

MINUTES
Technical Advisory Committee on Diesel-Powered Equipment
Meeting
April 13, 2023

A meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee on Diesel-Powered Equipment (TAC) was held on April 13, 2023, in the Westmoreland Room at the DEP New Stanton Office in New Stanton, PA. The meeting was held in person and using Microsoft Teams. The meeting began at 10:06 a.m.

TAC MEMBER PRESENT

Todd Homet

TAC MEMBER PRESENT VIA TEAMS

Ron Bowersox

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STAFF PRESENT

Richard Wagner, Bureau of Mine Safety (BMS)
Chas Washlack, BMS
Gary Barkley, BMS
Jeff Hamilton, BMS
Dan Lambert, BMS
David Lowery, BMS
Margaret Scheloske, BMS

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION STAFF PRESENT VIA TEAMS

Art Brower, BMS

CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The meeting was called to order at 10:06 a.m. Minutes of the October 12, 2022 meeting were reviewed. TAC members Ron Bowersox and Todd Homet approved the minutes.

OLD BUSINESS

Status of 200 Hour Oil Change

Director Wagner reported that it has been introduced but not presented to the House and Senate for approval because of the recent election changes; but would be presented again.

Donaldson Filter and Filter Approval Process

The members asked how the testing with the new Donaldson filter has been going. Jeff Hamilton reported that the filter is working well, and he has been informed that it has been approved by MSHA.

Discussion followed regarding the process for approval of filters. It was reported the Bureau recently informed a filter manufacturer that the filter must be MSHA approved, witness tested by TAC and the Bureau then be added to list of approved filters for that Bote-Dees.

The TAC reported that they have not in the past gone to every filter review and that their previous position was that any replacement filter that is on the MSHA list is approved for use in Pennsylvania as an in-kind replacement for any Bote-Dees.

Discussion followed regarding the MSHA approval process and the process followed for approval of previous filters. It was agreed that the process should be clarified.

The Bureau would like to see something for the file. Ideally, MSHA approval with witness testing, then the filter could be added to the approved list. Director Wagner would like to have something on record from the TAC to memorialize the process.

TAC will provide a letter to the Bureau with their recommendations.

NEW BUSINESS

Diesel Equipment Trainers

Chas Washlack discussed the need for diesel operator and mechanic trainer training. He asked the group for consideration of the possibility of the State providing a train the trainer program. This might include a 3-4 day, fundamentals of the diesel engine and review of why the emissions are scrutinized, training on the ECom, as well as hands on training with the diesel engine itself. He reported that the Department has an ECom available; but no test engines. It was noted that this training would be for the trainer, with classroom instruction and curriculum and could not be performed at the mine site.

Director Wagner noted that if the State did this, we would be the only entity to do so and asked the TAC if they knew of any other entities with a paid service, and where equipment could be obtained. He also stated that it would be a challenge for the State to obtain funding.

TAC member Homet remarked that is the responsibility of the owner of the diesel equipment to train and questioned why the State would consider taking this on.

Director Wagner stated that operators are concerned that they may be cited by the Department for inadequate training and would like to know how that can be accomplished. There is only one person performing this training and soon he will no longer be doing this. We have everything but a piece of equipment. Another option may be to enter into an agreement with an entity or manufacturer who would allow us to use their equipment.

He asked the group and TAC if there are any creative ideas to accomplish this training in the interim before we can provide in house state training.

Art Brower explained the Bureau's three methods to become the trainer already in place. 1. Instructor training by an approved organization. 2. Based on qualifications and teaching experience 3. Provisional instructors to teach specific courses with the Bureau monitoring classroom performance.

The current Bureau document was forwarded by email to the TAC and staff members by Peggy.

Rebuilding Engines

Chas Washlack informed the group that he is being asked on a regular basis what type of approval is necessary for rebuilt engines and reached out to the group for their input. There was extensive discussion.

The laws states that the fuel system must be repaired and maintained according to OEM and does not address any other aspects.

It was noted that MSHA does not have a recommendation regarding this topic. It was also noted that companies are not able to rebuild their own engines, they must source out to a vendor who is the authorized representative of the engine.

It was concluded that if the emissions on a rebuilt engine are representative of what they should be, it is okay to use other parts.

PUBLIC COMMENT

None.

ADJOURNMENT

With no further business to discuss, the meeting was adjourned at 11:17 a.m. The next meeting will be at 10 a.m. on July 12, 2023, at the DEP New Stanton Office, Westmoreland Room.