

HOME (/)  
ABOUT  
JOURNAL (/ABOUT)  
MASTHEAD (/NEW-PAGE)  
PROSPECTIVE MEMBERS (/PROSPECTIVE-MEMBERS)  
SUBSCRIBE (/SUBSCRIBE)  
STAFF RESOURCES (/STAFF-RESOURCES)  
PUBLICATIONS  
PUBLICATION ARCHIVE (/PUBLICATION-ARCHIVE)  
VOLUME 1 (2009) (/VOLUME-1-2008-2009)  
VOLUME 2 (2010) (/VOLUME-2-2009-2010)  
VOLUME 3 (2011) (/VOLUME-3-2010-2011)  
VOLUME 4 (2012) (/VOLUME-4-2011-2012)  
VOLUME 5 (2013) (/VOLUME-5-2012-2013)  
VOLUME 6 (2014) (/VOLUME-6-2013-2014)  
VOLUME 7 (2015) (/VOLUME-7-2014-2015)  
VOLUME 8 (2016) (/VOLUME-8-2015-2016)  
VOLUME 9 (2017) (/VOLUME-9-2016-2017)  
VOLUME 10 (2018) (/VOLUME-10-2018)  
SYMPOSIUM  
INFORMATION (/SYMPOSIUM)  
BLOG  
FULL BLOG (/FULL-BLOG)  
BLOG ARCHIVE (/BLOG-ARCHIVE-1)  
  
SUBMISSIONS (/SUBMISSIONS)

May 16, 2012 (/full-blog/2012/05/rules-to-live-by-iii-how-third-phase-of.html)

## “Rules to Live By III”: How the third phase of MSHA’s initiative seeks to save lives (/full-blog/2012/05/rules-to-live-by-iii-how-third-phase-of.html)



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Image Source (<http://www.blogdotu.com/www.thewirelesteport.com/media/2006/02/miners.jpg>)

By: Alison Marcotte, Staff Member

On January 31, 2012, Joseph A. Main, the Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Department of Labor’s Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), introduced the third phase of an outreach and enforcement initiative intended to prevent fatalities in the mining industry.[1] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn1](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn1)) This phase of the program is named “Rules to Live By III: Preventing Common Mining Deaths.”[2] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn2](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn2))

As its name suggests, Rules to Live By III focuses on why mining accidents happen and provides measures to miners and mine operators as to how to prevent them from reoccurring in the future. In the press release issued by MSHA describing the initiative, Main stated the purpose in more detail, "[t]he goal of this phase of 'Rules to Live By' is to reduce numbers of deaths and injuries from the targeted standards by having mine operators identify and correct all hazardous conditions, direct MSHA enforcement toward confirming that violations related to these conditions are not present at mines, and ensure miners are better trained to recognize and avoid these particular hazards." [3] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn3](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn3))

The initiative achieves this goal through its concentration on 14 safety standards that were chosen because violations related to each have been cited as contributing to at least five mining accidents and at least five deaths during the 10-year period of Jan. 1, 2001, to Dec. 31, 2010. [4] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn4](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn4))

Among the 14 standards chosen are on-shift examinations, equipment maintenance, inspections of surface coal mines, correction of hazardous conditions, and operations of haulage equipment. [5] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn5](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn5)) Along with mandating these standards, MSHA is using this phase to reach out to miners and miners' representatives during inspections to ensure that mine operators have the information they need to perform these standards and eliminate workplace hazards. [6] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn6](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn6))

Beginning April 1, 2012, MSHA will increase the frequency of inspections for violations of the standards listed above and direct mine inspectors to carefully evaluate gravity and negligence when assessing violations of the 14 standards that may cause or contribute to mining fatalities. Also, any violations of the targeted standards will be more likely to result in special assessments and punishment. [7] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftn7](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftn7))

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[1] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) Mine Safety and Health Association, *MSHA begins 3rd phase of 'Rules to Live By' outreach and enforcement initiative Fatality prevention program to focus on 14 safety standards*, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR (Jan. 31, 2012) <http://www.msha.gov/MEDIA/PRESS/2012/NR120131.asp>

[2] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) *Id.*

[3] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) *Id.*

[4] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) Mine Safety and Health Association, *Fatality Prevention: Rules to Live By*, UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, <http://www.msha.gov/focuson/rulestoliveby.asp>

[5] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) Benjamin M. McFarland, *MSHA Announces Third Phase Of Its "Rules To Live By" Initiative*, OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH: NEWS ALERT (Feb. 6, 2012)

<http://safety-health.jacksonkelly.com/2012/02/msha-announces-third-phase-of-its-rules-to-live-by-initiative.html>

[6] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) Mine Safety and Health Association, *supra* note 4.

[7] ([http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#\\_ftnref](http://www.blogger.com/blogger.g?blogID=8202935745006855383#_ftnref)) McFarland, *supra* note 5.

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631 SOUTH LIMESTONE, LEXINGTON, KY

40508 (859) 257-4747 [BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM) ([MAILTO:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM](mailto:BLOG.KJEANRL@GMAIL.COM))