



Giant Mine Environmental Assessment IR Response Template

Round One: Information Request – Alternatives North #18

June 17, 2011

INFORMATION REQUEST

EA No: 0809-001

Information Request No: Alternatives North #18

Date Received

February 28, 2011

Linkage to Other IRs

Review Board IR #27
Alternatives North IR #01, 3, 19
YKDFN IR #25, 26, 27

Date of this Response

June 17, 2011

Request

Preamble:

The Review Board IR #1 deals with the lessons learned to date from the Freeze Optimization Study from an engineering and design perspective. The Study was carried out without a land use permit and there were at least three publicly reported spills at the Giant Mine site as follows:

June 11, 2009 Spill of Drill Mud into Baker Creek;
August 12, 2009 Spill of Drill Mud; and
October 22, 2009 Spill of Arsenic that covered a worker at site

The DAR also states at page 10-9 "Since the Project Team assumed the responsibility for Giant Mine in 1999, workplace safety has consistently been good and improvements to health and safety practices are continuously occurring."

Question:

Please describe any lessons learned regarding spill reporting, spill management, monitoring, inspection and enforcement resulting from the spills that took place at the Giant Mine site during the Freeze Optimization Study.

Reference to DAR (relevant DAR Sections)

DAR, s.10 Assessments of Accidents and Malfunctions





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The DAR also states at page 10-9 “Since the Project Team assumed the responsibility for Giant Mine in 1999, workplace safety has consistently been good and improvements to health and safety practices are continuously occurring.”

Reference to the EA Terms of Reference

TOR s.3.2.5 Accidents and Malfunctions

Summary

The Spill Response Plan for the Giant Mine site was reviewed and updated in November 2009 to address any issues that arose during drilling on site.

The plans continue to be reviewed annually to ensure that all the information is up to date and that the plans reflect current site activities.

After every spill, the Spill Response Plan for the Giant Mine is reviewed and issues are addressed to ensure continual improvement to dealing with spills on site.

Response

After any spill occurs at Giant Mine, there is a review of spill reporting, spill management and monitoring and any lessons learned are used to update the site-wide Spill Response Plan.

The Spill Response Plan underwent an internal review during November, 2009 and was updated to ensure that call out procedures and reporting to the Spill Line were current and efficient. In addition, the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for working in and around arsenic trioxide were updated.

The revised Spill Response Plan was submitted to regulatory agencies for review, and comments received were incorporated into the plan.

Spill Reporting

Improvements to spill reporting have included submitting the Spill Reports by fax and following up with a phone call to make sure that the Spill Line has received the report.

Whenever there is a question about the quantity of a spilled material and if it is a reportable amount, the Spill Response Team will treat it as a reportable quantity and report the release to the Spill Line.

Spill Management

Whenever drilling beside a water body, silt curtains will be deployed and the water body will be monitored for any release of drill muds. If a release is noted, drilling will stop immediately. All drill muds used at Giant Mine will be environmentally friendly.





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When drilling into arsenic chambers, no air will be applied to the cutter head and all open drill holes will be sealed with a welded cap or HEPA filter. This will prevent pressurization of the chamber and releases of arsenic to the surface.

Spill Monitoring

Collection and disposal/treatment of the spilled material is done in consultation with the Regulatory Inspector.

Confirmatory sampling with analysis completed at an accredited laboratory is conducted to confirm that all spilled material has been removed. A clean up report and laboratory results are sent to the Regulatory Inspector.

The worker that was exposed to arsenic on October 22, 2009 was wearing appropriate PPE and therefore suffered no effects from the spill. This reinforces that appropriate standards are being used on site.

