Rescue of trapped miners

A 13-foot tall rescue chamber is being used to bring the 33 trapped miners to safety.

Rescue shaft

79°

The "Fenix" rescue capsule
It will take 15-20 minutes to lower the capsule down to the rescue shelter.

- Each miner will need to be fitted into a harness. In case of a jam, he can be freed through the bottom of the capsule to descend back into the mine.

- Miners will wear hard hats, oxygen masks and belts to monitor vital signs. A small video camera in the escape capsule will be trained on each miner's face to watch for expressions of distress.

Medical help
Paramedics and mining workers will first descend in the capsule to evaluate the men and oversee the journey upward.

Reinforced and angled entrance
The first 300 feet of the escape shaft was drilled at an inclination of 79 degrees. Workers encased the upper 100 feet of the shaft with metal tubing, which should prevent loose rock from crumbling into the shaft.

Travel time
The journey to the surface in the escape shaft should take about 15 minutes.

2,303 feet

Main mining tunnel

Empire State Building: 1,454 feet (shown for scale)

Refuge shelter
The 33 trapped miners have been in a living room-size chamber off of the main mining tunnel.

Source: Wire services, USA TODAY research

Capsule image by Chilean navy, graphic by USA TODAY