

UNDERMANAGER CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCE

AUGUST – DECEMBER 2015

EXAMINATION PANEL REPORT

Summary of results and general comments

Applications

Number of applications received: 27

Number of applications approved: 27

Written examination – Part B

Date: 26 August 2015

Number of candidates sitting all papers: 2

Number of candidates who passed all papers: 1

UB1 Legislation (out of 100 marks)

Highest mark: 65

Average mark: 56.9

Lowest mark: 44.5

Number of candidates who sat: 4

Number of candidates who passed: 2

Comments:

Question 1. Question (1a) was answered well by one candidate with two candidates achieving very good marks for question (1b) and the remainder of candidates struggling to communicate a sound knowledge of the subject matter, Control of Risk or Contractors. This resulted in correspondingly low marks for those candidates.

Question 2. All Candidates achieved very high marks for the second part of this question (2b) regarding Principal Control Plans.

Question 3 on listing High Potential Incidents and to whom they are to be reported (clause 128) was generally well answered.

Question 4 on the requirements for provision of information, training and supervision to workers (Clause 104) was generally well answered, except for one candidate who provided answers not specifically related to the question and consequently marked poorly.

Question 5 on the requirements of Clause 31, Explosives and Explosive precursors WHS (Mines) Regulations 2014, generally resulted in poor marks for candidates.

The exam was targeted at legislative requirements across the Work Health and Safety (Mines)

All candidates are reminded that exam questions can, and generally are, drawn from multiple pieces of legislation.

Legislation questions focus on matters appropriate to the working knowledge required by an undermanager.



- Note: answers can be in dot point form. Examiners are looking for the candidate to demonstrate a working understanding of the intent of the legislation. It is not necessary to provide legislation verbatim.

UB2 - Ventilation (out of 200 marks)

Highest mark: 132

Average mark: 113.3

Lowest mark: 95

Number of candidates who sat: 6

Number of candidates who passed: 3

Comments:

A number of candidates continued to rely heavily on 'rules of thumb' or use assumptions that are not explained or justified. Each candidate should briefly explain why their assumptions are appropriate for the ventilation question.

Question 2 made reference to the management systems in place to manage risks associated with ventilating the mine. Candidates are encouraged to approach questions such as this from the perspective of what aspects will need to be included in the relevant management systems.

The candidates who obtained good marks in the ventilation paper provided answers from the perspective of an undermanager, who could identify the potential hazards associated with the ventilation arrangements and provide specific measures to control the risks from those hazards. Answers need to reflect the hazards, risks and control measures relative to the mine plan and mine operation description provided in Question 1.

The knowledge of spontaneous combustion was generally good. A number of candidates failed to identify the need to confirm the accuracy of gas readings before triggering TARPS.

Candidates are reminded to read the question carefully as a number of candidates did not provide answers which reflected the mine plan and details provided in the question.

The current format of the ventilation paper is consistent with previous papers. Candidates are required to provide an explanation of their understanding of ventilation principles in relation to the data and other details provided in the exam.

UB3 - Coal mining practice (out of 100 marks)

Highest mark: 80

Average mark: 71.3

Lowest mark: 61

Number of candidates who sat: 3

Number of candidates who passed: 3

Comments:

Generally, all candidates demonstrated a sound knowledge of the mining hazards and controls across the range of questions in this paper, with all candidates achieving good results.

Candidates are reminded, that due to the range of hazards in the underground coal industry, there are also a wide range of controls that they are expected to have a working understanding of. This includes specialised practices such as gas drainage and stone drivage.

Oral examination

Date: 25 November 2015

Number of candidates eligible to sit: 19

Number of candidates who sat: 12

Number of candidates deemed competent: 10

Comments:

Candidates should review their weaknesses from written exams and/or previous oral examinations and ensure they are fully across the detail before their oral examination. Examiners wish to see that an Undermanager candidate would follow up on any weaknesses rather than just accept them.

Candidates generally understood the legislated obligations with respect to notification of incidents when scenarios were put to them (eg. The unintended activation, movement or failure to stop vehicles or machinery).

Candidates showed a wide range of competency in the management of significant incidents that affected the whole of mine and incorporated addressing several issues at the same time. Some candidates need to follow a more structured approach in identifying and addressing the hazards and taking control of the situation.

Candidates generally demonstrated sound competency in subjects of frictional ignition, windblast, spontaneous combustion, legislation framework, and the use of explosives in coal mines although candidates should make themselves generally aware of gazettal notices related to the use of explosives in underground coal mines.

The need for benchmarking mines across the state has always been an important aspect of a candidate's preparation for their undermanager's exam. A number of candidates presented for the oral exam with limited benchmarking behind them. A candidate should approach the task of benchmarking from the perspective of identifying the major coal mining hazards and visiting those operations which provide an opportunity to learn how those hazards are managed.

Candidates will gain an improved understanding from their benchmarking by seeking to understand **why** a particular mine operates as it does, as opposed to simply looking at how the mine operates. Candidates also need to be prepared to communicate their learning outcomes from each benchmarking visit.

It is common for candidates to approach scenario questions in an oral exam from the perspective of a deputy or their normal role. Each answer provided needs to be from the perspective of an undermanager. By doing this, the candidate can more readily demonstrate his/her knowledge, both technical and practical.

Candidates are reminded that the undermanager's role is an operational role requiring a structured management approach which incorporates practical mining solutions. The importance of this holistic approach to the role cannot be overstated.

More information

Business Processes and Authorisations Unit

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Acknowledgments

Undermanager examination panel