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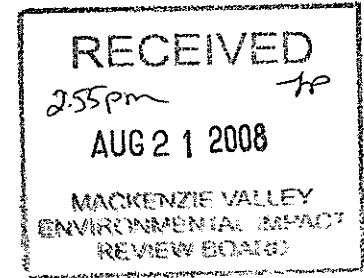


P.O. Box 1500
Yellowknife NT X1A 2R3

hand delivered

August 18, 2008

Mr. Richard Edjericon
Chairperson
Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board
200 Scotia Centre
P.O. Box 938, 5102-50th Avenue
Yellowknife, NT X1A 2N7



Dear Mr. Edjericon:

Re: EA0809-001 Giant Mine Remediation – Scoping Hearing, Undertaking No. 4

During the Scoping Hearing for the Giant Mine Remediation Environmental Assessment on July 22, 2008, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) undertook to answer the question: Where the availability of independent expertise might come from in a situation where all of those divisions of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) and the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) are actually developers. This letter is in response to this undertaking.

The following response is based on INAC's understanding of the question posed by Mr. Donihee, the Review Board's counsel, during the Scoping Hearing as recorded in the transcripts. If this response does not resolve the issue for the Review Board, INAC remains available for further discussion and exchange of information as the Review Board requires.

As noted during the Scoping Hearing, this project is unique in that it is not the development of a new mine site but rather the clean up and remediation of an abandoned mine site. This project is also unique because INAC and the GNWT are co-proponents and will not participate as interveners in the environmental assessment (EA) process.

As such, notwithstanding that INAC/GNWT are committed to mitigating any environmental impacts which may arise from the proposed Remediation Plan and intend to ensure the health and safety of the public, it is important to be clear that the technical information/expertise provided by INAC/GNWT, including respective expert divisions/departments, while available to the Review Board, is the same information/expertise upon which the proposed Remediation Plan is based. In INAC's view, additional technical information/expertise will presumably be available from the departments of Fisheries and Oceans and Environment Canada in accordance with their respective mandates. The Review Board might also consider hiring its own independent expert(s). The Review Board has the authority under s. 18(1) of the MVRMA to employ such "advisors and experts as are necessary for the proper conduct of its business".

In addition, if it would assist the Review Board, INAC can endeavour to make the members of the Independent Peer Review Panel (IPRP) available for further inquiries into the basis of the IPRP's expert reports and recommendations. The IPRP's composition was based on recommendations made by local stakeholders and includes nine leading experts and specialists of importance to this project, namely; geotechnical study, mining, mineral processing, environmental engineering, hydrogeology, permafrost, risk assessment, arsenic toxicology and public health. The purpose of the IPRP was to perform an independent evaluation and critique the proposed remediation plan. The Report of the IPRP, along with the many other studies and reports included in the Giant Mine Public Registry, are also available to the Board.

If the Review Board has further questions or requires further information, please feel free to contact Bill Mitchell, Manager, Giant Mine Remediation Project at (867) 669-2434.

Sincerely,



Trish Merrithew-Mercredi
Regional Director General
Yellowknife



Gary Bohnet
Deputy Minister
Environment and Natural Resources