

# Press Release



SOUTH AFRICAN  
INSTITUTE OF  
RACE RELATIONS

South Africa's Leading Research and Policy Organisation

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## More than five railway deaths for every mining death

Railway accidents accounted for more than five times as many deaths as mining accidents over a two-year period, according to the latest *South Africa Survey*, published by the South African Institute of Race Relations in Johannesburg last week.

Just over 160 people died in mining accidents in 2009 and 2010 while almost 900 were killed in railway accidents between 2007/08 and 2008/09.

The majority of mining accident casualties occurred owing to the fall of ground and transportation accidents, at 68%. The rest were caused by blasting fumes or other unspecified incidents.

South Africa has among the deepest mines in the world.

Some 81% of railway accident fatalities happened when people were struck during train movements while the remainder were as a result of fires, electric shocks, derailments, and level crossing incidents, according to data analysed in the *Survey*.

The South African mining industry provides about one million jobs — half of them directly. The Passenger Rail Agency of South Africa's passenger numbers range from 3.9 million a year — via the long distance Shosholoza Meyl — to 1.7 million passengers a week on Metrorail, used by urban dwellers to commute to work daily.

'The Government is rightly concerned about mining fatalities, but seems less so about deaths on the state-owned railways,' said Mr Kerwin Lebone of the Institute's research department.

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