

Multiple failures to comply with Inspection Orders

Synopsis

Between August 15, 2017, and September 11, 2018, mine inspectors conducted several inspections on three mining operations owned by the same company in the same geographical area of British Columbia.

The inspections discovered the following non-compliances with the Health and Safety Reclamation Code for Mines in British Columbia. Inspectors issued orders for the following non-compliances where the mine failed to:

- Ensure equipment over 7000 kgs has a logbook and the logbook is maintained.
- Clean up spills and properly dispose of contaminated soil.
- Fail to provide Building Code drawings of buildings constructed on site.
- Fail to properly manage electrical cords.
- Fail to report a dangerous occurrence.
- Fail to provide safe work procedures.
- Fail to maintain training records.
- Fail to have procedures for the safe evacuation of the mine.
- Improper storage of potentially hazardous materials.
- Store controlled products without supplier labels.
- Fail to train workers in the handling and use of controlled products.
- Fail to provide wheel chocks on mobile equipment and use when necessary.
- Fail to equip all work areas and buildings with properly maintained firefighting equipment.
- Continuing operations in contravention of a suspension of work order.



FIGURE 1. Improper storage of fuel

Follow-up inspections and correspondence with the mining company confirmed the orders were not complied with. A suspension of work order was issued to the mining company in response to the lack of compliance with the orders to ensure worker safety and protection of the environment. The mining company continued operations in contravention of the suspension of work order.

As a result of continued and demonstrated non-compliance with orders issued to the mine including the failure to suspend mining operations, the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation (EMLI) initiated an investigation.

Findings

The investigation confirmed orders were not complied with and work was conducted after the suspension of work order was issued, putting workers at risk. A recommendation for an Administrative Penalty was submitted for consideration to a statutory decision maker (SDM).

Under a separate administrative action, EMLI put forth a recommendation to the Chief Gold Commissioner to suspend the Free Miner's Certificate¹ of the mining company.

Outcome

After reviewing the report, the SDM made findings in relation to contraventions brought forth in the report. The SDM rendered an Administrative Penalty. In addition to the monetary Penalty, the Chief Gold Commissioner suspended the mining company's Free Miners Certificate for two years.

¹ A Free Miners Certificate is issued under the Mineral Tenures Act (MTA). It allows individuals or corporations to enter mineral lands to explore for minerals or placer minerals, register a mineral title, register exploration and development work under the MTA, revise an expiry date for a mineral title, and/or register a bill of sale for a mineral title.