

# **IMPROVED BLASTING ECONOMICS AT AN UZBEKISTAN COPPER MINE**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The Almalyk Integrated Mining and Metallurgical Plant is located near Tashkant in Uzbekistan and is one of the former Soviet Union's largest copper producers. Almalyk consumes about 10,000 metric tonnes of explosives annually and expects this requirement to double by the end of the century as they implement a program to boost mine output.

TNT as the primary commercial explosive is still in great use in parts of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. As the supply of imported TNT dwindles in this still new free market, changing to locally produced, bulk loaded emulsion blends incorporates the advances made in the explosives industry over the past 30 years. In 1997 the company installed on-site emulsion explosives manufacturing capability to greatly improve blasting and financial performance. Almalyk will supply all of their own explosives requirements from the plant and plans to sell the surplus production capacity to other mines in the region. Making these changes demonstrates the progressive thinking of the management of this large copper producing operation as they lead the industry with a state of the art manufacturing facility. Working with government and mine personal, the improvements in safety, blasting efficiencies and costs are detailed for the successful installation and operation of the plant and the overall blasting program.