

BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.



BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.
#1102 4920-52nd Street
Yellowknife NT Canada X1A 3T1
Tel 867 669 9292 Fax 867 669 9293
bhpbilliton.com

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File 4.1.8.13

Bill Ross
Chair
Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency
P.O. Box 1192
Yellowknife, NT
X1A 2W8

Dear Bill;

Re: Response to IEMA 2004-5 Annual Report Recommendations

Thank you for your recommendations. Please find below our response to the recommendations from 2004-5 Annual Report that relate to BHP Billiton.

Reclamation and Closure

1. BHPB should develop a workable closure plan, within one year, with closure objectives and preferred options for the mine components leading to specific closure criteria.

Response: BHP Billiton has been working on revisions to this plan since 2003. The target delivery date is Jan 15, 2007 to the Wek'eezhii Land and Water Board.

2. Decisions should be made about closure of mine components based on information from the corresponding studies in the forthcoming Abandonment and Reclamation research plan.

Response: Several studies have already informed the closure planning process. Additional studies will likely be identified during the closure option evaluation review and will be included in the Closure Plan as a Research chapter. There will not be a stand-alone Research Plan.

3. BHPB should use a collaborative consultation process to assist in developing its next closure plan, similar to the process used for improving the operation of the Long Lake Containment Facility.

Response: BHP Billiton used the LLCF review process to test a collaborative process and we are pleased that the agency found it valuable. We considered the LLCF process as well as similar processes from the Colomac Mine and the Red Dog Mine and have incorporated the best features of each to create an effective process for the Interim Closure Options Evaluation Workshop in July 2006. We will continue to refine and improve this style of consultation for other projects as necessary.

Traditional Knowledge

4. BHPB should enable greater participation of Aboriginal Peoples in the design and delivery of monitoring programs at Ekati.

Response: For the past ten years, we have sought to involve the communities in traditional knowledge and environmental monitoring programs. The Environmental Agreement is clear that each Aboriginal group shall determine the extent of its participation. We can not force them to participate.

Communications and Consultation

5. BHPB should adopt a more collaborative approach to the review and design of reports, programs, projects and risk assessments.

Response: BHP Billiton already uses a collaborative approach for the design of reports, programs and risk assessments. We use this approach when required by a regulatory document or when we consider a study or report will benefit from a collaborative approach at the initial stages. We typically use this approach when we plan to make changes to programs, undertake risk assessments, commence new initiatives or special effects studies.

A good example of how BHP Billiton uses this approach is the series of meetings held with parties to discuss the content and preparation of the 3year Impact Assessment Report, and the content of the technical meetings and non-technical session and tour of EKATI.

Regional Monitoring and Cumulative Effects

6. DIAND, GNWT, GNU and BHPB should be involved in regional caribou monitoring of the Bathurst Caribou herd.

Response: BHP Billiton has conducted aerial caribou monitoring surveys of the EKATI since 1993. This data is provided to GNWT and GNU for inclusion in their regional monitoring programs of the various herds. The current survey design covers an area of 1,600 km².

If you have any questions regarding these comments, do not hesitate to contact me at 669-6116.

Sincerely
BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc.



Jane Howe
Chief Environmental Officer
Permitting and Traditional Knowledge