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NIRB#01WR005

January 26, 2001

Nunavut Impact Review Board  
P.O. Box 2379  
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**ATTENTION: Gladys Joudrey, Environmental Assessment Officer**

**RE: WMC International - Water Licence Renewal - Meliadine project**

The Water Resources Division, Yellowknife, has reviewed the above noted licence renewal and supporting documentation, and has provided some additional comments on your attached screening comment form, as well as in this letter.

Given that the project has recently been screened, and no changes are being made, it is recommended that the original screening report be adopted, or modified if required to address the renewal. Our comments focus on the licence terms and conditions. The only comments of note, which may not be an issue, as I was not involved earlier, is whether the "municipal" aspects of the project have been adequately addressed, given that the camp has a capacity for over 50 people. For example, there do not appear to be any sampling requirements. However, if the Inspector has been involved in the past, then perhaps this is unnecessary.

1. With respect to the Jan. 26 letter from A. Sexton to the Municipality of Rankin Inlet , and four options for waste disposal, (into their landfill): it is stated that authorization to use the dump in 2001 is pending. However, the Rankin Inlet licence expired in summer 1999, and there has been no renewal submitted to our knowledge. Without a valid licence, should the Inspector not be required to approve of this method/request, as well as location of waste disposal facilities?
2. Were the impacts previously assessed re the amounts of water specified as being needed for camp and drilling? Similarly, a couple of questions were raised by staff, re disposal of the land-based drill cuttings to sumps. Given that the water is allowed to drain away from the sumps, it seems important to know the specific composition of the drilling fluids (ie % of CaCl, composition of EZ mud etc. (or are these already known and on file? ), in order to evaluate whether this is an appropriate disposal method. It is also important to consider where and into what type of material the water drains into (eg . Till, marine clays, bedrock fissures). Given also that drilling has taken place between 1995-2000, an

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3. evaluation of sumps created during this period and of the surrounding terrain (eg vegetation, ground subsidence/heave etc) would be valuable to evaluate re whether current sump guidelines are effective.

We hope that these comments are helpful. I gather that this is a well managed project, and these comments may not be of concern to those familiar with it. If there are any questions or comments regarding the above, please contact me at (867) 669-2656.

Sincerely,



Greg Cook  
Environmental Assessment Coordinator  
Water Resources Division

cc. Nunavut District