

Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
Imperial Oil Geotechnical Study Environmental Assessment (EA03-009)
Responses to Information Request – December 6th, 2004

- a) There are no written agreements between the proponent and the GNWT regarding the construction, use, upgrading and/or maintenance of the Mackenzie Highway (No. 1) or the two winter roads due to this project. A meeting was held in the fall of 2004 in Fort Simpson with the various users from the oil & gas industry to discuss their programs for the upcoming 2004/05 winter season. The meeting was chaired by Rod Gunderson, District Superintendent of Highway Operations, Department of Transportation GNWT. The A/Regional Superintendent of Transportation, Gerald Perron was also present. Imperial Oil attended and provided details of their intended Geotechnical programs in the Sahtu and Deh Cho Regions.

Discussions were focused on the existing contractual arrangements between the Department of Transportation and private contractors involved in the construction and maintenance of the roads in question. The Department emphasized the need to utilize these contractors for additional work to accelerate and upgrade the winter roads for the up coming season.

The Mackenzie Valley Winter Road has a multiple users including Imperial Oil resulting in moderate to high usage. The Trout Lake winter road has no other industrial users besides Imperial Oil and therefore traffic volumes are expected to be low to moderate.

- b) There are no requirements for additional maintenance or for upgrading of the Mackenzie Highway (No.1). The road is of a standard capable of handling any additional traffic associated with the project.

The oil and gas industry, including Imperial Oil, has committed to providing a higher level of service on the Mackenzie Valley Winter Road from Wrigley (km 690) to Tulita (km 938) The work includes accelerating the winter road opening time, extending the operating season and providing maintenance, as required.

At the fall meeting, referenced above Imperial Oil agreed to provide additional maintenance on the Trout Lake Winter Road in conjunction with DoT's existing maintenance contractor, the Saamba Ke Band. The Department of Transportation has also committed up to \$50K from our existing O & M budget for right-of-way enhancements, i.e. clearing and widening. The Department believes that these measures will mitigate the impacts of this project and that the specific recommendations of the SKDB

are not warranted. As a contingency, the Department of Transportation will have a 18 metre portable bridge available for use along the Trout Lake winter road if required.

- c) As on other winter roads in the system, forest fires are prone to certain areas. Typically, they are dealt with on an individual basis and do not pose a direct impedance on any winter road construction activities. The Trout Lake Winter Road fire will be evaluated and cleanup authorized under a Contract Change Order with our contractor.
- d) Although the contract with the Saamba K'e Development Corp. for the construction and maintenance is a fixed lump sum contract there are provisions for additional work. Any work not specified in the contract will be handled by Contract Change Order and paid for accordingly.
- e) There will be no unrecoverable costs owed to the Department of Transportation. The oil and gas industry is committed to enhancing the level of service and will render payment directly to our contractors for all work. This is a standard practice of the Department of Transportation.
- f) The Department of Transportation does not anticipated any other additional costs increased maintenance cost or any reduction in spending on roads or other transportation infrastructure in the Deh Cho as a result of this project.
- g) The staffs of the Department of Transportation and its contractors regularly inspect and patrol the length of the winter road principally for the purpose of highway maintenance. The Road Licencing and Safety Division, Department of Transportation is responsible for compliance with the Motor Vehicles Act as it applies to commercial carriers. Highway Transportation Officers carry out patrols and on the NWT Highway system for non-compliance.