

2005 Mines Ministers' Conference

Action Plan 2005

Held in St. Andrews, New Brunswick, the 2005 Mines Ministers' Conference (MMC) featured strong cooperation amongst federal, provincial and territorial governments in effectively addressing issues of common concern. This success was achieved, in part, through the introduction of a theme, a workshop, and a news release, all of which helped provide focus to the conference agenda. The theme chosen for the 2005 MMC was *The Viability of Mining Communities*.

The results of the conference proved to be positive as mines ministers agreed to work together to identify and address various issues, including those affecting mining communities. Ministers thought the theme was very useful and congratulated the committee on a well-organized conference.

During the open session, industry and stakeholder representatives presented their views on numerous subjects of interest, such as:

- the importance of the contribution of mining in all regions of Canada;
- replenishing base-metal reserves in Canada;
- funding for geoscience initiatives;
- stimulating deep drilling;
- extending the Investment Tax Credit for Exploration;
- modernizing the definition of Canadian Exploration Expenses and Canadian Development Expenses;
- creating a single securities regulator;
- improving technologies to reduce emissions;
- addressing human resource challenges;
- improving Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry; and
- improving energy efficiency.

The Status Report on the Action Plan for the 2004 conference included recommendations in the following areas:

- fiscal and taxation policy;
- orphaned and abandoned mine sites;
- cooperative geological mapping strategies;

- Aboriginal issues;
- financial surety; and
- regulatory process.

In the closed session, these topics were addressed and ministers agreed upon the following action items:

Fiscal and Taxation Policy

Provincial and territorial ministers considered the recommendations of the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Mineral Industry (IGWG) Sub-Committee on Taxation Issues. Ministers mandated the Sub-Committee to analyze the industry's recommendations for tax measures to stimulate exploration and enhance investment in emission-reducing technology. The Sub-Committee is to table a report at the 2006 Mines Ministers' Conference.

Orphaned and Abandoned Mine-Site Rehabilitation

Ministers agreed to encourage respective federal/provincial/ territorial audit and finance officials to participate in the November workshop.

Ministers endorsed the ongoing work of the National Orphaned/ Abandoned Mines Initiative (NOAMI), in particular the development of:

- a portal site for a national inventory of inactive mine sites, and
- recommendations for the development of policies/legislation with respect to orphaned/abandoned mine-site remediation.

Ministers agreed to continue financial support for the work of NOAMI.























Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies

Ministers agreed to re-affirm their support for the *Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies Across Canada* as an initiative that will benefit all regions of Canada and help to improve Canada's position in an increasingly competitive global economy.

Ministers also agreed to continue to seek the necessary funding to make the Cooperative Geological Mapping Strategies a reality.

Aboriginal Participation in the Mineral Industry

Ministers agreed that the Sub-Committee on Aboriginal Participation in the Mineral Industry continue to focus on communicating and sharing information through its national network and working with national/industry organizations and government agencies.

Ministers agreed that the Sub-Committee should highlight and use successful projects/best practices on Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry as national models of success.

Ministers endorsed the recommendation that the Sub-Committee identify and develop strategies to address common barriers and gaps (real and artificial) to Aboriginal participation in the mineral industry.

Ministers agreed that the Sub-Committee participate in the development of a National Aboriginal Human Resources in Mining Strategy with the Mining Industry Human Resources Council (formerly known as the Mining Industry Training and Adjustment Council - Canada).

Financial Surety

Ministers supported the Directors of Mines Committee's intentions to pursue financial surety issues in more detail as part of the overall review of reclamation securities and, where warranted, make appropriate recommendations to ministers at the 2006 Mines Ministers' Conference. This and the continued efforts of the Directors of Mines Committee will serve as a means to facilitate future harmonization of legislation where it is deemed appropriate to do so.

Regulatory Process

Ministers endorsed the recommendation that the Intergovernmental Working Group on the Mineral Industry (IGWG) report progress on these matters to ministers at their 2006 conference.

IGWG members are to identify any regulatory issue of interest to the mining sector and to share information with all jurisdictions to better understand the significance and consequences of these initiatives.

Implementation of the National Diamond Strategy

Provincial and territorial ministers reported their decision to invite the federal government to participate in the implementation of the National Diamond Strategy by joining the Multi-Stakeholder Coordinating Body for that purpose.

NEW INITIATIVES

In addition to the action items based on the recommendations from 2004, ministers agreed upon the following new initiatives:

Mineral Statistics

Ministers heard the importance of mineral statistics in providing the basis for informed policy and decision-making. Provinces and territories were encouraged to continue collaboration with the federal government through memoranda of understanding on the collection and use of mineral statistics.

Ministers agreed that the Federal-Provincial-Territorial Committee on Mineral Statistics should report on its activities at future meetings.

Viability of Mining Communities

Mines Ministers heard an urgent request to address mining communities across Canada whose viability is being threatened by such factors as depleting reserves and global competitiveness. Deep drilling incentives, research and development in deep mining and processing technologies, and continued excellence in geoscience were all identified as possible solutions to maintaining the viability of mining communities.

Ministers agreed to strike a working group and asked that this working group continue to pursue the theme, *The Viability of Mining Communities*, and report back on a regular basis.

NEXT YEAR'S MEETING IN WHITEHORSE, YUKON

Ministers accepted the invitation delivered by Minister Archie Lang to convene from August 27 to August 30, 2006, for the 63rd Mines Ministers' Conference.























