



**VISIT TO GUYANA
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REPORT BY

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ABSTRACT

As part of the Policy and Regulation component of GENCAPD project, Guyana Geology and Mines Commission (GGMC) and Canada Center for Mineral and Energy Technology (CANMET) organized a visit to Guyana by Mr. David Latoski, Chief Mining Inspector of the Mineral Resources Directorate, Northern Affairs Programs, and Yukon Region of Canada, from March 6 to 13, 2000.

Planned as a follow-up to the tour of Yukon alluvial mining operations and Mining Regulatory Agencies by Guyanese officials in July 1999, the goal of this visit was to allow the Canadian Inspector to gain first-hand experience of the scale and conditions under which Guyanese mines operate and the regulatory functioning of GGMC. This will facilitate the design of a more appropriate program for another visit to the Yukon and to other Canadian Agencies by Guyanese Officials scheduled for July 2000.

Mr. Latoski's main contact was with GGMC, where he met with Brian Sucre (Commissioner), William Woolford (Deputy Commissioner), Divisional Managers James Mingo (Mines), Karen Livan (Environment), Kampta Persaud (Geological Services), Rosemary Benjamin Noble (Legal) and Newell Dennison (Petroleum) and staff from Mines, Environmental and Geological Services Divisions. Mr. Latoski also met with Prime Minister, Samuel Hinds and officials from Guyana Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Guyana Gold & Diamond Miners' Association (GGDMA), and Amerindian Peoples Association (APA).

On a comprehensive tour of Guyanese mining operations, Mr. Latoski visited sand pits at Soesdyke, East Montgomery bauxite mine at Linden, quarries in Essequibo, the large-scale OMAI gold mine, and land dredging gold mining operations at Mahdia and, Konawaruk. The field tour concluded with sightseeing at the world-renowned Kaieteur Falls and Baganara Resort on the lower Essequibo River.

During the wrap-up session at GGMC, Mr. Latoski and officials from Mines, Environmental Divisions and Geological Services Divisions compared mining operations in Guyana to those in the Yukon. Mr. Latoski provided useful advice and insights on regulation of Mines, consensus building among stakeholders, the importance of on-going training of Regulators, and how environmental and mining practices and requirements are integrated in the Yukon.

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1.0 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of Mr. Latoski's trip were:

To have a first hand look at how monitoring and inspection are done in the local mining industry. At the same time observe the implementation of Mining Regulations.

- i. To have a first hand look at mining and environmental management practices in Guyana.
- ii. Give comments and recommendations to GGMC based on his observations.
- iii. Design a program for attachments of GGMC Inspectorate and Environmental Division staff to the Yukon Monitoring Agency in Canada.

Mr. David Latoski is the Chief Mining Inspector of Mineral Resources Directorate in the Yukon Region of Canada. The Mineral Resources Directorate is part of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) in Canada's North. DIAND is responsible for supporting northern political development of the North's natural resources, protecting and rehabilitating the northern environment and implementing key elements of land claim agreements. DIAND through its Mineral Resource Directorate is responsible for land management of mineral claims administered by the federal government in the Yukon Territory, pursuant to the Yukon Quartz Mining Act, Yukon Placer Act and pursuant Regulations.

2.0 SCOPE

To achieve these objectives, the scope of the visit entailed Mr. Latoski seeing the different types of mining operations currently existing in Guyana and meeting with the relevant personnel involved in operating, monitoring and regulating the industry in Guyana. They included the Minister with responsibility for Mining, the Honorable Prime Minister Mr. Samuel Hinds, Environmental Protection Agency Officials, Guyana Gold and Diamond Miners Association Officials, mine operators and finally GGMC Officials.

At request of the Honorable Prime Minister, Mr. Latoski also met one of the local indigenous peoples organization, the Amerindian Peoples Association (APA).

3.0 COMPLETED ITINERARY

| DATE | ACTIVITY |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Saturday 4 th March | * Arrive in Guyana |
| Sunday 5 th March | * Rest |
| Monday 6 th March | * Courtesy call to Prime Minister (?), Mr. S. Hinds, Meeting with GGMC Staff from Mines, Environmental and Geological Divisions and gave presentation (briefing session) on activities of DIAND |
| | * Courtesy call to Commissioner & Deputy Commissioner |
| | * Courtesy call to EPA Director, Mr. Per Bertilsson |
| Tuesday 7 th March | * Visit to two (2) Loam Pit Operations. |
| | * Visit to two (2) Sand Pit Operations. |
| | * Visit Linmine Operations |
| Wednesday 8 th March | * Visit to Teperu/Itabu Quarry-M.G.P.L.in the Mazaruni River |
| | * Visit to Big Hope Quarry in the Mazaruni River |
| | * Visit to St. Mary's Quarry in the Essequibo River |
| | * Visit to Monkey Jump Quarry in the Essequibo River |
| | * Visit to Baganara Resort |
| Thursday 9 th March | * Visit to Kaieteur Falls |
| | * Visit to Omai Gold Mines Limited Mine Sites |
| | * Visit to Mahdia - Viewing small-scale operations in White Hole and St. Elizabeth |
| Friday 10 th March | * Meeting with GGDMA Officials. |
| | * Debriefing session with GGMC Technical Staff and presentation to Mr. Latoski. |
| | * Debriefing session with GGMC Management Staff. |
| | * Debriefing session with Commissioner and Deputy Commissioner |
| Monday 13 th March | * Meeting with APA Officials. |
| | * Depart for Canada |

During the three (3) days of field visits, Mr. Latoski was accompanied by Manager (ag), Mines Division Mr. J. Mingo, Senior Mineral Processing Engineer II, Mrs. D. Mc Donald and Mining Technician, Mr. T. Hurry from the Mines Division. Personnel from the Geological Services and Environmental Divisions participated in these field trips. Mr. Latoski had a similar kind of interaction during the briefing session, and the debriefing session with GGMC Technical Staff. As such Mr. Latoski interacted with Geological Technicians, Mining Technicians, Environmental Officer, Mining Engineers and Mineral Processing Engineers during his visit.

During his debriefing session with GGMC management staff, in addition to the Managers of the Mines, Environmental and Geological Services Divisions, the Commission's Legal Adviser and Manager of the Petroleum Division were also present.

Mr. Latoski's report entitled "A Yukon Perspective of Capacity Building in Environmental Management of the Mineral Sector" is presented at Appendix A to complement the actual report. Also, Appendix B presents some photographs taken during the visit.

4.0 OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 General Observations

Mr. Latoski made the following observations after visiting the various mining operations.

1. Most operations could improve in all phases of their activities - pre production, production and postproduction.
2. There was room for improvement in health and safety awareness with respect to both the workers and the public.
3. There was also need for environmental management practices to be taken on board from the planning stages in mining, at all levels of small scale, medium scale and large scale.

4.2 Sand and Loam Pit Operations

Mr. Latoski visited the following:

- X Kalicharan's Sand Pit
- X Regional Democratic Council's Loam Pit
- X Ramsaroop's Loam Pit
- X Raghoo's Sand Pit

He observed at all the sites that there was no stock piling of topsoil towards reclamation and recommended that this should be put in place. He also observed the mining of steep faces at these operations. He opined that not much could be done with the existing sand pits and recommended that a best practice management system be developed and put in place for the sand pits, and the loam pits.

4.3 Linmine Operations

At Linmine the East Montgomery Mine was visited. The following were observed;

- X Poor de-watering of the mine pit.
- X No proper reclamation in place
- X Poor health and safety practice - a lot of dust, electrical cables lying around the mine floor.

4.4 Stone Quarries

Mr. Latoski visited four (4) quarries and from his observations recommended the following:

- X Topsoil is saved for reclamation work after quarry operations cease.
- X Benching was required for some of the steep rock faces observed.
- X A standard procedure for development of stone quarries should be put in place.
- X Proper facilities for the storage of fuel and even waste oil should be put in place.
- X Where the dust problem was severe and affects visibility, buggy lights should be placed on all the vehicles.

- X Health and safety practices need to be enforced.

4.5 OMAI Gold Mines Limited

As a result of time constraints, a very short visit was made to Omai Gold Mines Limited Mine Site. Mr. Latoski met with the General Manager, Mr. R. Gourde, and other Omai Officials who gave a brief overview on operations.

There was a brief tour of Mine Operations, #2 Tailings pond, the Wenot and Fennels Pits, and the number 2 milling plant operations.

4.6 Small Scale Alluvial Mining – Mahdia

Here operations in White Hole and St. Elizabeth were viewed, as well some operators in the MAZDA concession area. While poor mining practice was observed on some operations, attempts by a few operators to put better controls in place were observed.

- X There was no storage of top soil for reclamation purposes. The benefits of this have to be taught to miners.
- X Steep mining faces were observed, however, some operators were making attempts to use benching methods.
- X Inadequate de-bushing - at some locations there were large tree trunks still in place where miners were working, and there was the great risk of these falling and causing fatal injuries;
- X No stripping of overburden observed in many instances. This is another area where miners need to be educated.

It was recommend here:

1. Best management practice is put in place that would be implemented at the beginning of mining operations.
2. For water storage, efforts are made to channel water to low lying areas rather than building dams and risk breaches.
3. Health and safety practices should be taught to miners.

4.7 Notable Comparisons Between Yukon and GGMC

| YUKON AGENCY | GGMC |
|--|---|
| Monitoring: The requirement is that all licenced Operations be subjected to Administrative inspection twice per year. | Operators are monitored as much as possible, areas with high prevalence of mining activity are subject to more frequent monitoring. |
| Investigative inspections are carried | Operations with mining |

out if problems arise.

licenses are monitored once per quarter.

Emphasis is to monitor compliance with mining permit/license.

Emphasis is to monitor production. Health and Safety aspects and general compliance with Local Mining Regulations also monitored.

Permitting Process All operations regardless of size are licenced and issued with mining permits. Each license is site specific.

Not all operations are licensed. Licenses are not site specific. The emphasis is to keep all terms within the mining laws.

Law There are two (2) Acts and Regulations, The Placer Mining Act and Hard Rock Mining Act.

One Mining Act, which was last revised in 1989. The old Regulations are still in use.

Personnel The emphasis is field experience when recruiting inspectors. They are trained on the job in each area of job activity, including engineering, enforcement, land reclamation and water quality assessment.

Qualifications count. Limited organized on the job training. Training mainly through courses, seminars, from external agencies.

The management practices and/ in house training programs of the Yukon Monitoring Agency would be of great interest to GGMC management. In Yukon the one (1) inspector approach would be used in the industry, while in Guyana a GGMC Official, as EPA Official and Health and Safety Official from the Ministry of Labour, can visit a mine operator.

How the Mineral Resources Directorate organizes itself to produce one (1) inspector to comprehensively monitor and inspect all the areas covered in the licence/permit of a mine operator, in the Yukon, would be of great interest to GGMC.

The technical assistance strategy to mine operators by the agency is also of note. DIAND inspectors suggest to miners' techniques they can apply to deal with any problem. This avoids a conflict of interest, or the possibility of being sighted as the consultant in any later litigation procedures. Technical assistance is also facilitated through seminars and workshops designed for the mine operators and sponsored by DIAND.

5.0 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that Mr. Latoski's visit to Guyana was a success. He was able to complete all activities within the objectives of this visit and compare observed practices in Guyana with practices in the Yukon towards finalizing a program for GGMC's field officers from the Mines and Environmental Divisions. It is expected that with the knowledge and insights gained, Mr. Latoski will be able to design an attachment program for GGMC staff that will optimally provide exposure in aspects of Mining and Environmental Management and Practices; organization, training and deployment of staff and resources; multiple land use issues; and the overall application and delivery of Mines Regulation, inspection and monitoring.

APPENDIX A

MR. LATOSKI'S REPORT:

***A YUKON PERSPECTIVE OF CAPACITY BUILDING IN
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT OF THE MINERALS SECTOR***

APPENDIX B
PHOTOGRAPHS