

MOU for a Northern Mining Workforce Initiative

During the environmental assessment for a major resource development project in the Northwest Territories, it is common for a developer to describe the job and business opportunities available through the proposed project and the steps that will be taken to ensure NWT residents and companies benefit from them.

A socio-economic agreement (SEA) captures these commitments and allows the Government of the Northwest Territories to monitor a developer's predictions about the project. The first SEA was established for the Ekati Diamond Mine in 1996, and subsequent SEAs were signed with Diavik and Snap Lake.

Over the past 10 years, guided by commitments described in each of their SEAs, the Ekati, Diavik and Snap Lake projects have created significant and unprecedented benefits for northern Canada. The three diamond mines have provided over 10,000 person years of northern employment. They have purchased approximately six billion dollars of goods and services through northern businesses and have provided millions of dollars in sponsorships and training, to support the development of northern workers' skills.

To build on this success, the GNWT, BHP Billiton Diamonds Inc., Diavik Diamond Mines Inc., and De Beers Canada Inc., have developed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to work together to create a new and innovative '*Northern Mining Workforce Initiative*'.

Under the MOU, the Diamond Mines and the GNWT will coordinate an *NWT Mining Workforce Initiative* with two main objectives:

- 1) The development of northern skills:
 - a. Identifying and developing training programs;
 - b. Investigating and developing transportation initiatives to enhance mine recruitment throughout the NWT.

- 2) Northern Attraction and Retention:
 - a. Developing strategies to attract workers to the north;
 - b. Pursuing initiatives to retain worker residency.

fact sheet

To reflect the highest-level commitment to the initiative, the MOU establishes a Steering Committee of GNWT Ministers and company Presidents. The Steering Committee will guide a Working Group, members of which will be able to roll up their sleeves to put the initiatives in place. Recommendations of the Steering Committee will be made by consensus.

The processes put in place through the MOU will help industry and government to coordinate the further development of northerners' skills. Parties to the MOU will also look at enhancing industry recruitment efforts not only in the mines' local area, but even further throughout the NWT. The processes under the MOU will make it easier for the Parties to work with some of the major communities in the NWT, to help them retain and increase the number of NWT workers they supply to the diamond mines.

The MOU will build on our past successes to promote employment initiatives to reduce regional and community disparities and find opportunities for even more NWT residents to participate fully in the resource sector and share the benefits of a prosperous Northwest Territories.

Note: Initiatives under the NWT Workforce Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), while encompassing the entire Northwest Territories, are intended to be complementary to any existing initiatives that the three diamond mines have made through the various Aboriginal Impact Benefit and Participation Agreements.