



REPUBLIC OF NAMIBIA

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## MINISTRY OF LABOUR, INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS AND EMPLOYMENT CREATION

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For **Immediate Release**; 11 MAY 2022 – Windhoek

### CLOSURE OF WHALE ROCK CEMENT PTY LTD (CHEETAH CEMENT)

The Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations and Employment Creation (MLIREC) through writing, issued a Notice in terms of Regulation 11(3) (b) of Regulations Relating to Health and Safety of Employees at Work in terms of Labour Act (No. 11 of 2007), **ordered the Whale Rock Cement (PTY) Ltd also known as Cheetah Cement to cease production activities at the Grinding Station, Cement Mill Area, Rotor Pack and Cement Warehouse, with effect from 10<sup>th</sup> May 2022.**

The Ministry wishes to provide the following facts related to the closure of the Mine:

1. A team of Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) Inspectors and Labour Inspectors from this Ministry conducted a workplace investigation and inspection at the Cheetah Cement following reports of unsafe working conditions at the mine on **3<sup>rd</sup> May 2021**. The mine was found to have a number of shortfalls and contraventions with regard to OSH Regulations and was instructed to make improvements in this regard. The Ministry has conducted a number of investigations before the aforementioned investigation. Another investigation and workplace inspection was carried out at the mine on **27<sup>th</sup> April 2022** due to occupational injuries that occurred on **4<sup>th</sup> May 2022** and **27<sup>th</sup> April 2022**.
2. The company was found to contravene OSH Regulations in the mining and mechanical/maintenance workshop as follows:
  - Employees are not provided with suitable personal protective equipment, i.e hearing protection for excavator operators, kidney belts for back support, face masks designed for mining operations where excessive dust is evident, and lighting in the mining area or a spotter works in total darkness;
  - Failing to maintain good housing keeping on site and within the cement mill, cement storehouse and elsewhere were applicable;
  - Employer failed to provide adequate Sanitary conveniences and canteens to the employees;
  - Employer failed to provide first aid and emergency arrangements;
  - Employer failed to provide Health and Safety statutory structure on site by not establishing a Health and Safety Committee;

All official correspondence must be addressed to the Executive Director

- Employer has never investigated and identified the hazards and risks attached to the work, and employ appropriate measures to prevent or minimize risk thereof;
- Employer does not have health and safety policy and program in place;
- Employer failed to provide employees with necessary information and training to work safely and without a risk to their health;
- Employer failed to make arrangements for the first aid and emergency or provision for other emergency facilities and supplies; and
- The mining trucks are operated without proper tyre handling tools and machineries and the company further has no safe work procedures for tyre-handling. There is further insufficient lighting in the workshop area.


Requests by the Ministry to ensure compliance have however fallen on deaf ears as the Ministry has on various occasions engaged the Management of Cheetah Cement but no improvements were made to date since the inspection held on **3<sup>rd</sup> May 2022**.

3. The Notice shall remain in force until all the identified risks are rectified and safe work procedures are corrected and safety measures are enforced to the satisfaction of the Inspector of OSH.

The Ministry has since **January 2021** ordered the closure of one company, now Cheetah Cement and it will continue doing that to other non-compliant employers.

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Issued by :

 11/05/2022  
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**LYDIA H. INDOMBO**  
**ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

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