

African-based CSMI introduces short courses for professionals

4 July 2012 – Johannesburg: Much headway has been made on the African continent in the practice of safety, health, environment, and quality management (SHEQ). For many, however, formal education is still lacking in the areas that are fundamental to sustainable development, with local practitioners not having access to the requisite specialized tertiary education.

Says May Hermanus, director of the Centre for Sustainability in Mining and Industry (CSMI): 'In response to specific requests and requirements, the CSMI is addressing that need by way of a number of short courses and workshops. In addition to the usual beneficiaries of training at the CSMI, occasional students can now also take the centre's short courses leading to a certificate of competence (CoC) or a certificate of attendance. Students may also apply for CPD points.'

Based at the School of Mining Engineering at the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits), the CSMI will be conducting four short courses in the coming months, namely Sustainable Development in Mining and Industry (13–17 August 2012), Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Occupational Health and Hygiene for Non-Specialists (3–7 September 2012), and Safety and Health Leadership and Human Factors (1–5 October 2012).

'These courses will provide recognized and accredited training programmes and an education leading to recognized academic qualifications for professionals wishing to pursue or further their careers in the SHEC fields in the private sector, industry, government, or non-governmental organizations,' says Hermanus.

Since its inception in 2004, the CSMI has garnered recognition as a centre of excellence on the African continent for the training and education of managers, practitioners, and regulators in sustainable development.

The establishment of the CSMI originated from a partnership formed by BHP Billiton, Lonmin, and Gold Fields with the Wits School of Mining Engineering in response to an urgent need to increase the standards of safety within the mining industry.

Since then, other partners have supported the work of the CSMI as donors – in the case of AngloGold Ashanti, Goba and Xstrata – and as patrons of major projects in the case of the Department of Mineral Resources, Mining

Qualifications Authority, Anglo American, CoalTech 2020, the World Bank, and the Asbestos Relief Trust. BHP Billiton is currently the principal donor.

Following the development of four courses at graduate level with specific support from BHP Billiton during the period 2007–2008, the centre today offers nine courses at the Master of Science level dealing with OHS risk management, OHS leadership and human factors, occupational health and hygiene for non-specialists, SHEC systems, environmental impact assessment, mining and the environment, and geographical information systems.

In addition, the CSMI presents an accredited short course on safety risk management for Anglo American, and with support of the Department of Mineral Resources and the Mining Qualifications Authority, has developed and piloted eight short accredited courses for the Mine Health and Safety Inspectorate and the Environmental Inspectorate.

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