

SACESHA VIRTUAL CONFERENCE

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Developments with COVID-19

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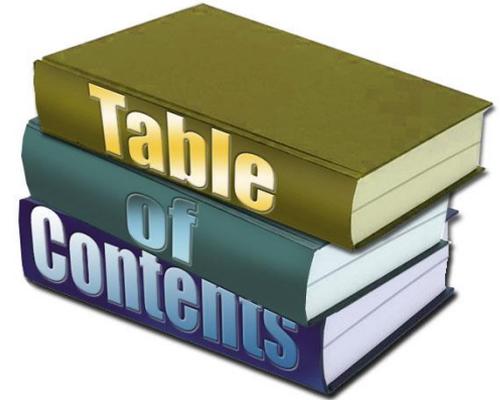


mineral resources & energy

Department: Mineral Resources &
Energy
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Presentation Outline

- Introduction.
- Interventions by DMRE
- Key COVID-19 Finding
- Instructions issued in terms of the legal provisions.
- Monitoring of COVID-19 Compliance.
- COVID-19 Guideline Amendments
- Proposed Guidance on the management of Vulnerable Employees
- Challenges
- COVID-19 Vaccination
- COVID-19 Stats
- Collaborations on COVID-19
- Conclusion



INTRODUCTION

26 March 2020

Guiding Principles on COVI-19 issued by the CloM

18 May 2020

Mandatory Guideline promulgated

3rd August 2020

Instruction: Re-enforcement of measures for COVID-19

Jan-March 2020

The WHO declared COVID-19 as a public health emergency of international concern

March 2020 declared it a global pandemic

President of SA declares a National State of Disaster on COVID-19

2020-To date:

***Several Instructions have been issued to the Mining Industry to continue complying with the Guideline**

*** COVID-19 Reporting Tool approved by MHSC.**

****Guideline reviewed to accommodate concerns of stakeholders.**

INTERVENTIONS BY DMRE

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- Minister of Minerals and Energy met with the Executives of MCSA, on the envisaged plans for rolling out the vaccine program on the 19 Jan 2021.
 - MCSA reported that they have adequate health care workers to assist in the roll out of vaccines, and further stated that they will be vaccinating the communities in which their companies are located

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- Minister was to present the request made by MCSA for registration as the key point of delivery by the Dept of Health at the NCCC.

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- On the 4 February the Director General for Health announced that the miners will fall in Phase 11 of essential workers where teachers, police officers, military etc are also defined.

INTERVENTIONS BY DMRE

❑ **The Inspectorate met with:-**

- Organised Labour representatives who had complained about how companies were implementing the Vulnerable employees' regulations of the Disaster Management Act.
- Employers on the issue of how the vulnerable employees have been treated by some companies, and explained that no employees should be dismissed or retrenched during the COVID pandemic

INTERVENTIONS BY DMRE

- ❑ COVID -19 Guideline has been amended to align with latest regulations issued in terms of section 27(2) of the Disaster Management Act, 2002.
- ❑ DMRE developed a COVID -19 reporting tool in line with the Mandatory Code of Practice for the Mitigation and Management of Covid-19 Outbreak
- ❑ The Guideline and the Reporting tool have been prepared for promulgation with its latest amendments

INTERVENTIONS BY DMRE

- ❑ Working together with the MHSC the Department has continued to ensure that the mining industry is compliant to COVID-19 regulations.
- ❑ An instruction to remind the sector to ensure compliance during the festive season was sent to all the mines in November.
- ❑
- ❑ Another instruction was sent in March for the Easter Period.
- ❑ Question and Answer session held with Regional Tripartite Forum stakeholders on COVID-19 Guideline.

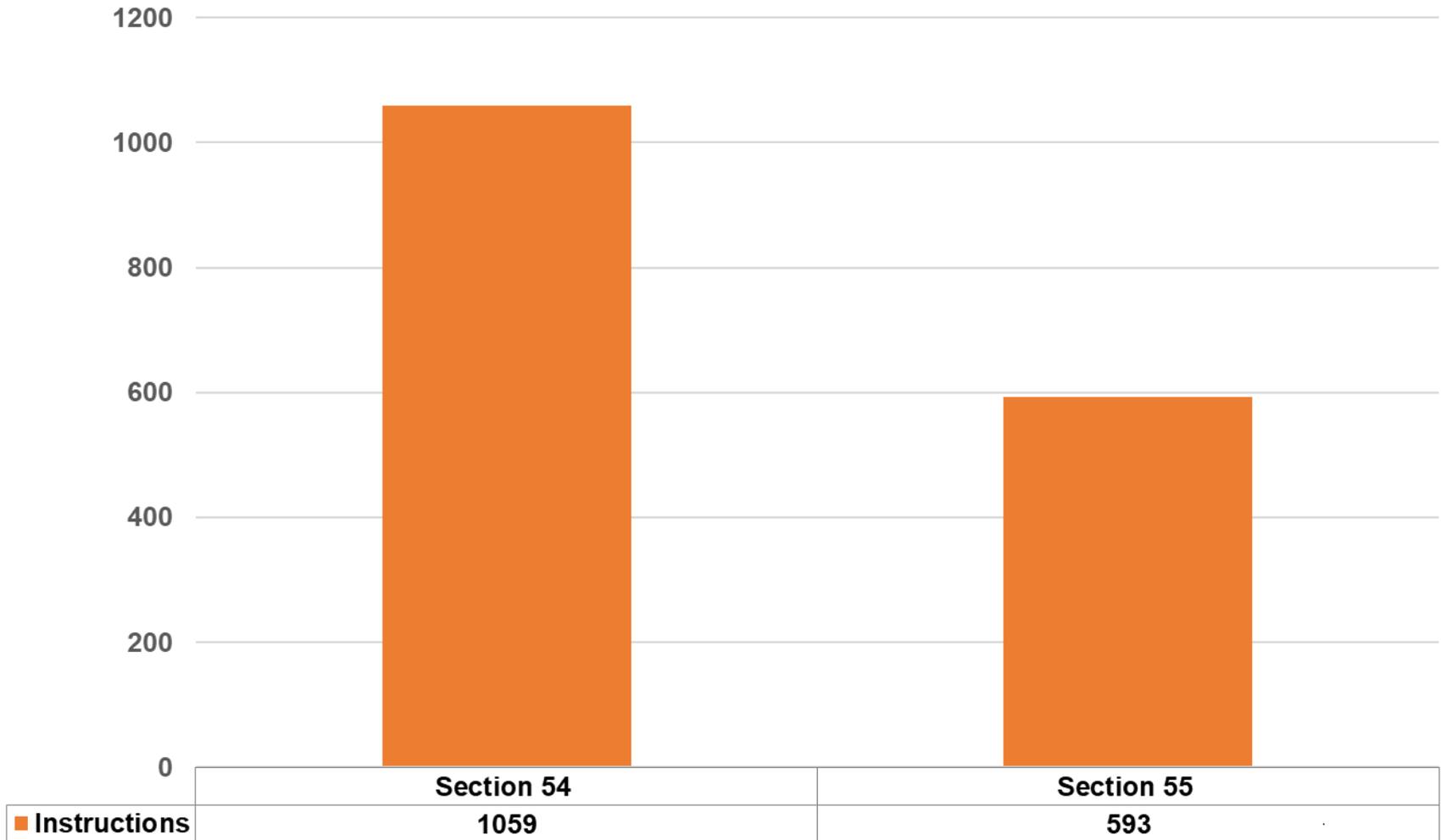
KEY COVID – 19 FINDINGS

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- Lack of Codes of Practice (COPs) prepared in line with the Guideline
 - Inadequate consultation with organised labour when developing COPs and protocols.

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- Variable testing and screening in certain mines
 - HR Policy on vulnerable employees were not finalized at certain Mines.

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- Inadequate participation of Occupational Medical Practitioners and Occupational Hygienists in drafting COVID-19 related procedures
 - PPE still a problem, instructions issued for this non compliance

INSTRUCTIONS ISSUED IN TERMS OF THE LEGAL PROVISIONS



MONITORING OF COVID-19 COMPLIANCE WITH LEGISLATION

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- The Department engaged stakeholders including CEOs of mining companies on their strategic interventions on COVID-19 as well as occupational health and safety matters.



The DMRE continues with monitoring compliance in the mining sector.

- COVID-19 audit tool has been developed to assist inspectors during mine inspections and audits.

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- A total of 6036 (cumulative) inspections and audits were conducted to ensure compliance with the legal provisions on the mitigation and management of COVID-19.

COVID-19 GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS

□ Current Definition in Revised COVID-19 Guideline:

- “Vulnerable employees-means Employees **with known or disclosed health issues or comorbidities** such as or with any condition which may place such employees at a higher risk of complications or death if they are infected with SARS-CoV-2;
- employees **above the age of 60** who are at a higher risk of complications or death if they are infected with SARS-CoV-2. (**or as defined by the Disaster Management Act Regulations and the Department of Health guidance note**)”

COVID-19 GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS

❑ Current Provisions in Revised COVID-19 Guideline:

8.1 RISK ASSESSMENT

8.1.2 The employer is required to conduct a risk-based assessment covering all workings at mines and should be described with reference to but not limited to:

8.1.8 **The risk of vulnerable employees** to SARS- CoV-2 while at work.

8.1.9 Control measures in place

8.1.11 The additional control measures such as **the review of Human Resource policies around business travel, sick leave, and other related policies to account for SARS-CoV-2.**

COVID-19 GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS

8.3 INCLUSIONS IN THE COVID-19 MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

8.3.2.1 Adequate, usable, and appropriate training, and information material about:

iv. Employee Assistance Programs

v. Process for employees to be able to disclose any pre-existing conditions prior to returning to work

COVID-19 GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS

8.3.2.2 As far as possible with employee consent and respecting medical confidentiality, information through the designated healthcare worker on whether an employee has pre-existing condition that will cause an employee to be unfit to return to work or classified as vulnerable employee. Such employees will only be permitted to work after receiving a certificate of fitness to work from an occupational medical practitioner.

8.3.4.7 Where employees are not permitted to work due to a confirmed pre-existing condition, the employer must arrange for transportation of such employees back to their homes

COVID-19 GUIDELINE AMENDMENTS

8.3 INCLUSIONS IN THE COVID-19 MITIGATION AND MANAGEMENT PROGRAMME

8.3.3.iv Sufficient availability of resources such as Flu vaccination that prioritizes those at high risk of contracting COVID-19 and give prophylaxis where required

☐ The Guideline must be considered a living document and must be read in conjunction with other documents such as Guidelines developed by WHO, NDOH and DOL

PROPOSED GUIDANCE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES

□ Risk Assessment

- The assessment and management of vulnerable employees should be based on:
 - Employee's level of vulnerability based on age and comorbidity/comorbidities (as defined by NDOH) and pregnancy status as in the DOH **"Notice: Return to work of vulnerable employees"**
- The risk of exposure based on current job description
- The risk of community transmission based on district COVID-19 positivity rates

PROPOSED GUIDANCE ON THE MANAGEMENT OF VULNERABLE EMPLOYEES

□ If the risk assessment results indicate for a vulnerable employee not to be sent home:

- The employer must adopt measures to promote physical distancing of employees. Including special measures for employees with known or disclosed health issues or comorbidities, or with any condition which may place such employees at a higher risk of complications or death if they are infected with COVID-19.
- Special measures for employees above the age of 60 who are at a higher risk of complications or death if they are infected with COVID - 19.

These provisions must be updated as and when the level of risk changes

CHALLENGES:

- Inconsistencies in defining vulnerable employees and reporting by mines
- Impact of applying health protocols on the financial well being of mine employees/ Complying with DOH and DOL directives with regards to management of COVID-19 among vulnerable employees
- Access to mine's primary health care services (for those sent home)
- Refocusing job descriptions or advising the most vulnerable employees to stay at home)

COVID-19 VACCINATION

Governance Structures 

Communication, stakeholder guidance, training
(provinces, districts, public sector and private sector) 



Supply – Monitor, Track Report

Vaccine Uptake, Use, and Coverage

Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI)
Vaccine Effectiveness Monitoring and Reporting

Data 

Regulatory Considerations 

Budget & Finance 

Adapted: From The Factory To The Frontlines: US Department of Health and Human Services)

COVID-19 VACCINATION

- The country is currently distributing the Johnson & Johnson as well as Pfizer vaccines instead of the AstraZeneca.
- variant of SARS-COV-2 that is of concern currently is the delta variant, which is highly transmissible as observed in places like India.
- The vaccine is administered free of charge at various points of service across all parts of the country

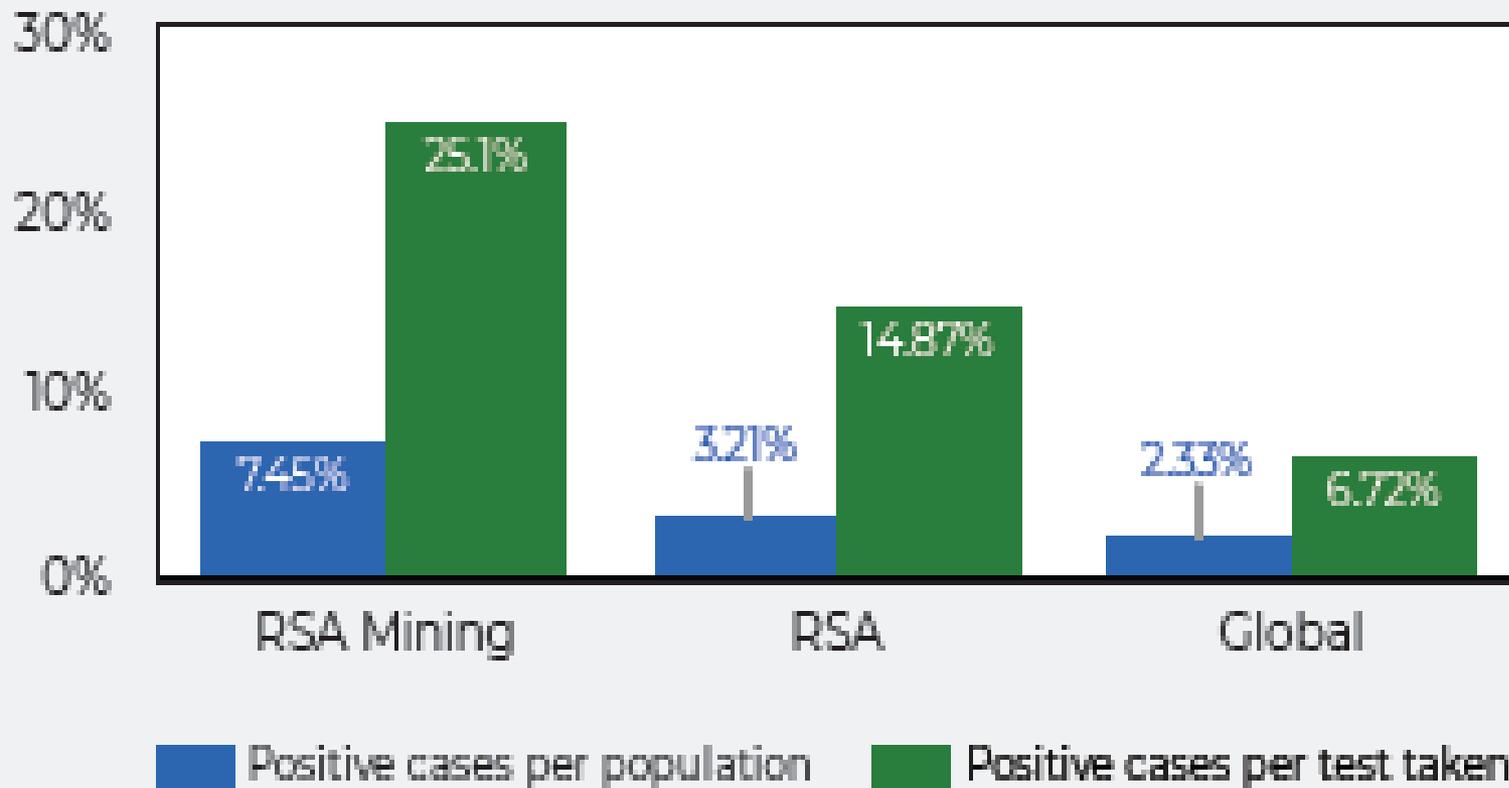


COVID-19 VACCINATION

- The vaccination system is based on a pre-vaccination registration and appointment system at a specific vaccination site
- After targeted groups receive the vaccine, mass vaccinations will take place in urban centers at pharmacies, health facilities, community halls and schools
- An electronic vaccination data system (EVDS) is assisting with the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines across the country and those without internet access are encouraged to do walk-ins at health care facilities

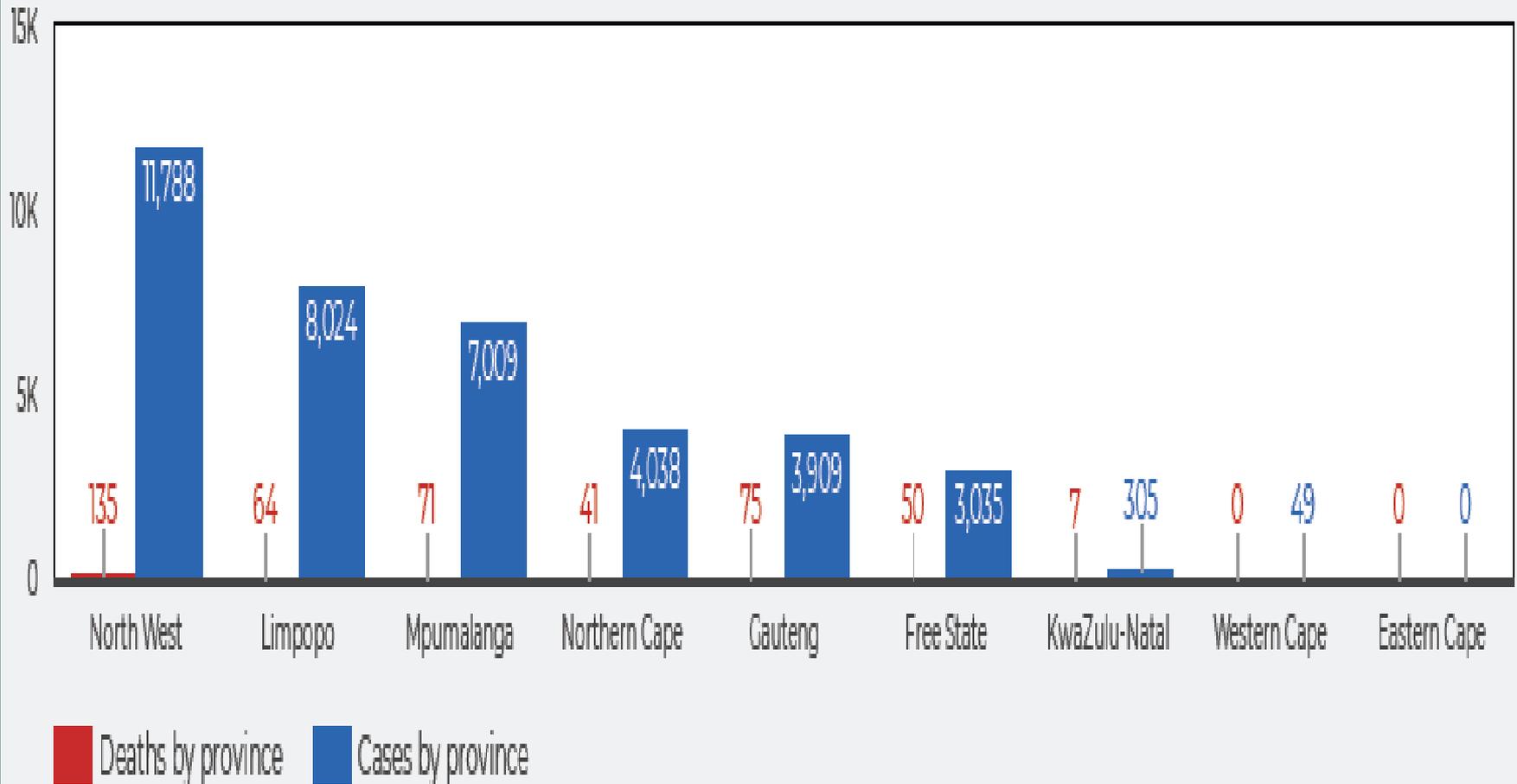
POSITIVE CASES PER POPULATION PER AND PER TEST TAKEN

Positive cases per population and per tests taken



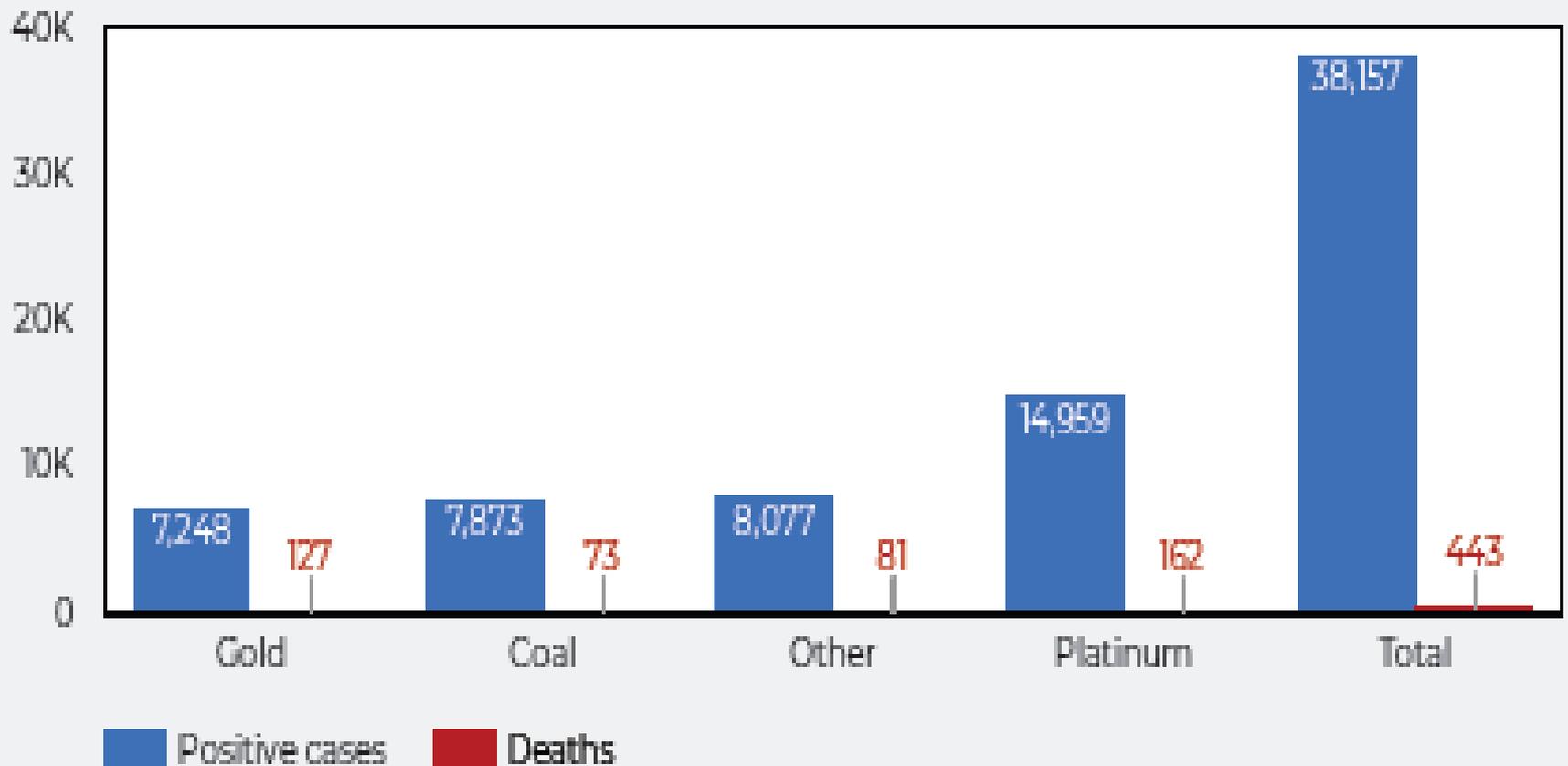
CASES PER REGION TO DATE

Cases and deaths per region to date



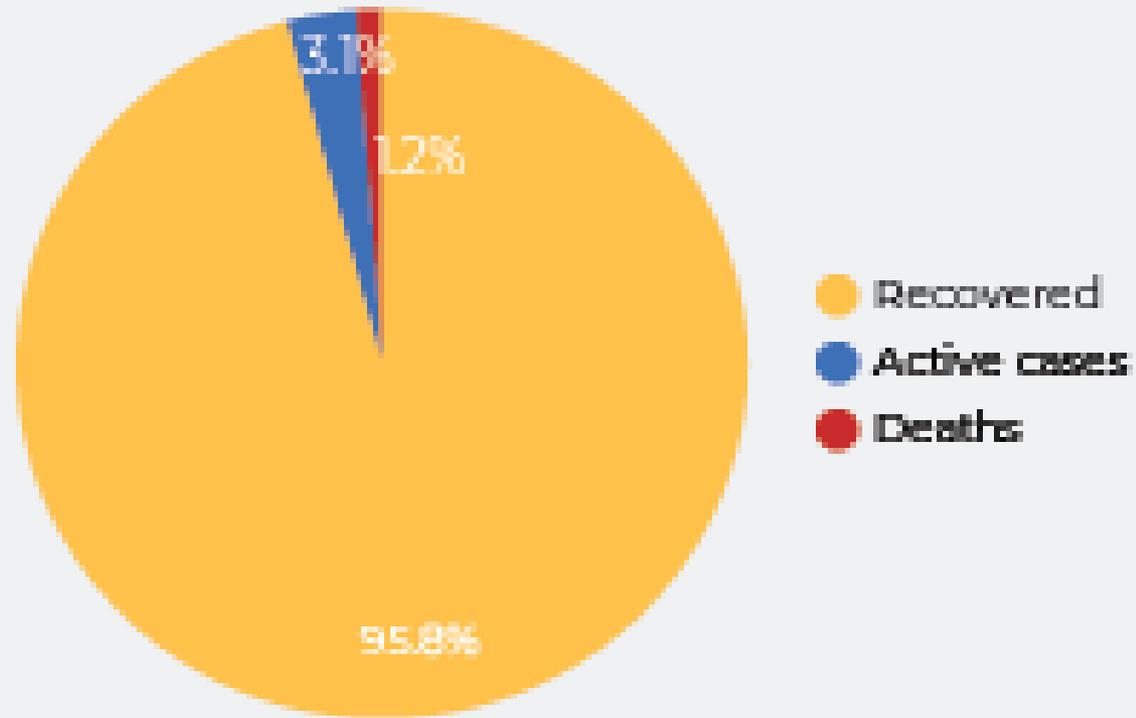
CASES AND DEATHS PER COMMODITY

Cases and deaths per commodity



STATUS OF MINING CASES

Status of mining cases



COLLABORATIONS ON COVID

□ DMRE collaborates with the following Departments and Organisations on COVID-19 mitigation and management.

- MCSA.
- Organised Labour in Mining.
- Department of Health Nationally and all regional offices are part of the Provincial DOH COVID-19 Committees.
- NIOH
- Do Employment and Labour.

CONCLUSION

- ❑ DMRE Guideline on COVID-19 is providing a framework to **mitigate and manage COVID-19 outbreak** amongst **employees in the South African Mining Industry** and **any other person/s (SAMI)** and **any other person/s they may contact in the community**.
- ❑ It is important that employers remember that these guidelines are mandatory, and their annexures must be considered as living documents, which will require employers to update **codes of practice, mine's policies, procedures and protocols** whenever there are amendments.
- ❑ Mitigating COVID-19 continually requires a **multi disciplinary and multi departmental approach** and therefore companies are encouraged to keep updated with relevant developments related to COVID-19, **prioritize the wellbeing of employees** when any measure is implemented.

CONCLUSION

- ❑ The Department will continue to collaborate with all stakeholders on implementing measures for the mitigation and management of COVID-19.
- ❑ Mines will be encouraged to ensure vigilance especially during the current lockdown alert level 3 adjusted period.
- ❑ The monitoring of the mines will be maintained to ensure compliance with the legal provisions.



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