



NEWS RELEASE

Chamber of Mines Urges the New NWT Government to Make Support of Mineral Industry a Top Priority

(Yellowknife, NT – December 15, 2015) The northern minerals industry is appealing to newly elected Members of the NWT Legislative Assembly (MLAs) to build a strong economic agenda that would make improving the investment climate for the minerals industry a top priority.

“We need our new government to take appropriate steps to protect our minerals industry,” said Gary Vivian, President of the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines. “And it’s really worth protecting. Our mines have made exceptional inroads in the past 20 years, through successful training and employment, and through huge spending with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal businesses. Today, we have thousands of people looking to the guidance of the new Legislative Assembly to protect their jobs and their businesses.”

In good years, the mining industry has contributed as much as 50% of the NWT’s Gross Domestic Product; currently it provides 40%. “The unexpected closures this year of the Cantung and Snap Lake mines is a huge blow to our economy,” said Vivian. “Our business community is seeing job losses and decreased business spending while both our public and Aboriginal governments are seeing reduced revenues.” The NWT has also witnessed a 7-year decline in mineral exploration investment, which has affected exploration support businesses. “The NWT lost about \$1 billion in investment opportunity compared to Yukon and Nunavut,” says Vivian, “and we need to see some action to recover exploration investment to protect future mining.”

To assist Members of the Legislative Assembly as they develop priorities for the new 18th Legislative Assembly, the Chamber has provided each MLA with a [Guide](#) to “Building Future Success”, which outlines the benefits of the industry, describes the market challenges we face and explains the northern challenges to costs and uncertainty that we must overcome. Priority actions include:

- Investing in infrastructure to level the playing field with southern Canada
- Decreasing regulatory costs by saying no to Ottawa’s cost recovery proposal
- Addressing land access uncertainty by settling remaining land claims, advancing land use planning, and limiting the creation of unnecessary new protected areas
- Reducing the high northern cost of living and its effects to labour and service costs
- Strengthening our northern workforce through education and training

“It’s time the NWT Government create a new Department of Mineral & Petroleum Resources, with its own Minister, that is devoted to protecting and growing an industry that is orders of magnitude larger in size and benefits than other economic activities,” said Mr. Vivian. “We need that kind of attention.”

Click here to download the [Guide](#). For more information on the NWT and Nunavut mining industries, please visit the website at www.miningnorth.com or contact Tom Hoefer, Executive Director at Tel:867-873-5281 or email: executivedirector@miningnorth.com.