ALS Environmental

August 5, 2005

Mr. Bruce Donald
Teck Cominco
Bag 2000
Kimberley, BC V1A 3E1

Dear Mr. Donald,

RE: Concerns Regarding Analytical Service

This is in response to email correspondence dated July 29, 2005 through August 3, 2005 expressing concerns over the services provided by ALS Environmental on some Teck Cominco / Azimuth Consulting Group submissions from late June and early July. The examples noted in the emails and the overall concerns over the service provided are taken very seriously by ALS Environmental, and this response letter will hopefully help to address the concerns that were expressed.

In order to provide some clarity and to help resolve the various items of concerns, the following are some of the details that relate to the individual concerns expressed in the emails.

1) missed analyses for samples submitted,
2) missed holding times for Nitrate, Mercury, Alkalinity.

Details of Expressed Concerns

Missed Analysis / Missed Holding Times for Samples Submitted for 2 Submissions:

Polaris MMER (ALS W1416) analysed for pH, Salinity, Total Cyanide, Ammonia, Total Suspended Solids, Radium 226 and total metals
Date / Time Received: Monday, July 11, 2005 @ 10:10 am.
Date / Time Reported: Monday, July 25, 2005 @ 2:23 pm for all but the Radium 226 via email
Wednesday, July 27, 2005 @ 2:42 pm for all analysis via email

Polaris MMER (ALS W1458) analysed for pH, Salinity, Total Cyanide, Ammonia, Total Suspended Solids, Radium 226 and total metals including Mercury
Date / Time Received: Tuesday, July 12, 2005 @ 9:30 am.
Date / Reported: Monday, July 25, 2005 @ 2:23 pm for all but the Radium 226 via email
Wednesday, July 27, 2005 @ 2:42 pm for all analysis via email.

On July 28, 2005, Cheryl Mackintosh of Azimuth Consulting Group called Leanne Harris and expressed concern over the fact that the Mercury analysis for W1416 was missing. Upon investigation, it was

discovered that the Mercury was missed at the time of receipt; although it was indicated on the chain of custody. The Mercury analysis for this sample was completed at Ms. Mackintosh's request, but it should be noted that it was one day past the recommended holding time of 28 days for Mercury analysis in water.

On July 29, 2005, Ms. Mackintosh emailed Ms. Harris to inquire about the missing analysis of Nitrate and Alkalinity on the two above referenced submissions. The 48 hour recommended holding time for Nitrate had been exceeded prior to receipt of the samples, but the analysis was carried out as per request. The 14 day holding time for Alkalinity had been exceeded by the time the analysis was completed.

Ms. Mackintosh indicated in subsequent email correspondence that these samples had been identified in an email as MMER monthly samples; which meant that they should have been analysed for a fuller suite of analyses. ALS missed the analysis requests and in future will work toward improved communication internally to prevent a similar situation from occurring again.

The results for the Mercury and Alkalinity analysis with holding time exceedences were compared to other routine monitoring results. Historically, the samples compare well with previous submissions analysed within the holding times. Future submissions will be analysed within the appropriate holding times for Mercury and Alkalinity as long as the samples are received with sufficient time to do the analysis. For the Nitrate analysis, with the very short holding time of 48 hours, these samples will not be able to reach a lab within the holding time due to the remote nature of the site. The recommended holding time for these analyses is usually based on studies done with chemically active samples (such as waste waters or discharge samples), which chemically change over short periods of time. While there is no way to tell exactly how these samples are changing over time (without doing a detailed study that incorporates time studies), in general clean water samples from groundwater or surface water sources usually don't have a large amount of chemical activity.

Hopefully, this letter has summarized and addressed the concerns that have been raised. Most of the issue relates to communication. Increased effort in ensuring that there is excellent communication between our staff and the client, as well as thorough communication internally, helps to yield a successful project.

Thank you for bringing this matter to our attention as it helps us to assess our operation and continuously adjust and improve. Please feel free to contact either of the undersigned if you would like to discuss the matter further.

Sincerely,

Joyce Chow, B. Sc.
Branch Manager

Heather Ross-Easton, B.Sc.
Client Services Representative

cc: Cheryl Mackintosh, Azimuth Consulting Group Inc.
Patrick Allard, Azimuth Consulting Group Inc.
Randy Baker, Azimuth Consulting Group Inc.