



February 19, 2004

Mr. Hugh Wilson
Miramar Hope Bay Ltd.,
300-889 Harbourside Drive
North Vancouver, B.C.
V7P 3S1

and to: **Distribution List**

Dear Mr. Wilson:

Re: Procedural direction and decision to set Final Hearing dates

The Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB or Board) has set the Final Hearing dates for the Doris North Gold Project, from June 13-18, 2004 in the communities of Cambridge Bay, Kugluktuk, Gjoa Haven and Taloyoak. These dates were previously sent to all parties on February 12, 2004 with a note that further instruction would follow.

The schedule for the Hearings will be as follows:

Cambridge Bay (technical sessions): June 13-15
Gjoa Haven: June 16
Taloyoak: June 17
Kugluktuk: June 18

The initial letter referenced concerns of parties and led the Board to conclude that further information from the proponent would be required, including further meetings between parties and staff in preparation for the Hearings. **Please note that failure to meet the instructions that follow may delay the June hearing and/or result in a negative recommendation to the Minister at the end of the Hearings.**

First, the Board notes the information concerns expressed by several parties and agrees with many of them. The Board notes several different information items are outstanding and *must be addressed before* the Final Hearings. These issues include, baseline data, Doris Lake Outflow, Roberts Bay Jetty, geomorphology, infrastructure, water management including talik assessment and tailings management, acid rock drainage, abandonment and reclamation, explosives

management, anticipated life of the project, cumulative effects assessment, climate change, alternatives, human health effects, monitoring and social impact assessment.

Another concern is the Proponent's failure to fully meet NIRB's list of 10 minimum EIS requirements, as indicated in a letter sent on October 15, 2002. Several items on the list were not fully addressed. For instance the requirements, as restated in NIRB's Prehearing decision, required a full discussion of alternatives. This included alternatives for tailings disposal and also the option of a larger and fully operating mine. Another requirement was the assessment of cumulative effects within the Hope Bay Belt including marine and road traffic and changes to those patterns. The discussion of these items in the Final EIS (FEIS) is currently inadequate and more information is necessary to allow the Board to properly assess this project proposal.

As a third item, the Board recommends that the Proponent meet with parties and hold a technical session to discuss these outstanding issues. The date for this meeting should be approximately March 29, 2004 and NIRB staff will be contacting you shortly to arrange a suitable meeting place and final date for all parties. Please note, the Proponent *must* provide information to those parties requesting it in advance of the meeting by March 15, 2004. The Proponent should also be prepared to bring updated information to the meeting as listed in the issues deficiencies in this letter, in order to allow a full discussion of deficiencies. Please also note, while NIRB staff will attend and facilitate the meetings, they will not make binding decisions for the Board, whose final decision it is to accept or reject that or any other information.

Finally, and as a result of this letter, the Board requires supplemental information to be filed by the Proponent on April 30, 2004. The Board also requests final hearing submissions (in English) related to the supplementary report and Final EIS by May 28, 2004, with translations due June 4, 2004. Assuming the requirements as listed in this letter are met, the Hearings will then proceed as scheduled above.

Please contact Ms. Zainab Moghal at zmoghal@nirb.nunavut.ca or the undersigned if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Briscoe
Executive Director

cc: Minister Mitchell
Board