



Quality in Mining  
Interest Group  
The Global Voice of Quality™

## **ASQ Mining Report -2015**

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### **ASQ –World Conference on Quality and Improvement (WCQI)-2015 Leadership meet- Nashville TN: 30 April – 4 May**

**Objective:** - Present the ASQ-Mining SIG status and current challenges to TCC (Technical Communities Council) and find a way forward that will be in the best interests of all stakeholders.

#### **ASQ- Mining IG Report and Conclusion:**

ASQ is undergoing a membership haemorrhage. From 125,000 to a current level of 74000 or so. The challenge is on retaining members. One way is to grow internal attractions to retain members other is to explore other geographies and industries. The situation probably needs a combination of all efforts.

The Mining SIG is an effort to service a section of the society that is very large and has unique needs that are not satiated by the existing services provided by ASQ. The SIG – Mining has grown from 5 persons in one location to over **160** persons globally in three years demonstrating an unfulfilled requirement in the industry. It has unique requirements that intersect other Divisions and ASQ communities.

**Mining is a continuous Construction** activity. It involves demolition, moving material and building on a continual basis. In this way there is a lot of commonality between ASQ Mining IG and the ASQ Construction Division.

**Mining as Automotive-** Mining uses very large and heavy duty machinery that is mobile. This makes it closely associated with the ASQ-automotive group. ASQ mining as a special group within Automotive could be a unique set to resolve the issues in mining.

**Mining as Chemical and Process Industry (CPID)** - The entire midstream and downstream processing in mining is largely about the physical and chemical operations to get the finished products such as gold, diamond, potash, salt, fertilizers, metals, non-metals, rare earth etc. Are directly for the human consumption. This makes mining closely associated with the Chemical and Process Industries (CPID) to resolve unique set of quality issues in mining.

**Mining as Energy and Environment (E&E)** - All mining activity involves moving the earth and affecting the environment, it affects air, water and soil irreversibly. Major mining operations are associated with the energy resources such as coal, oil and gas/oil sands, uranium etc. Hence this group plays a vital role in providing expertise to mining.

**Mining is a source for Safety and Sustainability** much longer before they became the key words for business success.

As all these groups fall under the ASQ banner, the mining group is well positioned to be the unique face of ASQ. This will enable other Divisions and groups to derive benefits of the Mining SIG as they cannot approach this market segment individually.

Mining, as an industry, is large. It is much larger than automobiles, or construction or E&E – just because all these have their resources from mining. The top 10 Mining companies account for 500 billion dollars of net worth<sup>1</sup>.

At present the Mining industry is going through a severe down turn and has affected some of our key champions temporarily. There have been some changes and some temporary slowdowns.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.statista.com/statistics/272706/top-10-mining-companies-worldwide-based-on-market-value/>

**Options forward:** – transitional changes vs. transformation

Historically ASQ has gained its strength and growth by educating and revolutionizing the manufacturing and automotive sectors. So manufacturing is the heart of ASQ. All the knowledge material and educational products whether related to Lean Six Sigma, Reliability or QMS-ISO9000, audits or measurement and inspection etc., all are around the manufacturing sector. Not even that now since the manufacturing sector has moved to china, India and south Asia, so is ASQ. We strongly believe that ASQ is growing more horizontally opening divisions to new knowledge areas such as Innovation or Master Black belt etc. and is losing its vertical growth which primarily comes from industry in North America.

ASQ –Mining IG see an exceptionally large growth of Quality community and ASQ membership if we take quality to the grass root of the Industry in our home continent. So **people, place and industry** are our highest priority to assure the vertical growth of ASQ. It is strongly believed that the major milestone of our global quality journey cannot be achieved until we reach to the Mining machine operators.

In a nutshell, ASQ needs to put the same level of efforts in North American mining industry they did with manufacturing and Health care sector in last 25 years. Just the mining and resource sector of US and Canada has enough strength to achieve the new heights of ASQ's global success.

***Future of ASQ Mining IG:*** - ASQ –TCC board asked the group if it should be discontinued as ASQ cannot support this group over the current period of calm. On speaking to other groups- aerospace industry goes through these phases and they have seen such events many times before. This will require a better understanding of the current situation in light of other experience. The decision for this has to be very slow and deliberate – not to be taken in haste.

**Discontinue could also mean merge with other ASQ divisions as a sub division or group /SIG.** Merging will possibly allow the two groups to pool resources. It will require a good amount of effort to find common ground. It will also involve removal of areas that are not of common interest. It will take time to move

through this process as the key stakeholder will have to be aligned first, and then the members will have to be aligned too. This change in focus may cause a change in the membership depending on individual interest.

**Continuing as is will require strengthening of the support for this group.** It will allow understanding whether the current calm is due to the industry downturn or it is because there is insufficient energy within the group. It will also allow the merging option to be evaluated further. Given these groups are operating through volunteers who are without any financial benefit- this work takes much longer time.

If the ultimate goal is to serve the society through the identified segment i.e. mining, any decision that is taken has to be very carefully thought out. Such a conclusion may not be arrived at in the few remaining months of 2015. At the same time ASQ is unable to provide support that the group needs.

To balance these challenges, **I believe it will be in all stakeholders' interest to:**

1. Begin exploring common interest options between ASQ Divisions and ASQ mining IG.
2. Presenting ASQ mining as a face of ASQ in the mining industry to continue growth to Mining and other related groups
3. Minimize expenditure to the \$6000-8000 USD levels to allow for participation in global events.