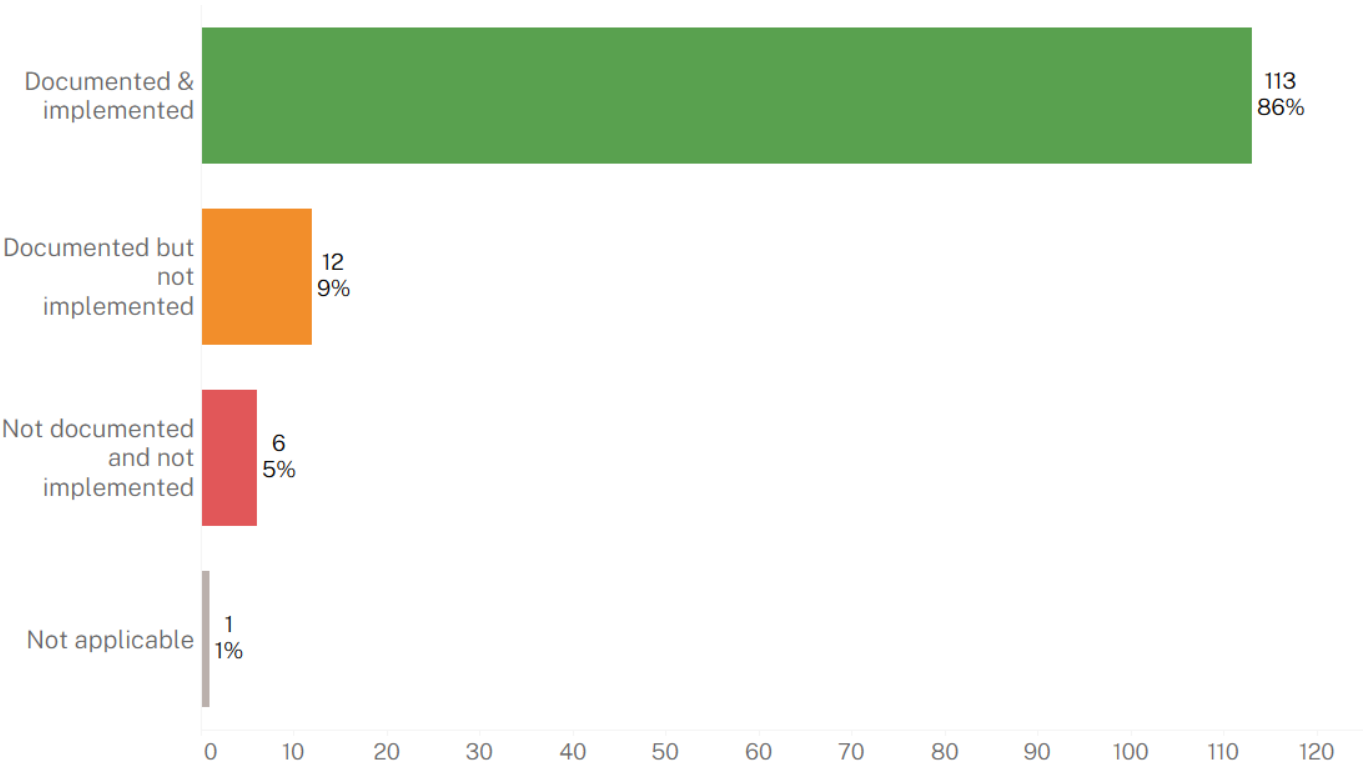


Figure 3 provides an overall assessment findings by criteria METEX sites assessed.



Figure 3: Overall assessment findings ratings by criteria at METEX sites assessed (surface and underground combined)



## Notices issued to METEX operators (surface and underground)

In total, 22 assessments were conducted at METEX sites (surface and underground).

In summary, of the 22 METEX sites assessed, a total of 41 compliance notices were issued to 19 METEX sites.

- 10 compliance notices were issued to all 7 surface METEX sites assessed
- 31 compliance notices were issued to 12 of the 15 underground METEX sites assessed

The compliance notices comprised of:

- 2 x section 195 prohibition notices
- 29 x section 191 improvement notices



- 10 x section 23 cause for concern notices.

Two *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* s195 prohibition notices issued related to the topics of risk management and supervision controls in the site mechanical engineering control plan (MECP) and roads and other vehicle operating areas principal hazard management plan (ROVOA PHMP).

Twenty-nine *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* s191 improvement notices issued related to the topic of risk management and supervision.

Ten *Work Health and Safety Act (Mines and Petroleum Sites) 2013* s23 notice of concern issued related to the topic of risk management and supervision.

Table 3 lists the compliance notices issued by type and number at METEX sites assessed.

Table 3: Notices issued for METEX sites assessed

Category	Surface	Underground	Grand Total
WHS(MPS)A s23 notice of concerns	3	7	10
WHS s191 improvement notice	6	23	29
WHS s195 prohibition notice	1	1	2
Grand Total	10	31	41

## Recommendations for operators of METEX sites

Based on the findings outlined in this report, and in relation to the numbers and types of compliance notices issued during the compliance priority program assessment of risk management and supervision at METEX sites, it is recommended that the following should be reviewed by operators of METEX sites (surface and underground sites):

Review the site principal hazard management and principal control plans for risk management and supervision topics and review information resources provided on the Regulator's website at:

[www.resources.nsw.gov.au/resources-regulator/safety/health-and-safety-management](http://www.resources.nsw.gov.au/resources-regulator/safety/health-and-safety-management):

### Risk management review topics

Air quality or dust or other airborne contaminants:

- Dust management in mobile plant cabins, control rooms and workshops and operator training to reduce dust ingress into work areas.

Contractor management plan:

- Clearly defined contractor operating safety management system.

Electrical engineering control plan (EECP):

- Electrical equipment testing program.
- Live testing procedures and task control checklists.
- Welding equipment test and tag compliance.

- Audit of electrical enclosures security to comply with design.
- Restoration of power procedures.
- Transformer bay water ingress/ponding and corrosion of electrical components.

Explosives control plan:

- Safe storage and isolation from hand-held radio devices of explosives during transport and use in work areas.

Emergency management control plan:

- Refuge chamber signage relocated with the refuge chamber.
- Escapeways clearly sign posted and clear of stored items.
- Effective communication systems with remote or working alone workers.

Health control plan:

- Heat management procedures for short and long duration tasks undertaken in hot and humid conditions.
- Occupational noise management in concentrator grinding circuits.

Mechanical engineering control plan (MECP):

- Falling objects while drilling cable bolt holes with a jumbo rig.
- Hot-work workshops adequate fire-fighting equipment and site cleanliness.
- Risk controls when plant was suspended at height during installation.
- Safe access/egress and fall from height risks on fixed structures.
- Pre-start checks on mobile plant.
- Risks of entanglement with rotating components of processing and sump pumps.

Personal protection equipment:

- Fit testing programs for use of PPE for respirable dusts and gasses.
- Hearing protection signs in concentrator grinding circuits.

Roads and other vehicle operating areas (ROVOA):

- Recovery of bogged mobile plant.
- Maintenance of road surface standards.
- Mobile plant parking area standards.

Ventilation control plan:

- Maintenance workers mobile equipment recovery in unventilated areas.
- Mobile plant operating in areas where ventilation was inadequate.

## Supervision review topics

Air quality or dust or other airborne contaminants:

- Monitoring dust management in mobile plant cabins, control rooms and workshops and operator training in managing dust reduction

Contractor management plan:

- training and supervision of the contractor operating safety management system

Electrical engineering control plan (EECP):

- Electrical testing undertaken by a competent person.
- Confirmation of task compliance with site live testing procedures.
- Monitoring compliance with welder test and tag procedures.
- Monitoring electrical enclosure security systems.
- Monitoring compliance with restoration of energy procedures.
- Monitoring transformer bay water ingress/ponding and corrosion of electrical components.

Explosives control plan:

- Monitor compliance with safe use of explosives, storage and transport and isolation from hand-held radio devices.

Emergency management control plan:

- Monitoring refuge chamber signage and escapeways remain open and accessible.
- Monitoring effective communication systems with remote or working alone workers.

Health control plan:

- Monitor heat management plan compliance with workers conducting short and long duration work tasks in hot and humid work areas.
- Monitor occupational noise management standards in concentrator grinding circuits.

Mechanical engineering control plan (MECP):

- Monitor hot work tasks and prevent fires.
- Monitor risk controls when plant is suspended at height during installation.
- Monitor fall from height risk controls on fixed structures.
- Monitor compliance with mobile plant pre-start checks.
- Monitor entanglement risks with processing and sump pumps.

Personal protection equipment:

- Monitor correct application of PPE for respirable dusts and gasses.
- Monitor correct use of hearing protection in concentrator circuits.

Roads and other vehicle operating areas (ROVOA):

- supervise bogged vehicle recovery.

- Monitor compliance with road surface standards and mobile plant parking areas.

Ventilation control plan:

- Monitor compliance with ventilations standards for mobile plant operating in mine roadways.

For more information on safety assessment programs, the findings outlined in this report, or other mine safety information, please contact the Regulator.

Contact	Contact details
Email	<a href="mailto:cau@regional.nsw.gov.au">cau@regional.nsw.gov.au</a>
Incident reporting	To report an incident or injury call 1300 814 609 or log in to the <a href="#">Regulator Portal</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.resources.nsw.gov.au">www.resources.nsw.gov.au</a>
Address	Resources Regulator 516 High Street Maitland NSW 2320

## Appendix A – Assessment criteria rating

Each assessed criteria is rated from one to 4 based on evidence supporting the expected control supports identified at the mine site.

Evidence supporting expected control supports

Expected control supports	Rating	Evidence supporting rating / comments				
	<table><tr><td>4</td><td>3</td></tr><tr><td>2</td><td>1</td></tr></table>	4	3	2	1	
4	3					
2	1					

Assessment findings results are calculated based on the total points allocated to the assessed ratings as a percentage of the maximum possible points for each criteria group, and any findings rated as 'Not applicable' were excluded from the calculation.

Criteria assessed ratings and points

Assessed as	Rating	Points
Documented & implemented <b>Compliant</b>	4	4
Implemented but not documented <b>Improvement needed</b>	3	2
Documented but not implemented <b>Significant improvement needed</b>	2	1
Not documented and not implemented <b>Non compliant</b>	1	0
Not applicable (N/A)		

Findings results (points) with colours assigned as follows:

- Green (=100%)
- Yellow (>= 80% and <100%)
- Orange (>= 65% and <80%)
- Red (<65%)
- Not applicable