

## MINUTES

**Meeting of a BC Assayers Certification Program Board of Advisors Meeting  
held at the  
Ministry of Energy and Mines, Mines Branch office  
Room 300, 865 Hornby Street, Vancouver, B.C.  
on  
October 15<sup>th</sup>, 1999**

***Present:***

Mr. Manzur (Mac) Chaudhry	B.C. Energy & Mines, Victoria
Mr. Rob Edmunds	B.C. Institute of Technology, Burnaby
Mr. Keith Errington	B.C. Institute of Technology, Burnaby
Mr. John Gravel	ACME Analytical Labs, Vancouver
Mr. Keith Rogers	Intertek Testing Services, Vancouver
Dr. Ron Smyth	B.C. Ministry of Energy & Mines, Victoria
Mr. Ray Lett (Secretary)	GSB, BC Ministry of Energy & Mines Victoria.
Mr. Jim McLeod	Cominco Research Labs, Vancouver
Mr. Lloyd Twaites (Chair)	ALS - Chemex Labs, Vancouver
Ms. Elaine Woo	BC Institute of Technology, Burnaby
Mr. George Roger	Placer Dome Inc. (Retired).
Mr. Glen Armanini	ALS - Chemex

### **1. Welcome and Introduction Remarks (Lloyd Twaites):**

Lloyd Twaites called the meeting to order at 1.40 p.m., welcomed those present and tabled the Agenda. He noted that Ross Kean (Cominco) had moved to eastern Canada and would no longer be able to attend meetings.

### **2. Approval of April 23<sup>rd</sup>, 1999 Assayers Advisory Board Meeting Minutes and Agenda for October 15<sup>th</sup> 1999 Meeting:**

*Proposed (Ray Lett) and seconded (Keith Errington) that the Minutes of the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Assayers Advisory Board Meeting and the October 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting Agenda be accepted. All in favour.*

### **3. Status of April 23<sup>rd</sup> Meeting Action Items:**

Lloyd Twaites reviewed the status of the action items arising from the Minutes of the April 23<sup>rd</sup> Advisory Board Meeting.

#### **3.1 Awards Committee (John Gravel, Ray Lett, Mac Chaudhry) Report**

Ray Lett showed the Committee a sketch for a trophy to mark a significant financial and/or material contributions to the Assayers program by an institution or company. After discussion the Committee suggested modifications to the planned trophy and asked Ray Lett and John Gravel to obtain cost estimates for its manufacture. Keith Errington offered BCIT services for shipping the trophy to the award winners. The Committee agreed that each Corporate Member should receive a plaque engraved with the Assayers Certification Program logo and mission statement and each individual member should receive a certificate. The mission statement for the plaques and certificates would be written by Ray and John.

**Action:** Ray Lett to continue with a final design for the trophy and obtain a cost estimate for approval by the Board. John Gravel and Ray Lett to write a mission statement and produce a logo for the Corporate plaques and Member certificates.

### **3.1 Assayer Program Newsletter (Lloyd Twaites)**

Lloyd invited contributions for the proposed Assayers Program Newsletter. Keith Errington suggested making the newsletter part of the Assayers web site. Some topics suggested were a “Peal Harbour” file of examples of assaying failures (John Gravel), an solicitation for new members, an invitation for contributions to the newsletter and an introductory article to launch the newsletter (Lloyd). He suggested an announcement about the web site should be mailed to assayers. Jim McLeod warned that publication of any sensitive information (e.g. member phone numbers) should be limited because of the potentially wide distribution on the www.

**Action:** Lloyd Twaites to write an introductory article for the Assayers Newsletter web site.

### **3.2 Changes to Business Plan**

Ray Lett proposed that a statement in the Partnership Business Plan concerning BCIT training responsibilities be changed from “*to provide a training program for assayers and mineral analysts*” to “*to provide a training program for assayers and mineral analysts independent of the Assayers Certification Program*”.

*Proposed (Ray Lett) and seconded (Keith Errington) that the text of the Assayers Program Partnership Business Plan be changed to clearly separate the B.C.I.T. night school training program from the Assayers Certification Examination Program. All in favour.*

### **3.3 Mailing to Equipment Suppliers (Lloyd Twaites)**

Lloyd reported that an previous mailing had encouraged Anachemia and BICO to join the partnership. He reported that no instrument suppliers had as yet joined the partnership.

### **3.4 Web Site (Keith Errington)**

Keith Errington reported that BCIT had applied for a domain name for the proposed Assayers Program web site and the name would most likely be www.assayerscert.bc.ca. The web site text would be based on the program brochure. The BCIT web master would ensure that the appropriate links to other sites are included. Ron Smyth asked if the BCIT web site had information on the Assayers Program. Elaine Woo replied that the BCIT web site referred to the program under the link www.assay.bcit.ca.

**Action:** Ray Lett to send a digital copy of the Assayers Program brochure to Keith Errington.

### **3.5 Examiners Board Meeting Expenses (Mac Chaudhry)**

The Advisory Board pay for Derek Blundell’s expenses to attend the next Examiners Board Meeting. Mac agreed to obtain travel receipts. Keith noted that Terry Suen would be on maternity leave during the next 6 months.

### **3.6 Updating the Assayers program information circular 1994-2 (Mac Chaudhry)**

Mac Chaudhry requested that this topic be revisited at the next Advisory Board meeting so that a draft of the revised information circular could be reviewed by members of the Examiners Board. He recommended that the circular be published as a loose-bound rather than a hard-bound copy so that updates can be made more easily. He suggested that costs for both loose and hard bound versions be obtained for the next meeting. Ron Smyth offered Geological Survey desk top publishing support to produce the circular and Keith Errington offered copying services through BCIT.

*Action: Mac Chaudhry to review a draft of the Assayers Program Information Circular with Examiners Board.*

### **4.0 Financial Report (Lloyd Twaites)**

Lloyd reported that recent contributors included B.C. ministry of Energy and Mines (\$3000), CANMET (\$1000), Bondar-Clegg (\$1000, Cominco (\$1000), Bico (\$1000), ASL-Chemex (\$1000), Anachemia (\$100).

John Gravel cautioned that it could be necessary to cap contributions at some future time. Jim McLeod stressed that seeking industry funding for the program was important because he predicted contributions would decline due to falling mining revenues. Lloyd recommended that corporate fees were reduced from \$1000 to \$500 and that this be discussed at the next Advisory Board meeting. Ron Smyth suggested the Program fund for a scholarship. Keith Errington stated that the program should cover the costs of a display booth at future conferences. Keith Rogers recommended that a poster for promoting the program at future meetings (e.g. CMA, SMA) also be funded. Lloyd stated that funds would be needed to produce and distribute additional copies of the assayers brochure.

### **5.0 BCIT Training Update (Elaine Woo)**

Elaine reported that there were presently 8 students enrolled in the 4<sup>th</sup> module of the training course scheduled for completion in August 2000. The second module of the course has been prepared for loading onto a CD. Distance education with students from Manitoba was under consideration by BCIT. Students from Ontario had also expressed an interest in distance education, but there had been no publicity about the BCIT assayers training program in Ontario. Elaine invited suggestions of how the program could be promoted outside B.C. Mac noted that although the examination program was only legislated in B.C. the training could be blended with other, similar programs outside the Province. The Ontario government had previously considered setting up an Assayers Certification Program, but decided not to implement it.

Ron Smyth suggested that a good opportunity existed for the Advisory Board to market the training component of the program to other jurisdictions.

Keith Errington explained that marketing was limited by the BCIT's provincial mandate. However, BCIT's president was in favour of expanding distance education programs through the Internet.

Ron suggested writing a short Newsletter item for the Northern Miner stressing the BCIT training-Assayers certification link.

Mac commented that very few universities offered major degrees in analytical chemistry.

Lloyd agreed to discuss a Northern Miner article with Keith and Elaine.

*Action: Lloyd Twaites to discuss a Northern Miner article about the BCIT Assayers Training Program and Assayers Certification Program with Keith Errington and Elaine Woo.*

## **6.0 Assayers Examination Update**

Mac reported that 8 candidates were scheduled to sit the practical assayers examination scheduled for mid December. He summarized the examination statistics from September 1997 to date:-

Theory Examination:	25 candidates	11 failed	56% pass
Practical Examination:	6 candidates	3 failed	50% pass

Mac expressed concern about the 50% practical pass rate and partly attributed it to trainee assayers in commercial laboratories being isolated to one analytical task with little opportunity to rotate to other tasks. He stressed the need to improve the examination pass rate and recommended that instructors should give guidance to trainees.

Keith commented that a low pass rate also existed in the land surveyors examination due to insufficient practical experience.

Mac stated that this issue would be discussed at the next Examiners meeting.

Keith Rogers remarked that rotating laboratory staff to different tasks was presently difficult because of financial constraints and the need to maintain productivity in commercial laboratories.

Elaine commented that the low pass rate could also be attributed to insufficient individual motivation.

Mac stressed that a motivational talk to candidates should be given at the start of each training session.

George Roger noted that Placer encouraged cross training to include all assaying tasks and also included ISO topics.

Keith Errington recommended to Elaine that an experience assayer be asked to give a motivational talk at the start of a training session.

## **7.0 New Examination Test samples**

Lloyd noted that preparation of arsenic and sulphur standards was complete and suitable material had been collected for nickel samples. Material for mercury test samples was still needed and Mac agreed to talk to CANMET about preservation of material in view of the high mercury volatility. Mac noted that new mercury and cadmium test material would be needed for the next, but one examination. Cadmium content should not exceed 100 ppm.

**8.0 Other Business- Notification of Assayers program to CANMET:** John Gravel recommended asking Henry Steger (CANMET) to publicize the Assayers program in Ontario.

**9.0 Next Meeting (Lloyd Twaites)**

The next meeting was proposed for Friday April 14<sup>th</sup> at 1.30 p.m. at BCIT.

**10 Adjournment (Lloyd Twaites)**

*Proposed (Keith Errington), Seconded (Keith Rogers ) that the meeting be adjourned at 3.30 p.m. with thanks to those present for attending. **All in favour***

Chair Person, Lloyd Twaites

---

Secretary, Ray Lett

---

Date: \_\_\_\_\_