

Lily Mine anniversary puts spotlight on mine safety

The issues of health and safety in the mining industry were on the minds of delegates when the 2018 Mining Indaba kicked off in Cape Town on Monday – the day marked exactly two years since three workers were killed after being trapped underground at Vantage Gold's Lily Mine in Barberton in Mpumalanga. **The Citizen** reports that the bodies of Lily Mine workers Yvonne Mnisi, Pretty Nkambule and Solomon Nyirenda remain underground despite Deputy Mineral Resources Minister Godfrey Oliphant saying late last year that the container in which the workers were trapped in February 2016 was likely to be retrieved by January 2018. The report says **the issue of safety at the mines again came into sharp focus last week when more than 950 workers were trapped for two nights at Sibanye-Stillwater's Beatrix gold mine in Free State after a power outage**. There were no fatalities and all workers were rescued uninjured. Speaking on the sidelines of the Indaba, CEO of Chamber of Mines Roger Baxter said that the industry was investing time and money, and introducing a lot of measures to mitigate deaths at the mines. He said the industry's efforts were led by its 'Zero Harm' programme, chaired by Anglo American Platinum CEO, Chris Griffith.

The National Union of Mineworkers (NUM) has called for an infrastructure audit to be conducted on all SA mines in a bid to prevent underground accidents, reports **Mining Weekly**. Speaking after all 952 workers were rescued alive at the Beatrix mine after being trapped at Level 24 underground for two days, NUM national spokesperson Livhuwani Mmamburu said **the union was deeply worried about the rising number of safety incidents in the country's mines**. Mmamburu said: 'There is no reason why a mine like Beatrix should not have emergency exits if the cage fails to work. The fact that generators also failed to kick in is worrying. That is why we are calling for an infrastructure audit to see why all these incidents are happening.'

Mining Minister Mosebenzi Zwane told delegates at the opening of the Indaba that government had completed its inquiry into the Lily Mine tragedy and that the report would now be handed over to the Department of Mineral Resources. He is quoted in an **eNCA** report as saying: **We would all agree that closure and finality are critical on this matter, especially for the families of Miss Yvonne Mnisi, Miss Pretty Nkambule and Mr Solomon Nyerende.** The report says the bodies of Mnisi, Nkambule and Nyirenda remain underground after a lamp room container in which they were working was swallowed up by the earth when a pillar collapsed at the mine on the morning of 5 February, 2016.