

## **Mine safety - a fundamental success parameter for coal mining in Germany**

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RAG Aktiengesellschaft is generally acclaimed for its state-of-the-art mining technology and high health and safety standards. Recent years have seen the development of successful new mining practices along with the introduction of an extremely effective safety at work system. The company's long-term safety strategy and up-to-date management system, which have been based on an innovative health and safety policy and a dynamic organisational and procedural structure, create the framework that is required for a successful industrial safety record. This paper will present a number of examples showing how mine safety can best be developed and organised and how the workforce can be made aware of their responsibilities and in this way can achieve even higher health and safety standards.

The core business of RAG Aktiengesellschaft is to extract Germany's coal deposits and all indigenous mining activities now come under its remit. RAG is responsible for three coalfields – Ibbenbüren, Saarland and Rhine-Ruhr – and its 30,000-strong workforce is distributed around eight collieries, a coke works and various service sectors. Last year RAG produced around 21 million tonnes of coal from its German-based operations. In spite of production cuts and the general downsizing of the coal industry the company is still able to meet one third of Germany's total coal requirements.

RAG Aktiengesellschaft provides security of energy supply based on the latest mining technology while at the same time maintaining the highest health and safety standards. The company philosophy is solidly based on three elements: coal production, health and safety, and environmental protection.

- Workplace safety and productivity – these two key objectives are an inseparable part of RAG's remit. Over the years the German coal industry has developed extremely successful and innovative technologies and at the same time has achieved the highest safety standards.