

# THE ROUND TRIP OF SCAVENGERS TO HAVERSTORS TO SALVAGERS

## BLOEM J

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## SUMMARY

Reclaiming on our sites are a reality and an everyday problem to manage. The Minimum Requirements document are trying to guide the operators / permit holders how to handle this situation on site, but it is still what practically works and are more site specific than what we realise.

## INTRODUCTION

Originally the people reclaiming on site was scavengers. When the comparison was made between these people and animals scavenging for flesh as food, they were renamed to informal reclaimers. "Informal" was used to make sure that they are no ones responsibility and should be dependable on themselves.

With the 3rd addition of the Minimum Requirements documents still to be finalised, the second addition of 1998 still discourage "any informal or formal reclaiming on a landfill site".

In the 3rd addition of the Minimum Requirements document by DWAF, "Salvaging" is discussed and explained in much more detail, especially salvaging during daily operations. Here they explain in detail the separation being done on different cells while compaction and covering of the waste is still done on the active cells. Buffer cells are used as demarcation between the active cells and the cells where salvaging is done.

## SALVAGING ON SITES

It is according to the Minimum Requirements, still the responsibility of the permit holder to decide to allow reclaiming on site.

The decision is easy when a new site is permitted and the infrastructure can be designed to accommodate a recycling facility.

When it is an existing site and reclaimers are inherited, that is when it can become very difficult to control. The reclaimers would have been working without any control or structure. It is usually then very difficult to get them to deviate from their previously disorganised habits.

## **CONTROLLING OF SALVAGERS ON SITES**

The first step in controlling the salvagers on site is always to gain their trust. If there is no mutual respect, nothing can be planned or implemented.

Thereafter it is very important for them to form a committee with a chairman. They will usually elect the people they trust to lead and manage them. Then the role players can meet around a table and start placing structures and programmes in place to formalise the operations on the site.

## **CASE STUDIES**

### **Rooikraal:**

At this site there are 850 salvagers working on the site. There are two groups, one from Villa Lisa and one from the northern Informal settlement. They recover material for two hours in the morning and two hours in the afternoon.

There is a fenced-off storage and sorting area in the north western side of the site. This area is kept clean and neat by the salvagers. They have formulated rules and a code of conduct that are upheld by the community.

### **Simmer & Jack:**

At S&J the numbers are controlled to a maximum of 15 per day. They work in shifts and rotate as determined by themselves. They wear specific colour PPE to distinguish them and so that they can be identified as re-claimers.

### **Botshepi:**

This site was in total disarray with people living on the site and fires being started even on the workface. Some of the salvagers lost their lives by jumping on moving vehicles. There are approximately 350 salvagers on the site.

After consulting with their committee they drew up rules and all informal dwellings were removed. Fires were banned on the landfill area and they started to participate in cleaning the site. The volume of people and the workface was reduced and they are wearing reflective vests to make them more visible.