

**SMCRA**  
**CERTIFICATION AND TRAINING OF BLASTERS**

**SEC. 515(b)(15)** The RA shall provide provisions to:

(D) require that all blasting operations be conducted by trained and competent persons as certified by the regulatory authority;

**SEC. 719.** In accordance with this Act, the Secretary of the Interior (or the approved State regulatory authority) shall promulgate regulations requiring the training, examination, and certification of persons engaging in or directly responsible for blasting or use of explosives in surface coal mining operations.

**OFFICE OF SURFACE MINING RECLAMATION AND ENFORCEMENT**  
**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR**  
**30 Code of Federal Regulations**

**PART 850 STANDARDS FOR CERTIFICATION OF BLASTERS**

**Sec. 850.1 Scope**

This part establishes the requirements and the procedures applicable to the development of regulatory programs for training, examination, and certification of persons engaging in or directly responsible for the use of explosives in surface coal mining operations.

**Sec. 850.5 Definition.**

As used in this part--

Blaster means a person directly responsible for the use of explosives in surface coal mining operations who is certified under this part.

**Sec. 850.10 Information collection.**

The information collection requirements contained in this part have been approved by the Office of Management and Budget under 44 U.S.C. 3507 and assigned clearance number 1029-0080. The information is being collected to meet the requirements of sections 503, 515, and 719 of Pub. L. 95-87. This information will be used by the regulatory authority to assist in implementing the blaster certification program. The obligation to respond is mandatory.

**Sec. 850.12 Responsibility.**

(a) The regulatory authority is responsible for promulgating rules governing the training, examination, certification and enforcement of a blaster certification program for surface coal mining operations. When the regulatory authority is a State, the State shall submit these rules of the Office of Surface Mining for approval under parts 731 and 732 of this chapter.

(b) The regulatory authority shall develop and adopt a program to examine and certify all persons who are directly responsible for the use of explosives in a surface coal mining operation within 12 months after approval of a State program or implementation of a Federal program or within 12 months after March 4, 1983 of this rule, whichever

is later. The Director may approve an extension of the 12-month period upon a demonstration of good cause.

[48 FR 9492, Mar. 4, 1983, as amended at 48 FR 44781, Sept. 30, 1983]

**Sec. 850.13 Training.**

(a) The regulatory authority shall establish procedures which require that--

(1) Persons seeking to become certified as blasters receive training including, but not limited to, the technical aspects of blasting operations and State and Federal laws governing the storage, transportation, and use of explosives; and

(2) Persons who are not certified and who are assigned to a blasting crew or assist in the use of explosives receive direction and on-the-job training from a blaster.

(b) The regulatory authority shall ensure that courses are available to train persons responsible for the use of explosives in surface coal mining operations. The courses shall provide training and discuss practical applications of-

- (1) Explosives, including--
  - (i) Selection of the type of explosive to be used;
  - (ii) Determination of the properties of explosives which will produce desired results at an acceptable level of risk; and
  - (iii) Handling, transportation, and storage;
- (2) Blast designs, including--
  - (i) Geologic and topographic considerations;
  - (ii) Design of a blast hole, with critical dimensions;
  - (iii) Pattern design, field layout, and timing of blast holes; and
  - (iv) Field applications;
- (3) Loading blastholes, including priming and boosting;
- (4) Initiation systems and blasting machines;
- (5) Blasting vibrations, airblast, and flyrock, including--
  - (i) Monitoring techniques, and
  - (ii) Methods to control adverse affects;
- (6) Secondary blasting applications;
- (7) Current Federal and State rules applicable to the use of explosives;
- (8) Blast records;
- (9) Schedules;
- (10) Preblasting surveys, including--
  - (i) Availability,
  - (ii) Coverage, and
  - (iii) Use of in-blast design;
- (11) Blast-plan requirements;
- (12) Certification and training;
- (13) Signs, warning signals, and site control;
- (14) Unpredictable hazards, including--
  - (i) Lightning,
  - (ii) Stray currents,
  - (iii) Radio waves, and
  - (iv) Misfires.

**Sec. 850.14 Examination.**

(a) The regulatory authority shall ensure that candidates for blaster certification are examined by reviewing and verifying the--

(1) Competence of persons directly responsible for the use of explosives in surface coal mining operations through a written examination in technical aspects of blasting and State and Federal laws governing the storage, use, and transportation of explosives; and

(2) Practical field experience of the candidates as necessary to qualify a person to accept the responsibility for blasting operations in surface coal mining operations. Such experience shall demonstrate that the candidate possesses practical knowledge of blasting techniques, understands the hazards involved in the use of explosives, and otherwise has exhibited a pattern of conduct consistent with the acceptance of responsibility for blasting operations.

(b) Applicants for blaster certification shall be examined, at a minimum, in the topics set forth in Sec. 850.13(b).

**Sec. 850.15 Certification.**

(a) Issuance of certification. The regulatory authority shall certify for a fixed period those candidates examined and found to be competent and to have the necessary experience to accept responsibility for blasting operations in surface coal mining operations.

**(b) Suspension and revocation.**

(1) The regulatory authority, when practicable, following written notice and opportunity for a hearing, may, and upon a finding of willful conduct, shall suspend or revoke the certification of a blaster during the term of the certification or take other necessary action for any of the following reasons:

(i) Noncompliance with any order of the regulatory authority.

(ii) Unlawful use in the work place of, or current addiction to, alcohol, narcotics, or other dangerous drugs.

(iii) Violation of any provision of the State or Federal explosives laws or regulations.

(iv) Providing false information or a misrepresentation to obtain certification.

(2) If advance notice and opportunity for hearing cannot be provided, an opportunity for a hearing shall be provided as soon as practical following the suspension, revocation, or other adverse action.

(3) Upon notice of a revocation, the blaster shall immediately surrender to the regulatory authority the revoked certificate.

(c) Recertification. The regulatory authority may require the periodic reexamination, training, or other demonstration of continued blaster competency.

(d) Protection of certification. Certified blasters shall take every reasonable precaution to protect their certificates from loss, theft, or unauthorized duplication. Any such occurrence shall be reported immediately to the certifying authority.

(e) Conditions. The regulatory authority shall specify conditions for maintaining certification which shall include the following:

(1) **A blaster shall immediately exhibit his or her certificate to any authorized representative of the regulatory authority or the Office upon request.**

(2) Blasters' certifications shall not be assigned or transferred.

(3) **Blasters shall not delegate their responsibility to any individual who is not a certified blaster.**