

(e) Written instructions for conservation of water shall be provided with the refuge chamber supplies.

(f) All miners affected shall receive training in the operation of the refuge

chambers and shall receive refresher training annually.

(g) The refuge chambers shall be inspected regularly, with quarterly inspections and servicing from manufacturer approved representatives.

These inspections and servicing shall continue to be documented and provided to the Mine Manager or their designee.

(h)

TABLE 1—REFUGE CHAMBERS AT POGO MINE
[Current status]

Refuge chamber	Manufacturer	Number capacity in persons
MRC 1	DEA	16
MCR 2	DEA	16
MCR 3	DEA	8
MCR 4	DEA	12
MCR 5	Bost	20
MCR 6	Bost	20
MCR 7	Bost	20
MCR 8	MineArc	16
MCR 9	MineArc	16
MCR 10	MineArc	8
MCR 11	MineArc	8
MCR 18	MineArc	8
MCR 19	MineArc	8
MCR 24	Bost	20

TABLE 2—ENTRAPMENT CHAMBERS AT POGO MINE
[Current status]

Entrapment chamber	Manufacturer	Number capacity in persons
MCR 12	MineArc	6
MCR 13	MineArc	6
MCR 14	MineArc	6
MCR 15	MineArc	6
MCR 16	MineArc	6
MCR 17	MineArc	6
MCR 20	MineArc	4
MCR 21	MineArc	4
MCR 22	MineArc	4
MCR 23	MineArc	4

(i) Portable refuge chambers have a capacity from 8 to 20 persons with 4 that have a 20-person capacity. Additionally, portable entrapment chambers have a capacity of 4 to 6 persons and are utilized per Northern Star (Pogo), LLC, standards to provide safe refuge for persons potentially working behind heavy equipment who may be entrapped in an emergency with heavy equipment in their path of travel preventing safe evacuation. All chambers are equipped with gas monitoring equipment, packaged drinking water, oxygen bottles, backup compressed air, toilet, radio, phone, air conditioning, back up battery power, fire blankets, fire extinguishers, and food rations.

(j) The MineARC refuge chambers are equipped with and pre-packaged MARCISORB chemical absorber cartridges to remove the buildup of harmful carbon dioxide (CO₂) and

carbon monoxide (CO) from the air inside the refuge chamber. The DEA refuge chambers have been retrofitted with a MineARC electrical scrubbing system and pre-packaged MARCISORB chemical absorber cartridges as well. Bost refuge chambers have an electrical scrubbing system utilizing soda lime (Drägersorb) to remove the buildup of CO₂ and gold-based oxidation catalyst (Premiox™) to remove CO from the air inside the refuge chamber.

(k) Northern Star (Pogo), LLC, has reviewed this petition with the miner’s representatives on June 15, 2024, who concur with and support all statements made with this petition. Miners at Pogo Mine are not represented by any labor organization.

The petitioner asserts that the alternative method in the petition will at all times guarantee no less than the

same measure of protection afforded to the miners by the standard.

Song-ae Aromie Noe,
Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances.

[FR Doc. 2024–22930 Filed 10–3–24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4520–43–P

DEPARTMENT OF LABOR

Mine Safety and Health Administration

Petition for Modification of Application of Existing Mandatory Safety Standards

AGENCY: Mine Safety and Health Administration, Labor.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: This notice is a summary of a petition for modification submitted to the Mine Safety and Health

Administration (MSHA) by Peabody Gateway North Mining LLC.

DATES: All comments on the petition must be received by MSHA's Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances on or before November 4, 2024.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments identified by Docket No. MSHA-2024-0049 by any of the following methods:

1. *Federal eRulemaking Portal:* <https://www.regulations.gov>. Follow the instructions for submitting comments for MSHA-2024-0049.

2. *Fax:* 202-693-9441.

3. *Email:* petitioncomments@dol.gov.

4. *Regular Mail or Hand Delivery:*

MSHA, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances, 201 12th Street South, Suite 4E401, Arlington, Virginia 22202-5452.

Attention: S. Aromie Noe, Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances. Persons delivering documents are required to check in at the receptionist's desk, 4th Floor West. Individuals may inspect copies of the petition and comments during normal business hours at the address listed above. Before visiting MSHA in person, call 202-693-9455 to make an appointment, in keeping with the Department of Labor's COVID-19 policy. Special health precautions may be required.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: S. Aromie Noe, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances at 202-693-9440 (voice), Petitionsformodification@dol.gov (email), or 202-693-9441 (fax). [These are not toll-free numbers.]

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Section 101(c) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 and Title 30 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) part 44 govern the application, processing, and disposition of petitions for modification.

I. Background

Section 101(c) of the Federal Mine Safety and Health Act of 1977 (Mine Act) allows the mine operator or representative of miners to file a petition to modify the application of any mandatory safety standard to a coal or other mine if the Secretary of Labor determines that:

1. An alternative method of achieving the result of such standard exists which will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded the miners of such mine by such standard; or

2. The application of such standard to such mine will result in a diminution of safety to the miners in such mine.

In addition, sections 44.10 and 44.11 of 30 CFR establish the requirements for filing petitions for modification.

II. Petition for Modification

Docket Number: M-2024-026-C.

Petitioner: Peabody Gateway North LLC, 12968 State 13, Coulterville, Illinois 62237.

Mine: Gateway North Mine, MSHA ID No. 11-03235, located in Randolph County, Illinois.

Regulation Affected: 30 CFR 75.507-1(a), Permissible electric equipment.

Modification Request: The petitioner requests a modification of 30 CFR 75.507-1(a) to permit an alternative method of compliance to permit the use of battery-powered non-permissible radios used in the return airways.

The petitioner states that:

(a) Peabody previously filed a petition for modification of 30 CFR 75.507-1(a) on July 12, 2023 (Docket Number M-2023-020-C), but the Proposed Decision and Order (PDO) was denied by MSHA on June 4, 2024.

(b) Peabody currently uses Motorola and Kenwood permissible radios in its underground mine to communicate between miners. Such communication facilitates movement of equipment, assignment of necessary work as well as communication with the surface control room.

(c) The mines also use wired communication systems and the communication and tracking systems required in the mine's Emergency Response Plan. Such communication facilitates efficiency and safety. It occurs along the face areas and in other areas covered by this standard. It facilitates communication in case of emergencies such as injuries both on the section and to the surface.

(d) Motorola and Kenwood have discontinued the manufacture and sale of MSHA-approved permissible radios. Such radios were the only permissible radios available for the underground coal mine industry. The notices indicated that for a period of time the radios were sold out of stock but that ceased as indicated in the notes. Peabody is not aware of any other radio which is economically feasible.

(e) Peabody seeks modification of 30 CFR 75.507-1(a) as it applies to use of low voltage battery-powered non-permissible radios. It intends to use the following equipment:

(1) Motorola R-7 Portable Two-Way Radio. Other safe portable radios may subsequently be used if approved in advance by the MSHA District Manager.

(f) Peabody mines utilize the continuous miner method of mining. Some sections utilize two continuous miners and use of the radios permits coordination of the coal haulers and between the two continuous miners as

well as communication near pillar and sealed area workings.

(g) Effective communication is critical to the safety of the miners at the mine. It reduces the potential for collisions and pedestrian accidents and facilitates communication in an emergency.

(h) The alternative method proposed in the petition will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded by the standard.

The petitioner proposes the following alternative method:

(a) Non-permissible intrinsically safe radios to be used include the Motorola R7 Portable Two-Way Radio.

(b) All such radios shall be rated IP 66 or higher.

(c) All non-permissible radios used in the return airways will be examined by a qualified person as defined in 30 CFR 75.153 prior to use to ensure the equipment is being maintained in a safe operating condition. These examinations results shall be recorded in the weekly examination book and will be made available to MSHA and the miners at the mine.

(d) A qualified person as defined in 30 CFR 75.151 shall continuously monitor for methane immediately before and during the use of non-permissible radios used in the return airways.

(e) Non-permissible radios shall not be used if methane is detected in concentrations at or above one percent. When one percent or more methane is detected while the non-permissible radios are being used, the radios shall be de-energized immediately by turning them off and withdrawn from the area.

(f) All hand-held methane detectors shall be MSHA approved and maintained in permissible and proper operating condition as defined in 30 CFR 75.320. Each miner using a radio shall be trained in the use of handheld methane details.

(g) All radios shall be used in accordance with the safe use procedures recommended by the manufacturer.

(h) Personnel who use non-permissible radios shall be properly trained to recognize the hazards and limitations associated with use of the equipment.

(i) The radio battery is designed to last more than the length of a shift. The radio shall not be charged underground and shall be charged on the surface in accordance with the procedure for other battery-operated devices such as methane detectors.

(j) The operator shall post the PDO granted by MSHA in unobstructed locations on the bulletin boards and/or in other conspicuous places where notices to miners are ordinarily posted, at all the mines for which the PDO

granted by MSHA applies, for a period of not less than 60 consecutive days and a copy shall be made available to all miners' representatives.

(k) The proposed radios will be available for inspection and testing during MSHA's investigation. As other radios are acquired, if the petition is granted, such radios shall be made available for MSHA inspection. The radios shall be made available for MSHA testing during the investigation.

(l) The Motorola radio is rated IP 66 and IP 68. It is powered by a lithium cell. Two such radios have been purchased by Peabody and are available at Gateway North for examination and testing by MSHA. Peabody has not, itself, tested such radios because it is presumed that MSHA will intend to conduct tests at the mine and would be unlikely to accept Peabody's results.

(m) The miners at Gateway North Mine are not currently represented by a labor organization and this petition is posted at the mine.

In support of the proposed alternative method, the petitioner has also submitted manufacturer product specification sheets for MSHA-approved permissible radios indicating they are no longer available and manufacturer product specification sheets for the proposed Motorola R-7 Portable Two-Way Radio.

The petitioner asserts that the alternative method in the petition will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded to the miners by the standard.

Song-ae Aromie Noe,

Director, Office of Standards, Regulations, and Variances.

[FR Doc. 2024-22931 Filed 10-3-24; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4520-43-P

MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORPORATION

[MCC FR 24-09]

Notice of Entering Into a Compact With the Republic of Sierra Leone

AGENCY: Millennium Challenge Corporation.

ACTION: Notice.

SUMMARY: In accordance with the provisions of the Millennium Challenge Act of 2003, as amended, the Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC) is publishing a summary of the Millennium Challenge Compact (Compact) between the United States of America and the Republic of Sierra Leone. Representatives of the United States of America and the Republic of

Sierra Leone executed the Compact on September 27, 2024. The complete text of the Compact has been posted at: <https://www.mcc.gov/resources/doc/compact-sierra-leone/>.

(Authority: 22 U.S.C. 7709 (b)(3))

Dated: September 30, 2024.

Peter E. Jaffe,

Vice President, General Counsel, and Corporate Secretary.

Summary of Sierra Leone Compact Overview of MCC Sierra Leone Compact

The Millennium Challenge Corporation (MCC), on behalf of the United States of America, has signed a five-year Compact with the Republic of Sierra Leone aimed at reducing poverty through economic growth. MCC funding of \$480,669,000, together with a voluntary contribution of \$14,200,000 from the Government of Sierra Leone, will support economic growth in Sierra Leone through investments in the energy sector to address the constraints of insufficient availability of affordable and reliable electricity. The Compact will address these constraints through three projects: (1) the Transmission Backbone Project; (2) the Distribution and Access Project; and (3) the Power Sector Reform Project.

Background and Context

Sierra Leone's economy suffers from a power sector that cannot serve its existing customer base or keep up with future business and household demand. This is due to limited and high-cost supply, low capacity and poor reliability of the transmission and distribution networks, and the ineffectiveness of sector policies and institutions. These bottlenecks negatively impact current customers, most of whom are in the capital city, and prevent Sierra Leone from expanding electricity service to the 70% of the population without electricity. As the economy grows and the grid expands, load forecasts suggest demand will more than double by the end of the compact term.

Meeting this demand will require large investments in foundational infrastructure and institutional capabilities. The need to simultaneously address multiple sector constraints, combined with the long lead times required to plan, finance, and construct large scale infrastructure, poses a major coordination challenge for public and private investment in the sector. This coordination challenge is magnified by the lack of capacity at sector institutions to reassess, update, and execute against sector planning documents—as well as

sector wide issues with transparency and governance. As a result, much needed public and private investment is all too often delayed, withdrawn, or exceedingly costly due to the risks and uncertainties involved.

Given this sector context, the Compact strengthens the foundations of a reliable electricity sector through investments in transmission and distribution infrastructure, development of a strong enabling environment for independent power producers, and substantial capacity building support for the utilities and key sector institutions.

Project Summaries

The compact program consists of three projects:

(1) The Transmission Backbone Project (\$226,702,000) will expand Sierra Leone's transmission network to increase network coverage, increase the throughput capacity needed to evacuate increasing electricity supply, and increase reliability of service. With less than 500 miles of transmission lines currently in Sierra Leone, the country's extremely limited grid means most citizens do not have access to power. This project connects a high-voltage West African Power Pool transmission line to the capital city. The project also builds and operationalizes a main and back up transmission dispatch center critical for network reliability and integration into the regional power marketplace. Technical assistance supports critical capacity development for the transmission utility in transmission operations and maintenance.

(2) The Distribution and Access Project (\$123,634,000) is designed to increase reliability of the grid, improve the financial viability of the distribution utility, and make strategic investments in connecting new customers to the grid and regularizing existing connections. This project refurbishes critical components of the distribution network in the capital city where 80% of power is consumed in Sierra Leone and reduces both technical and commercial losses through the provision of new meters and organizational change. Access investments include distribution line and substation expansion as well as direct connections to select end users, driven by socioeconomic data and planned transmission expansion. In addition, this project will involve the construction and operationalization of a main and a back-up distribution dispatch center to improve the Electricity Distribution and Supply Authority's operations and maintenance performance.