

Our File EA01-004

February 20, 2003

Ms. Janet Hutchison  
Chamberlain Hutchison  
1310 Merrill Lynch Tower  
10025-102A Avenue  
Edmonton, AB T5J 2Z2

Dear Ms. Hutchison:

**Re: Process Concerns - De Beers Canada Mining Inc.  
Snap Lake Diamond Project**

We are writing in response to your e-mail of January 23, 2003 addressed to Mr. Louie Azzolini, and your e-mail of February 14, 2003 addressed to Ms. Glenda Fratton.

Your January 23, 2003 e-mail speaks to three matters: release of internal/staff reports, time set aside for the public hearings, and a meeting to discuss the format of technical reports. The latter two matters are addressed in this letter, while the first matter was addressed in a separate letter from Board Counsel, dated February 14, 2003.

Your concern regarding the amount of time set aside for the public hearings was considered by the Review Board, and it was decided that the five (5) days set aside for the hearing is adequate and that no extension is warranted.

We looked into your inquiry as to whether Aboriginal groups were notified of or invited to the November 21, 2001 meeting to discuss the format of the technical reports. Our records (public registry item 143, attached) indicate that five Aboriginal groups or representatives of these groups were invited to this meeting, including Mr. Bob Turner of the North Slave Métis Alliance.

Your February 14, 2003 e-mail points out a concern related to lack of notification of technical meetings that occurred in late January and early February, and a concern related to inadequate review time of technical documents. We trust that the work plan

amendments outlined in our February 19, 2003 letter to the parties to the EA addresses your latter concern.

Several technical meetings were held between De Beers and various parties to the EA on January 28, 29, 30, and February 5, 7, and 10, 2003. In your February 14<sup>th</sup> e-mail, you requested an explanation as to why no notice was given of these meetings. It is not the Review Board's responsibility to notify the parties to the EA of meetings held between De Beers and other parties, unless the Review Board plans to participate in such meetings. We notified the parties of the phosphorus modeling meeting (February 10), as one of our technical experts attended this meeting.

I trust that this response will be of assistance.

Yours truly,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Vern Christensen', with a stylized horizontal line extending to the right.

Vern Christensen  
Executive Director

