

Rio Tinto hits 100 million carats milestone at the Diavik Diamond Mine

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(Source from JNA)

Rio Tinto, the operator of the Diavik Diamond Mine in Canada, has announced a major milestone of producing 100 million carats of rough diamonds since the mine commenced in 2003.

“We are delighted to reach this milestone, and I am enormously proud of the teams who have helped make this happen safely and responsibly in some of the harshest operating conditions in the world,” said Simon Trott, managing director of Rio Tinto Diamonds, Salt & Uranium.

The Diavik Diamond Mine, located on an island in a remote sub-arctic lake, is Canada’s largest diamond mine. The mine produces predominantly gem-quality diamonds destined for high-end jewellery in all major consumer markets around the world.

Marc Cameron, president and chief operating officer of Diavik Diamond Mines, added, “Strong and respectful partnerships are at the heart of the way we work at Diavik, and I would like to thank all of our investors, our community, business and government partners, and our workforce for their support over the past 13 years.

“This production milestone is especially gratifying given our strong safety record, our focus on ethics and the environment, and an unwavering commitment to delivering substantial and lasting benefits to all of our stakeholders.”

Right from the beginning, local communities have been widely consulted about the operation and impact of the Diavik Diamond Mine. This engagement has led to the development of considerable employment, training and capacity-building opportunities.

Approximately half of the mine’s 1,100 employees live in Canada’s north and one quarter of Diavik’s workforce is Aboriginal. Since 2003, C\$6.8 billion (about US\$5.26 billion) has been spent on goods and services to support the mine, of which over 70 percent is with local firms many of which are Aboriginal-owned.

In 2014, the development of a fourth pipe at Diavik, known as A21, was approved, according to Rio Tinto. Development of the A21 pipe, which was part of the original mine plan, is estimated to cost US\$350 million over four years and is an important source of incremental production. Production from A21 is expected to commence in 2018.



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Aerial view of the Diavik mine in winter. The mine is located on an island surrounded by the waters of Lac de Gras