



Water Resources Division
Resource Management Directorate
Nunavut Regional Office
P.O. Box 100
Iqaluit, NU, X0A 0H0

Your file - Votre référence

Our file - Notre référence
GCDocs# Final

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Karen D. Costello P. Geo, FGC
Executive Director
NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines
#4, 5120 49th Street
Yellowknife NT X1A 1P8
E-mail: karen.costello@miningnorth.com

Re: Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada's (CIRNAC) follow up to the May 14, 2025 RECLAIM Update industry engagement session in Yellowknife and to the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines' (Chamber) correspondence of April 25, 2025.

Dear Karen,

Thank you for the Chamber's letter dated April 25, 2025 relating the RECLAIM V8 Working Group's ongoing update of the RECLAIM tool. In it you raise a number of points that I will speak to individually while also expanding on our recent talks, with an eye to providing more information and certainty to industry on the requests for more information, a pathway to discuss policy and a proposed schedule in light of Industry's requests for additional engagement and a workshop.

April 25, 2025 Letter from the Chamber to CIRNAC

I held off responding to your April 25, 2025 correspondence because the Government and citizens of Canada were engaged in a national election process, resulting in the application of the Caretaker Convention which imposes limits on what civil servants may communicate with respect to priorities, policy and projects.

While under the Caretaker Convention, the Working Group continued working to compile industry comments internally to respond to Industry's comments on RECLAIM V8 for a future response. That said, I committed in Yellowknife to providing a written response to the Chamber and to Industry more broadly, with our plans to move forward with engagement on RECLAIM V8.

I am sure you agree that this is an interesting, even exciting time to be working in the North with new opportunities for advancement and our continued cooperative efforts to refine and enhance the updated version of the RECLAIM V8 estimating tool.



With respect to the two recent engagement sessions, the first during the Nunavut Mining Symposium and the more recent presentations in Yellowknife on May 14, 2025. I provide my significant takeaways from the two recent engagements below.

- The Government of Northwest Territories (GNWT) provided a further breakdown on what the Working Group has heard to date,
- The suggestions related to policy questions and those not directly related to the tool were further grouped into headings and topics,
- Information was provided on a further pathway, outside, but concurrent to the RECLAIM V8 update, for the Chamber and Industry to engage with on discussions related to a review of policy,
- Both CIRNAC and the GNWT reaffirmed their openness to individual discussions on the tool, how it has been applied and what specific operations might be looking for in the way of future applications of the tool,
- A request was received for further discussion on Progressive Reclamation including; the validation of work, assessment, process/pathway for inclusion in the Licensing process, Water Board criteria for consideration and finally, as a topic for consideration in the broader envelope of policy talks to be discussed outside this process,
- The Chamber requested workshops on RECLAIM V8 and a workshop / technical meeting on Unit Rates for the estimators. Dates are not yet finalized, but the Working Group is open to making the most of our time and effort to ensure a transparent process without significant delay,
- Both CIRNAC and GNWT were asked about the idea of a cross jurisdictional review. An initial scan has been compiled. While not comprehensive, it may provide a draft to facilitate your own review, and
- A recurring theme in both the NWT sessions revealed that the Nunavut Water Board and NWT Land and Water Boards each have their own set policies and guidelines to follow when setting a security quantum. It is not up to Government to impose or dictate to these institutions, but rather to provide input on a robust tool and support throughout their process.

The Working Group found the whole experience informative and the turnout by non-government organizations, citizens, and industry to be encouraging. This reflects greatly on the leadership and level of engagement that is occurring between the GNWT and their partners in co-management and by any measure added to the successes already achieved during the Nunavut Mining Symposium.

Reclamation Policy Questions

Throughout the RECLAIM engagement to date, a number of policy questions have been raised. These complement reclamation, liability and security related policy work already initiated within the Department. While the RECLAIM model is a tool used by CIRNAC and others to estimate liability, it necessarily must be applied in the context of a reclamation policy to result in a security estimate.



As I noted above, CIRNAC and the Working Group have reviewed what has been provided to date by industry on policy-related questions. As shared at the May 14, 2025 meeting, the Working Group has grouped the 58 policy related questions into the following themes:

• Policy Change	• Unit rates
• Additional Studies	• Traditional Knowledge
• Timelines	• Crown legal Obligation
• O&G update	• Devolution
• Clarification requests	• Extending Closure Planning (LTM)
• Discount discussion	• Adoption of Owners Rep costs

There are a number of these topics that will undoubtedly evolve into broader topics, each with its own specific questions. These requests will be reviewed and will be given a line of inquiry which will likely feed into a broader discussion on the policy suite, in support of legislative requirements. The Working Group will continue the work on the RECLAIM V8 with the policy work advancing in parallel. As indicated at the May 14, 2025 meetings, CIRNAC has been considering how to address the policy questions that have been raised as part of this RECLAIM V8 update.

Updates to RECLAIM V8

The RECLAIM updates are focused on creating a more robust, flexible and responsive tool. The Working Group has heard and received a number of comments on the tool and the implementation schedule. To be clear, none of the parties on the Working Group have a set agenda for implementation; it is the expectation that the tool will be implemented at the discretion of each jurisdiction once updating is complete.

The Working Group will include information within the manual on each element of the tool, giving guidance on applicability in circumstances that are based on the jurisdictions' own preferences and guidelines.

Workshop / Technical Meeting

With respect to timing and the Chamber's request to include workshops into the timeline, the Working Group noted that the area that has seen the most feedback is that of the Unit Rates, how they are cited, and their source.

Based on this feedback, the Working Group supports the Chamber's request to include a workshop / technical meeting to ensure the RECLAIM V8 is robust and accurate for future implementation.

During the January 2025 kick off meeting it was stated that both industry and the various NGO's like the opportunity to hear what was being said in the room and to build off themes as they were discussed. The Working Group took that to heart and over the last 5 months has integrated two sessions, one at the Nunavut Mining Symposium and one most recently in May in Yellowknife, to provide platforms for industry and NGOs to build upon comments



and to give the opportunity for the dynamic creative flow of information to occur. The Working Group has also increased the commenting period to ensure that everyone has the ability to provide information on RECLAIM V8.

The initial proposed date was July 2025. We have heard that this date would be difficult for industry representatives to accommodate. Therefore, following discussion at the May 2025 face to face meetings, the Working Group proposes to hold the workshop / technical meeting between the dates of August 11 and September 30, 2025.

I trust that, in concurrence with your letter from the on April 25, 2025, this timeframe will provide for greater participation. If the Chamber would like to canvass their membership, the Working Group can solicit feedback from additional parties on the timing that would result in maximum participation.

Proposed topics:

The Working Group continues to be open and transparent in our operations and agrees that a planned workshop / technical meeting will be beneficial. While open for broader discussion, the Working Group acknowledges that the area that has seen the most feedback is that of the Unit Rates, particularly how they are cited and their source.

Given that RECLAIM V8 has been open for review since January, and further information was provided in April 2025 on how these rates were determined including Hyper-links and locations of the posted results were provided to the best of ability by the Working Group. While the actual Unit Rate calculation is not provided in all cases (in some cases related to proprietary information), sufficient information was provided to reconstruct individual unit rates for verification.

If any member of industry would like to share their internal numbers and how they have calculated them, including their assumptions, the Working Group would be amenable to reviewing them in the public format a workshop provides for comparison purposes.

This workshop would also facilitate other conversations to occur on some of the specific items in RECLAIM V8 that were identified as requiring further clarification while allowing the estimators sufficient time to share opinions and other non-proprietary information with their peers.

Again, understanding that there is so much regional variability that no one set of rates will be able to provide guidance in all cases. RECLAIM has historically been the starting point of the conversation with proponents to jointly develop an estimate of accurate liability. This is not expected to change with the recent update.

As always, our door remains open to productive consultation and new or innovative ideas from Industry and other stakeholders in the shaping of the tool going forward.

If there are any questions or concerns, please contact me at (867) 975-4550 or Andrew.Keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca.



Sincerely,

Andrew Keim

Andrew Keim
Manager
Water Resources, Nunavut Regional Office
Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada
Andrew.Keim@rcaanc-cirnac.gc.ca

CC.

Bill Pain, Environmental Scientist, GNWT