

GUIDANCE TO ACCOMPANY THE PRINCIPLES

8. SAFEGUARD THE HEALTH AND SAFETY OF WORKERS AND THE LOCAL POPULATION

Objective: To be proactive in implementing good practices for health and safety performance in all exploration activities and seek continual improvement.

Introduction

Health and safety are of immediate and personal concern to workers and local populations, as well as being a basic human right. As such, explorers should conduct their activities in ways that protect the health and safety of workers and the local population in the area of influence of their activities.

Policy and Management Process

In preparing instruments for the management of health and safety, explorers are advised to:

- a. Adopt and make publicly available policies and procedures for the management of health and safety that are based on established, proven programs;¹
- b. Apply relevant national regulations standards or home country or international good practice guidelines for health and safety management, whichever is the higher standard of performance;
- c. Adopt and implement a management structure with adequate resources, defined responsibility and accountability for health and safety performance at the corporate and project level; and
- d. Provide education, training, equipment and supplies to ensure a safe working environment and to deal with specific local health risks.

Risk Prevention

Sound health and safety programs are based on a full understanding of risks, mechanisms to avoid or manage such risks, and having such programs in place from the initiation of any exploration project. Explorers are therefore encouraged to:

- a. Assess existing and potential project related risks to the health and safety of employees and local people and develop plans and procedures to avoid, manage or mitigate these risks (see also Principle 4);
- b. Develop site- or project- specific checklists that emphasize the management of local risks and hazards;
- c. Provide health and safety information and training that is culturally and linguistically appropriate to the local population;

¹ Due diligence guidelines for Directors and Management of Junior Companies which can be found on-line at www.pdac.ca/e3plus under the 'Excellence in Health and Safety' e-toolkit.

- d. Adopt and make public policies and procedures for the transportation of persons, equipment and hazardous materials to and from exploration work sites and have in place provision for appropriate action should there be an accident involving persons or the release of hazardous material;
- e. Take reasonable steps to verify that drivers, aircraft pilots and boat operators employed or contracted to provide transportation to and from exploration work sites are appropriately qualified for the tasks they are expected to perform;
- f. Take reasonable steps to verify that contractors are able to meet the health and safety standards required and that vehicles, aircraft and boats used to access exploration work sites are properly equipped and maintained;
- g. Establish the capacity to deal with accidents and to deliver emergency medical assistance in the absence of delivery of similar programs by other agencies and co-ordinate the delivery of such assistance with the host community and, where possible, government or non-governmental organizations;
- h. Periodically test procedures to respond to emergencies; and,
- i. Review and, where necessary, revise policies and procedures in the light of experience gained from every test, incident, or accident.

Monitoring and Reporting

Explorers are advised to implement procedures for monitoring and reporting on health and safety performance (see also Principle 2) in order to inform management, government, local communities, shareholders and other interested parties.² In doing so, explorers should promptly report any accident or health incident to the local community and appropriate authorities and assist with any rescue, containment or preventative measures that are visibly required, or required by the authorities, or otherwise deemed essential to remedy the incident and prevent its recurrence. Explorers should also consider the need to:

- a. Monitor, investigate and report on accidents and incidents in a manner that encourages continuous learning and improvement of health and safety performance; and
- b. Prepare periodic reports on health and safety performance and make such reports available to all interested parties.

² The Global Reporting Initiative has developed a reporting template for mining, which unfortunately is unsuitable for exploration projects. It is the intention of PDAC to sponsor development of a template specifically for exploration.