

Thefts Continue to Pose a Major Threat to Mining Companies

By Paloma Duran / Wed, 10/19/2022 - 17:16

The Mexican Mining Chamber (CAMIMEX) warned that thefts of output and goods like explosives in the mining industry continue to increase despite the support provided by the Secretary of National Defense (SEDENA). In addition, the chamber called on the industry and authorities to improve safety protocols to avoid workplace accidents.

The General Director of CAMIMEX, Karen Flores, said that thefts remain a recurrent issue in the sector and highlighted that these crimes are probably perpetrated by organized crime. The President of CAMIMEX's Commission on Safety and Health at Work, Juan Peña, stressed that thefts of explosives, for example, are used to maintain illicit mining projects, mostly underground.

“Explosives are not used in coal mining, so the issue there is non-existent. In open pit operations, mining companies use explosives that illegal mining companies do not normally use, so the issue there is considered to be very low or non-existent. The biggest problem occurs in underground mining. All these supplies like explosives have a barcode that can detect to whom they were sold to. This enables SEDENA to carry out controls. However, since illegal mining cannot buy these explosives legally, they are obtaining them illegally,” said Peña.

Jaime Gutiérrez, President, CAMIMEX previously said that on average, Mexican mining operators end up losing about 30 percent of their products to petty theft and robberies carried out by organized criminal groups. He also warned that insecurity appears to be increasing in the country, as mining operations are vulnerable due to their remote location, while the high value of their products makes them an attractive target.

Flores added that another important issue is worker safety. Therefore, she called on the mining industry and its authorities to take measures to prevent accidents. Flores said that it is important to ensure that safety standards are always met and called on the mining companies of Coahuila to reinforce these measures. She emphasized that accidents like the one that occurred in Pinabete, Coahuila, where 10 workers died after the mine collapsed, could be prevented.

In the past decade, Mexico has experienced more than 270 mining-related accidents in which 270 mining workers died and 108 others sustained injuries. In recent years, the number of accidents has decreased significantly, from an average of 36 per year in 2015 to three in 2022.

Source: mexicobusiness.news