



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

Government Action Plan to Improve Northern Regulatory Regimes

Yellowknife, Northwest Territories, May 3, 2010.

The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, the **Honourable Chuck Strahl**, today announced an “Action Plan” to improve northern regulatory regimes to ensure that they are more effective, predictable and provide greater certainty to industry, Northerners and all Canadians.

Potential investors in northern resource projects have faced complex and overlapping regulatory processes that are unpredictable, costly and time consuming” said Minister Strahl. This has become a barrier to economic investment in the North and economic growth for Canada. “Our government is committed to fixing these regulatory processes in the North today to secure increased economic potential for Northerners and Aboriginal Peoples.”

Changes to the regulatory system will be made in consultation with the North’s leaders to determine how best to modernize the legislation while, at the same time, respecting the comprehensive land claims agreements.

The Minister has appointed a Chief Federal Negotiator, **John Pollard**, a former Minister of Finance of the GNWT, to lead consultations and negotiations on how the Land and Water Boards will be restructured, as part of the work to amend the *Mackenzie Valley Resource Management Act*, *Northwest Territories Waters Act* and *Territorial Lands Act*, with the aim to simplify the process for issuing permits and licenses.

The Chamber of Mines has welcomed the Minister’s announcement of the Action Plan. “*It is encouraging to see that the Federal Government has recognized that there are problems and difficulties with the current system and that investment in the NWT is threatened*” said **John F. Kearney, President of the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines**. “*However the Action Plan does not provide any details or timelines and we do not yet know what amendments to the Act, or what changes to the boards, will be proposed or when the amendments will be implemented.*”

“*Today’s announcement does not itself represent any immediate improvement that will help mineral exploration. The Action Plan is a step in the right direction and, if the appropriate changes are implemented, this could eventually lead to renewed investment in resource development in the North. To get to that result will need the co-operation and commitment of all stakeholders. The mineral industry is ready to work together with the Aboriginal peoples and Government to help secure economic prosperity for the North*” added **John Kearney**.

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