



30 production shifts at a longwall MMU in District 3.
Each "O" represents production on one shift.

Figure 1. Example of a typical distribution of 30 shift production levels achieved at a longwall MMU.

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MSHA proposes to require mine operators to maintain records of the amount of material produced by each MMU during each shift. This will enable operators to establish the VPL. Because verification of a plan's effectiveness is conditioned on the VPL, these records are necessary to ensure that the VPL continues to represent

typical production levels. Although a VPL must be included in the ventilation plan, MSHA will not cite mine operators for producing at levels exceeding the VPL.

MSHA considers the VPL to be a plan design criteria, not a minimum plan parameter that must be in effect on every shift. The Agency would expect production on a MMU to exceed the

VPL on about 33 percent of all production shifts. If the district manager determines that an operator's actual production exceeds the VPL on more than 33 percent of the production shifts over a six-month period and the operator or MSHA samples exceed the applicable standard, the district manager may require that the adequacy of the plan parameters be verified under