



Giant Mine Environmental Assessment IR Response

Round One: Information Request - Yellowknives Dene First Nation #23

June 17, 2011

INFORMATION REQUEST RESPONSE

EA No: 0809-001

Information Request No: YKDFN #23

Date Received

February 28, 2011

Linkage to Other IRs

YKDFN #22
Review Board IR #27

Date of this Response

17 June, 2011

Request

Preamble:

Throughout the territory there has been a general failure to implement cumulative effects monitoring, despite the focus that it holds during the EA stage/process. The proponents, as regulators, have not pushed nor required actual development and participation from those contributing to the impacts, while industry has steadfastly declared this to be a government responsibility. To avoid this conflict in a project where the regulator and the applicant are one and the same, these plans should be submitted for the Parties and Boards consideration ahead of implementation.

Question:

INAC should be directed to complete a draft of the monitoring plan and the adaptive management structures for the Parties consideration.

Reference to DAR (relevant DAR Sections)

s. 14 Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Framework and Long-Term Environmental Monitoring

Reference to the EA Terms of Reference

s.3.6 Monitoring, Evaluation and Management

Summary

In response to having someone “direct INAC to complete a draft of the monitoring plan and the adaptive management structures for the Parties consideration” the Giant Mine Remediation Project Team





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(Project Team) has already committed to developing such a monitoring plan (Developer's Assessment Report (DAR) Chapter 14). The Project Team will develop an Environmental Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (EMEF) and an Environmental Management System (EMS).

In terms of timing, approved monitoring plans are anticipated to be in place prior to implementation. However, they are not developed at this time but rather the Project Team will be developing the EMS over the next couple of years and will be consulting the parties throughout development. There will also be valuable input to the design of the EMS received through the Environmental Assessment (EA) and Regulatory Review Process.

In terms of administering the program, the Project Team is committed to developing and managing the long-term monitoring program in a manner that is:

1. Adaptive
2. Objectives Based
3. Credible
4. Inclusive
5. Transparent
6. Cost Effective
7. Accountable

The Giant Mine Remediation Project (Remediation Project) monitoring approach includes: a performance monitoring program to confirm that the objectives are being met; and the development of an adaptive management plan to allow the Remediation Project to adapt to changing conditions as required. For further information on these principles the reader is respectfully directed to the Response to Review Board Information Request #27.

Response

In response to having someone "direct INAC to complete a draft of the monitoring plan and the adaptive management structures for the Parties consideration" the Project Team has already committed to developing such a monitoring plan. As stated in the DAR Chapter 14, the Project Team will develop an EMEF that will address both an overall EMS and a Governance approach (including the adaptive management structure) for monitoring within this Project.

In terms of timing, approved monitoring plans are anticipated to be in place prior to implementation. However, this is not developed and the Project Team will be developing the EMS over the next couple of years and will be consulting the parties throughout its development. First, the Project Team will utilize existing policies or guidelines cited in section 1.7.2 of the DAR to develop the management plans and other guidelines including the *Guidelines for Designing and Implementing Aquatic Effects and Mentoring Programs for Development Projects in the Northwest Territories*; INAC, June 2009.





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The intent of the engagement on the EMS and its adaptive management programs will include:

- Developing agreed upon targets and criteria for individual plans;
- Developing mitigation measures and strategies;
- Providing a coordinated approach to analysis and interpretation of monitoring data where applicable, facilitate collaboration with First Nations, Regulators and others.

Monitoring is a fundamental component of the Remediation Project. The purpose of monitoring will be two-fold: to assist in determining if the environmental effects of the project are as predicted; and to use an adaptive monitoring approach to confirm that the proposed mitigation measures are effective, and thus whether new mitigation strategies are required. Adaptive Management is an essential component of the remediation plan and will form part of the EMS and EMEF as noted in section 14.1.8 of the DAR. The Project Team will also approach officials and partners who are involved in the Cumulative Impact Monitoring Program (CIMP) to discuss how that initiative might benefit the Giant monitoring plans.

In terms of administering the program, the Project Team is committed to developing and managing the program in a manner that is:

1. Adaptive
2. Objectives Based
3. Credible
4. Inclusive
5. Transparent
6. Cost Effective
7. Accountable

For further information on these principles, the reader is respectfully directed to the Response to Review Board Information Request #27. That response speaks to each of these principles and how the Project Team plans to undertake its commitment to developing and implementing an EMEF and an EMS. The EMS will describe the core approach to managing, monitoring and reporting on environmental issues – it is a central component of the EMEF. It will describe the core approach to managing, monitoring and reporting on environmental issues.

As there are a variety of options to address these operating principles, the Project Team is prepared to work with potentially affected groups to develop an approach that will meet the needs of the parties. This applies to developing and implementing the EMEF and the EMS as described in Chapter 14 of the DAR. The public will be involved in the design and implementation of the monitoring program in a manner that is inclusive and transparent. Aboriginal communities and the public have provided important input into the design of the Giant Mine Remediation Plan, and will continue to provide input through the EA process. The project will involve an effective approach to long term monitoring that is appropriate to such a large-scale, publically funded remediation project. It will involve stakeholders in design and implementation and will provide the public with a transparent and timely view of monitoring plans and monitoring results throughout the life of the project.



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The format and content of the Giant Mine Remediation EMEF and EMS is not presently developed. They will be developed and finalized in response to the detailed project design (which is currently under development); pursuant to direction from the Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board; in conjunction with the requirements of relevant regulatory instruments; and with the involvement of Giant Partners. Drafts will be shared as they become available throughout the EA and regulatory review process.

