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New Partnership to Develop Common Mine Safety Training Standards

YELLOWKNIFE (February 15, 2011) – New common standards for mine safety training are being developed by the Government of the Northwest Territories, the Northern Safety Association (NSA), and the three diamond mines in the NWT (BHP Billiton, Rio Tinto and De Beers Canada). The safety standards will be recognized by all three mining companies, and will provide NWT residents with mine safety training to improve their employment opportunities.

“Improving training opportunities to develop healthy, educated residents is a key priority for our Government,” said the Minister of Education, Culture and Employment, Jackson Lafferty. “With NSA’s dedication in delivering safety programs to reduce workplace accidents, and the mines commitment in hiring residents of the NWT, our partnership will help us meet our goal.”

In 2008, the GNWT and the three diamond mines signed a Memorandum of Understanding, to collaborate on the NWT Mining Workforce Initiative which develops programs that help NWT residents obtain the education and skills they need to work at the diamond mines, and finds ways to attract mine workers and their families to live and work in the NWT.

“Developing common standards for mine safety training in the NWT demonstrates the success of this MOU,” said the Minister of Industry, Tourism and Investment, Bob McLeod. “Initiatives based on partnerships help us retain a healthy mining industry in the NWT and provide continuing opportunities for our residents.”

The Government of the Northwest Territories is investing in education and training programs to ensure residents, businesses and communities are able to take advantage of the opportunities that the development of our resources provides, as envisioned in the *Northerners Working Together* plan.

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