

Job losses slowing in the mining sector

Job losses in mining have slowed down compared with two years ago, according to the Chamber of Mines. **Business Day** reports that the improvement comes against the backdrop of moderate growth in the sector driven by platinum group metals, which are back in demand because China's economic prospects are looking up. The sustained rise of commodity prices has also helped mining. Figures released recently by Statistics SA show that mining production increased 4.6% year on year in February 2017, after recording a 1.4% year-on-year increase in January. Chamber of Mines chief economist Henk Langenhoven said that **nearly 40 000 jobs were lost in mining from the beginning of 2015 to the end of 2016. 'However, the rate of job losses has slowed down.'** Job losses between 2015 and 2016 amounted to 4.5% of the sector's workforce. 'It's ... still very tough, but if we compare to the beginning of 2015, job losses have slowed down dramatically.' Commenting on the increased production, Langenhoven said: 'It's the impact of better commodity prices.' But he cautioned that it was coming off a low base and that growth remained slow.