

## **MEDIA STATEMENT**

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### **MINING INDUSTRY VACCINATION PROGRAMME REACHES MILESTONE – 200,000 EMPLOYEES AND CONTRACTORS FULLY OR PARTIALLY VACCINATED**

#### ***Programme extended to dependants and communities***

**23 September 2021, Johannesburg:** The Minerals Council South Africa is pleased to advise that the mining workplace vaccination programme reached a major milestone this week, with more than 200,000 employees and contractors either fully or partially vaccinated. This major industry initiative has been driven by mining CEOs in the interest of saving lives and livelihoods.

Roger Baxter, Minerals Council CEO notes that the industry started preparing for a vaccine roll-out in February this year, using its extensive in-house infrastructure and resources.

“To date, 52 workplace sites have been registered under the Department of Health’s workplace vaccination programme, with many more outreach and temporary facilities operating. Additionally, companies that have fewer than 4,000 employees have teamed up with private companies and provincial departments of health to offer on-mine vaccination, while others have been served by a number of larger companies that have availed their facilities.”

As of Wednesday, 22 September, a total of 203,007 mining employees and contractors have been immunised – around 45% of our workforce – with 49% now fully vaccinated.

Roger Baxter drew specific attention to the leadership role played by organised labour - the Association of Construction and Mineworkers Union (AMCU), the National Union of Mineworkers (NUM), Solidarity and UASA - in advocating for vaccinations amongst employees and supporting the company-based roll out programmes.

“Union leadership has played a highly constructive role, with many union leaders visiting vaccination sites, getting vaccinated, and also sharing their personal experiences of Covid-19 and vaccinations.



“This has truly been a massive mining industry effort, with unprecedented levels of cooperation between companies, with the Minerals Council, with national and regional departments of health, with the Department of Minerals Resources and Energy and the Chief Inspector of Mines, with business entities such as B4SA, and of course our mining unions. Not only has the industry established vaccination sites under strict guidelines, it has also embarked on extensive education and communication campaigns both amongst employees and community members.

“As an industry we have set ourselves a target of achieving 80% vaccination in the coming weeks; with some companies already reporting between 70% and 80% vaccination levels at some sites, we feel that this is absolutely attainable. Meanwhile, companies have started to vaccinate employees’ dependants and community members, either at company sites or by supporting neighbouring facilities.

“And while we know that vaccinating as many employees and community members as possible will reduce transmission of Covid-19 and prevent serious illness and death, we know that we need to continue to be vigilant and continue to practice all the non-medical interventions that we have developed since the start of the pandemic.”

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