

July 22, 1997

Semi-Annual Report on Certified Assayers Program

The Assayers Certification Program is authorized in the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Act for the purposes of encouraging assayers to meet the high standards required for assaying the various products common to the mineral industry. These standards are maintained through rigorous examinations in both theoretical and practical aspects of assaying. The examinations are presently conducted as part of a BCIT industry-funded training course. The program is administered by a Board of Examiners appointed by the Minister. Mr. Manzur Chaudhry, the Board Chair, represented the Ministry until March 31st, 1997 when he retired. He has agreed to continue to act as Chair until the October 31st when new appointments to the Board are scheduled. Ray Lett of the Geological Survey Branch manages the Program on behalf of the Ministry.

A meeting was held on June 20th, 1997, with representatives of the Ministry, Vancouver Stock Exchange, British Columbia Securities Commission, British Columbia Institute of Technology, Commercial Assay Laboratories and the Board of Examiners to discuss ideas for streamlining administration, encouraging greater participation by certified assayers and laboratories in the Program and for sharing the costs of the Program.

Two options discussed were developing an industry-government partnership or transferring the Program to British Columbia Institute of Technology.

Recommendations from the Board following the meeting are that the Ministry continue administering the Program and that an industry-government partnership be formed to share administration costs. These costs, estimated to be \$16,000 annually, would include Examination Board Chair fees for arranging examinations, examination materials and Board member travel. A Board meeting is planned for early August to identify potential stakeholders for this partnership.

Of note, those present at the meeting agreed that the Assayers Certification Program was very important for the maintaining international credibility of commercial assaying and mineral analysis in British Columbia. While the Standards Council of Canada mineral analysis laboratory accreditation program could duplicate some Program functions, accreditation in this program is voluntary and does not test the ability of individual assayers.

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