

Environmental Agreement Working Group
September 26, 1997
Meeting #1

Present were the following:

Mary Tapsell	DIAND	669 2680
Julie Dahl	DFO	873 8871
Steve Matthews	RWED	873 7775
Kathryn Emmett	GNWT	920 8046
Hal Mills	Independent Monitoring Agency	669 9141
Janice Traynor	Independent Monitoring Agency	669 9141
John Witteman	BHP	669 9292
Denise Burlingame	BHP	669 9292
Steve Harbicht	DOE	669 4733
Len Hedburg	DIAND-South Mackenzie District	669 2761
Darren Unrau	DIAND-South Mackenzie District	669 2673

(1) Opening

The purpose of the working group is to communicate and develop processes, not to enter into technical discussions.

The Water Board was not represented at the meeting and may have to be included so that all agencies having an interest in BHP matters are represented. It is unknown who at this time will represent the Independent Environmental Monitoring Committee or the Water Board.

The membership may vary from time-to-time depending on the matters to be discussed at future meetings. Nonetheless, membership will be restricted so as to focus on important issues rather than entering into broad discussions.

(2) Communication Protocol

The Independent Environmental Monitoring Agency wonders if a signed protocol is required and is presently considering having a policy only for communication, this being, "*Policy Respecting Information Exchange, Communication and Coordination*". Once the policy has been accepted by the agency, it will be distributed to the committee members.

Action: Hal Mills to distribute the policy upon acceptance by the Agency to the committee members for comment.

The Agency will not place all materials in the public record. It will treat material marked confidential as such or will return it to sender.

The matter of inspection reports being provided to the Agency was discussed. The South Mackenzie District of DIAND will provide inspection reports to the Agency. However, if the inspection report contains a compliance issue, it will be resolved before the Agency receives the report. Although DIAND has committed to sending information to the Agency, other departments such as RWED, DFO and DOE need to consider what they will provide to the Agency.

Action: NRCan, DFO, DOE and RWED will develop positions on what materials they will provide to the Agency and report back to the committee next meeting.

(3) Construction Phase Environmental Management Plan

BHP reported on the revisions being made to the Plan based on comments received from government and the Agency. All comments will be addressed, however, changes to the matters before the Water Board, i.e. Water Effects Monitoring Program, QA/QC Plan, Contingency Plan, Abandonment and Restoration Plan, will have to wait until their comments are received. The comments received from government and the Agency on these items will be included at that time. BHP will be meeting with the GNWT to get more detail on their comments. BHP Will distribute new pages to insert into the existing Construction Phase Environmental Management Plan.

Changes to the Wildlife Effects Monitoring Plan and the Aquatic Effects Monitoring Plan will be made through meetings and workshops on the same. As both of these programs are drawing to a close for this season, the coming winter season will provide an opportunity to develop monitoring programs to address the concerns held by government and the Agency, and to have accepted programs in place before next field season.

BHP reported that it would be combining the Site Contingency Plan and the Transportation Contingency Plan into one. This plan will serve as the Operating Contingency Plan and will be ready mid to late November. It will need to be ready for the onset of the trucking season.

Action: Jim McCaul, DIAND is to check when the Water Board will send their comments on the above. He will report back to the committee on when these will be sent to BHP.

(5) BHP Annual Report

The content of the annual report was discussed. Members emphasized that the report should follow the intent outlined in the Environmental Agreement. This being:

- (i) compliance reports with respect to Water License, Surface Leases, Land Use Permits and other Regulatory Instruments;
- (ii) results and findings of studies and research conducted in the preceding year;
- (iii) results and findings of environmental monitoring programs;
- (iv) summary of operational activities during the Reporting Year;
- (v) actions taken or planned to address impacts or compliance problems which are set out in the Annual Report;
- (vi) summary of operational activities for the next Reporting Year; and
- (vii) lists and abstracts of all Environmental Plans and Programs.

The members did not support the inclusion of full reports prepared by BHP over the year. This would be too excessive. What needs to be in the Annual Report is an executive summary of each report. The Annual Report is to be comprehensive in scope, not in detail. Compliance reporting will provide an overview of compliance reports produced. Details will be provided for instances of non-compliance, noting corrective measures taken to reach compliance.

BHP anticipates producing some 50 copies of the Annual Report and up to 300 of the plain language document. The latter would be used by BHP in public meetings and for general distribution.

BHP feels the Annual Report will need further discussion so that agreement is reached by all, including the Agency, on what the Report will contain.

Action: BHP will provide a table of contents for the Annual Report to the committee. It will by October 17 provide the table of contents again with a paragraph describing the content under each heading.

The Annual Report will be discussed further at the next meeting.

(6) Operating Environmental Management Plan

The Operating Plan has to be completed in 6 months. Members felt the format of the Construction Phase Plan could be used for the Operating Plan. The preparation of each chapter of the Operating Plan should be discussed with government and the Agency. BHP will be proactive in ensuring that all concerns are addressed in the Operating Plan before finalizing it. This should result in few comments upon its completion.

Materials to be discussed regarding each chapter will be distributed two months in advance of the meetings.

Action: BHP to prepare a schedule of meetings with government and the Agency to address each chapter of the Operating Environmental Management Plan.

(7) Wildlife and Aquatic Effects Workshops

BHP will be having technical meetings on Wildlife Effects, October 9th, and Aquatic Effects, October 24th. The former will be with RWED, Canadian Wildlife Service and BHP. The latter is being arranged with Tony Piece and Peter McCart of the Agency. DOE and DFO expressed an interest in attending the latter meeting. The meetings are seen to set direction for the workshops.

The workshops are scheduled for late January and early February. The timing will allow the participants to read the 1997 wildlife and aquatic effects reports in advance of the workshop.

Action: Hal Mills to check with the Agency if DOE and DFO can attend the meeting on Aquatic Effects. He will report back to the individual departments.

(8) Next Meeting

The next meeting will be Friday, October 24th, 1:00-3:00. Bellanca Bldg - 8th Fl, LARGE Boardroom.

(9) Other Business

Draft Terms of Reference were distributed for review.

Action: Review comments back to Mary Tapsell by October 10. Mary to summarize comments for discussion at next meeting.