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person claiming a right of participation as an interested party in a proceeding may become a party upon application to the Assistant Secretary and the granting of such application. After referral of a petition to the Chief Administrative Law Judge, all applications for status as a party shall be made to the Chief Administrative Law Judge for his disposition.

### § 44.4 Standard of evaluation of petitions; effect of petitions granted.

(a) A petition for modification of application of a mandatory safety standard may be granted upon a determination that—

(1) An alternative method of achieving the result of the standard exists that will at all times guarantee no less than the same measure of protection afforded by the standard, or

(2) Application of the standard will result in a diminution of safety to the miners.

(b) Except as may be provided in § 44.16 for relief to give effect to a proposed decision and order, a decision of an Administrator or an administrative law judge granting or denying a petition for modification shall not be effective until time for appeal has expired under § 44.14 or § 44.33, as appropriate.

(c) All petitions for modification granted pursuant to this part shall have only future effect: *Provided*, That the granting of the modification under this part shall be considered as a factor in the resolution of any enforcement action previously initiated for claimed violation of the subsequently modified mandatory safety standard. Orders granting petitions for modification may contain special terms and conditions to assure adequate protection to miners. The modification, together with any conditions, shall have the same effect as a mandatory safety standard.

[43 FR 29518, July 7, 1978, as amended at 55 FR 53440, Dec. 28, 1990]

### § 44.5 Notice of a granted petition for modification.

(a) Every final action granting a petition for modification under this part shall be published in the FEDERAL REGISTER. Every such final action published shall specify the statutory grounds upon which the modification is based and a summary of the facts which warranted the modification.

(b) Every final action or a summary thereof granting a petition for modification under this part shall be posted by the operator on the mine bulletin board at the affected mine and shall remain posted as long as the modification is effective. If a summary of the final action is posted on the mine bulletin board, a copy of the full decision shall be kept at the affected mine office and made available to the miners.

### § 44.6 Service.

(a) Copies of all documents filed in any proceeding described in this part and copies of all notices pertinent to such proceeding shall be served by the filing party on all other persons made parties to the proceeding under § 44.3. If a request for hearing has been filed by any party, a copy of all subsequent documents filed shall be served upon the Mine Safety and Health Administration through its representative, the Office of the Solicitor, Department of Labor.

(b) All documents filed subsequent to a petition for modification may be served personally or by first class mail to the last known address of the party. Service may also be completed by telecopier or other electronic means.

(c) Whenever a party is represented by an attorney who has signed any document filed on behalf of such party or otherwise entered an appearance on behalf of such party, service thereafter shall be made upon the attorney.

(d) Any party filing a petition for modification under these rules shall file proof of service in the form of a return receipt where service is by registered or certified mail or an acknowledgment by the party served or a verified return where service is made personally. A certificate of service shall accompany all other documents filed by a party under these rules.

(e) Service by mail shall be complete upon mailing. Service by telecopier or other electronic means shall be complete upon receipt.

(f) Whenever a party has the right to do some act within a prescribed period after the service of a document or other material upon the party and the