
SA chamber of mines surprised at plans to support AEMFC

Sunday, 19 Oct, 2008

Dr Frans Barker acting CEO of the Chamber of Mines in South Africa has expressed his surprise at a notice from the government that seems to favour state run companies

It may be noted that the minister of minerals and energy issued a notice in the government gazette that the state owned mining company, the African Exploration Mining Finance Corporation, would be exempt from certain provisions of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 2002.

These provisions include applications for prospecting rights, mining rights and mining permits. They require applicants to submit environmental management plans or programs, and to notify and consult with interested and affected parties.

Dr Barker said that "I would be putting it mildly to say that we are surprised by this notice. Our view is that the state should be subject to the same requirements as the private sector in terms of prospecting for or operating a mine. If the intention is to exempt the state from the requirements regarding environmental management programs, or from the requirement to consult with interested and affected parties, it sets an unfortunate precedent with regard to the extensive range of other obligations that mining companies need to comply with."

He added that "Unless there is some hitherto unannounced reason for this notice, the state should lead by example by ensuring that organs of state are subject to the full spectrum of the laws that apply to mining companies. This type of notice seems to negate the principle of equality before the law. Any negative impact that mining might have on the environment, or on communities, is the same, irrespective of whether it is a state owned or private sector mining company."

For more news visit at www.steelguru.com