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NUNAVUT WATER BOARD
NUNAVUT IMALIRIYIN KATIMAYINGI

May 4, 2001

To: Distribution List

Subject: Polaris Mine – Decommissioning and Reclamation Plan

Dear Parties:

On April 3, 2001, Cominco Ltd. submitted its Decommissioning and Reclamation Plan for the Polaris Mine (4 Volumes; Prepared for Cominco Ltd. by Gartner Lee Limited; GLL 20-935; March 2001) to the Nunavut Water Board (NWB) and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (DIAND). This plan was submitted to fulfill the requirements of Water Licence N4L2-0262 and Surface Leases 3472, 68 H/8-1-3, 68 H/8-3-3, 68 H/8-8-2, and 68 H/8-9-2 at the Polaris site.

In order to avoid unnecessary duplication, to streamline the review process, and to maximize the use of all resources, the NWB and DIAND are proposing to follow a joint process for the review and approval of the Decommissioning and Reclamation Plan. While both agencies have very specific mandates with respect to the approval of the Plan, we hope that a single process, to review a single plan through one window for the submission of comments, will facilitate the task of all reviewers and decision-makers. While we understand that it may be difficult in certain cases to clearly separate the water-related jurisdiction of the NWB under the Water Licence and that of DIAND under the land leases, we will be asking interveners to divide their comments into those two categories (water licence- and surface/mining lease-related issues) so that in the end, two distinct approvals will be granted depending on our respective jurisdiction.

At this time, both agencies propose to proceed with the approval process through a *written hearing*. We expect to complete the review and approval process of Cominco's Plan by the end of November; therefore the deadline to provide both agencies with your comments on the Decommissioning and Reclamation Plan will be *September 30, 2001*.

Meanwhile, to facilitate the review of this project and provide all stakeholders with the opportunity to discuss procedural and substantive issues, we also propose to hold a *pre-hearing conference* (PHC) in Resolute on *August 2, 2001*. This PHC will be followed by a visit of the Polaris Mine on *August 3, 2001*.

For your convenience, Cominco has agreed to make available complete sets of the Decommissioning and Reclamation Plan, and they have advised us that a CD version will

also be offered shortly. If you wish to receive a copy of the Plan, we invite you to contact Bruce J. Donald, Cominco Reclamation Superintendent (by telephone at (250) 427-8256, telecopier at (250) 427-8206, or email at bruce.Donald@cominco.com. Copies of the Plan will also be available at the DIAND Land Administration office, Building 918, in Iqaluit.

If you have any questions on these proposed procedures, please write to the undersigned **on or before May 11, 2001**. Following your comments on whether or not these procedures are proper, we will finalize the PHC procedures and update and notify all parties of the next steps.

Sincerely,

Original signed by:

Philippe di Pizzo (pdipizzo@polarnet.ca)
Executive Director
Nunavut Water Board

Original signed by:

Carl McLean (mcleanc@inac.gc.ca)
Manager, Land Administration
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