

Following are comments on Section 2 of the MINER Act:

1. The majority of the requirements of Section 2 of the MINER Act are covered by the ETS for Emergency Mine Evacuation and plans required by State laws and/or regulations. Many of these plans are currently in effect or will be so in the near future. An additional plan is not necessary and should not be required when the requirements are already addressed in a plan approved by the State agency. The State approved plan could be jointly approved by MSHA as is the case with many other plans.
2. Any two-way communications or tracking requirements should be researched by MSHA and NIOSH to ensure that those systems are feasible and adaptable to any mine or mine condition. This burden should not be placed on the operator. The government agencies should provide the technical research as to the feasibility and reliability of such systems.
3. Section 2 requires additional SCSRs and requires SCSR storage caches to be reached in 30 minutes travel time instead of the 45 minutes required in the ETS. This will increase the demand for and the delivery time for SCSR units. The chart in the Program Policy Manual that relates seam height and travel distance should be used to determine the distance between caches.
4. SCSR maintenance schedules and training should be based on the recommendation of the SCSR manufacturer. Any specific requirements should be provided to the mining community for comment prior to implementation.
5. A concentrated effort should be made to avoid duplication of requirements that are in place through MSHA or the various State agencies. Any requirements should be workable and practical and provide a proven benefit for miner safety.

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