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**To:** WEI Communication Working Group participants

**From:** Rahul Ray

**Date:** November 4, 2019

**Re:** Communication Working Group meeting: Tuesday, October 29, 2019

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During the fourth Water Engagement Initiative (WEI) Main Table meeting on September 11, 2019, interest was again expressed in improving various aspects of Rio Tinto’s communication. Three WEI participants expressed interest in forming the Communication Working Group to address their concerns. They included Gina Layte-Listen, Jason Llewellyn, and Gerry Thiessen. The discussions were to also include Rio Tinto Communication representatives Danielle De Kay and Lianne Olson with the intent to find ways of improving communications.

The meeting held on Tuesday, October 29, 2019 was initially planned for Thursday, October 3, 2019 but needed to be rescheduled. The meeting participants are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. October 29, 2019 - WEI Communications Working Group participants

Individual	Organization	Email
Gina Layte-Listen	Director, Public Works, City of Prince George	Gina.LayteListon@princegeorge.ca
Sashka Macievich	Recovery Manager, Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako	sashka.macievich@rdbn.bc.ca

This document is a meeting summary and not word-for-word “meeting minutes”. The information presented highlights the topics raised, key discussions, conclusions, and identified action items.

At the meeting, the facilitator was Rahul Ray (RR). He prepared a draft meeting summary, and then circulated the draft to meeting participants for review and revisions. After addressing the proposed edits, a final meeting summary was prepared.

The meeting invitation outlined the three main concerns heard to date:

- **Ongoing operational communication:** Review and confirm adequacy of existing communication mechanisms, e.g. Flow Facts, frequency of face-to-face update meetings, update if a staff transitions out of their roles.
- **Rio Tinto operational emergency communication and engagement:** Need to confirm the process for communicating and engaging interested parties should a Rio Tinto operational emergency occur.

- **Emergency incident communication:** Need for clear communication and engagement procedures in the event of an emergency that affects the Nechako region e.g. Big Bar Slide (this will likely involve provincial representatives).

The draft agenda included:

- Introductions
- Purpose of the Communication Working Group
- Identification and description of key issues
- Overview of existing Rio Tinto communication tools
- Discussion of potential improvements
- Next steps

In the meeting summary that follows, concepts that need to be explored in more detail and discussed with Rio Tinto representatives are included in boxes.

### Meeting Notes

- Sashka described her role the Recovery Manager for the Regional District of Bulkley-Nechako (RDBN). As an example of her work, she is helping the Southside recover after the 2018 wildfires which affected people and infrastructure.
- She said issues occur on the reservoir with high water as well as low water. She said that better communication is needed with Rio Tinto, enabling a more complete understanding of when water levels will change, with as much warning as possible. Timely information is critical to avoid effects on people and reduce misinformation and speculation.
- Sashka described the communication network that exists in the RDBN. It includes the use of social media, telephone calls, community postings, text messages and emails. Rio Tinto can work with the RDBN to build on this network.

• In extraordinary cases, where atypical events are occurring or expected to occur, Rio Tinto should issue a special bulletin and use all communication channels.

• Ideally Rio Tinto would produce a calendar outlining typical seasonal flow changes, as well as forecasted flow based on planned events.

- Rio Tinto should continue the use of Flow Facts, which Sashka and Gina will become more familiar with and provide comment on.

**Action item: Rahul to send Sashka and Gina the latest Flow Facts (information sent on Tuesday, October 29, 2019).**

**Action item: Sashka and Gina to review Flow Facts and make a list of the additional information or improvements that are needed. *After initial review, comment received that it “would be good to have a forecast based on their operational timetable.”***

- Comment that a clear understanding is needed of who to contact within Rio Tinto for what. Gina gave an example of work they are doing to armour a parks riverside trail adjacent to the Nechako. They need to contact Rio Tinto to confirm what the water levels will be when but are unsure who to contact.
- Gina noted that Prince George is “at the end of the line” in terms of Nechako River flow, but often have complex challenges as they need to contend with the flows in the Fraser River.
- Gina suggested that better coordination with Rio Tinto is needed when emergency operations occur. Rio Tinto should appoint a point-person and make them known when emergencies arise. They should be available to participate in EOC processes.
- Sashka commented that greater collaboration is needed on emergency planning. Rio Tinto has their plans and the RDBN theirs. However, it would be useful for RDBN to learn about the scenarios being modelled so they can develop corresponding planning.
- Participants discussed the importance of face-to-face meetings, even on an annual basis. It would be good for City of PG staff such as planners, engineering and public works team members to get to know Rio Tinto staff and vice-versa to support better communication.

## Action Items

**Action item: Rahul to send Sashka and Gina the latest Flow Facts (information sent on Tuesday, October 29, 2019).**

**Action item: Sashka and Gina to review Flow Facts and make a list of the additional information or improvements that are needed. *After initial review, comment received that it “would be good to have a forecast based on their operational timetable.”***

Following the meeting, in a Friday, November 1, 2019 email, Councillor Lauze from the District of Vanderhoof wrote:

“A couple of concerns that we have regarding communication:

- flow facts are great, but the implications of the flows are not always clear and so we would like more explanation of what those flows actually mean,
- in the case of an emergency, we would like engagement to mean being part of the decision-making process rather than being told of the decisions after the fact