

## **Chamber of Mines — Policy Guidelines**

**From Chamber of Mines News, 9th December 1982.**

1. In 1980 the Chamber of Mines, recognizing that in the not too distant future new unions representing black, asian and coloured mining industry employees would emerge, drafted a set of policy guidelines for dealing with the unionization of blacks, asians and coloureds.
2. This document, called 'The Criteria for the Recognition of Trade Unions', laid down fairly stringent guidelines.
3. It was, however, realized at the time that industrial relations in South Africa in general and in the mining industry in particular, would be very dynamic in the future and that these policy guidelines would without a doubt have to be amended from time to time to reflect the changing circumstances and changing perceptions.
4. In the short space of two years these guidelines have already been amended on three occasions and are now to be amended again.
5. For several months now the Chamber has been investigating intensively the pivotal role that the formal registration of a trade union by the Industrial Registrar, Department of Manpower, plays in the Chamber's policy on the recognition of trade unions.
6. The Executive Committee of the Chamber yesterday considered recommendations which had previously been submitted to it and agreed that registration of a trade union need no longer be a criterion for the Chamber to formally recognize the trade union as a partner in the collective bargaining process, capable of negotiating binding agreements with the Chamber.
7. This policy decision will now make it possible to simplify the procedures leading to the full recognition of trade unions considerably.
8. Stated very briefly, the criteria for the full recognition of a trade union will be as follows:
  - (a) The union will be required to submit to the Chamber an acceptable constitution which indicates that the union intends recruiting members in the whole mining industry;
  - (b) The union can prove that it has recruited a significant proportion of employees in the class or classes (occupations, not race) which it seeks to represent, on one or more mines, members of the Chamber;

(c) The union agrees to enter into a formal recognition agreement which defines the categories of employees to be represented and the mine or mines on which these employees are employed and which also defines the procedural rules for the regulation of the relationship between the union, the mine or mines concerned and the Chamber;

(d) The union agrees that if another union also becomes significantly representative of the same class or classes of employees it purports to represent and this other union is formally recognized by the Chamber, the union will approach the Chamber jointly with the other union when wages and other conditions of employment of the class or classes of employees are negotiated.

(e) Should the membership of a union recognized by the Chamber decline to the point where it is no longer regarded as being significantly representative, the Chamber reserves the right to withdraw recognition.

### **Some background information**

1. Currently, mines, members of the Chamber, employ 480,559 black employees, 915 coloured employees and 423 asian employees.

2. There are at present five new unions recruiting black, asian and coloured mine employees as members, namely:

(a) The Black Allied Workers Union

(b) The Black Mining and Construction Workers' Union

(c) The Black Mine Workers Union

(d) The National Union of Mine Workers; and

(e) The Federated Mining Explosives and Chemical Employees' Union.

3. Three of these five unions have had discussions with the Chamber, namely, those mentioned in 2(c), (d) and (e) above. All three have been granted access to recruit members on mine property. In addition, the Federated Mining, Explosives and Chemical Employees' Union has been granted formal recognition to represent the following categories of employees on the following mines:

**Hartebeesfontein Gold Mining  
Company, Limited:**

1. Vehicle Drivers  
(Light, Heavy and  
Extra Heavy Duty)

**Vaal Reefs Exploration and  
Mining Company, Limited:**

1. Painters  
2. Handymen

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