

**Request for Proposal
Medical Audit - Mining Properties**

**Department of Government Services
November 2010**

Introduction

The Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Branch of the Department of Government Services, Government of Newfoundland and Labrador invite proposals from interested parties to conduct a medical audit of two mining properties in Labrador. The proposal would outline costs, methodology and personnel together with achievable start and completion dates required to complete the project specifically outlined herein.

Background

Iron Ore mining has been carried out in Labrador West by the Iron Ore Company of Canada (IOCC) and Wabush Mines since the early 1960s. Silicosis, a type of pneumoconiosis, was initially diagnosed in the mining workforce in the mid 1970s. A study conducted in the early 1980s concluded that silicosis was present in 43 workers at IOCC and 14 workers at Wabush Mines. In the 1990s audits were completed in the areas of dust sampling programs, medical X-rays, and silica awareness training. In 2000, the OHS Branch, union and mine management representatives agreed for an external agency to complete a Phase 1 study to determine the need and extent of follow up action above and beyond existing dust management programs.

The Phase 1 study was completed by McMaster University in 2002. The report included the conclusion that the true risk of silicosis and pneumoconiosis from previous studies may be an underestimate as it rarely occurs earlier than 20 year from start of exposure. It was not deemed necessary for a full epidemiological study to be performed as it was in a 1982 Labrador West Dust Study. The study recommended a study based on reading X-rays would provide the necessary information concerning the extent of the problem.

A tripartite Labrador West Dust Study (LWDS) Phase 2 Steering Committee including representatives from IOCC, Wabush Mines (Scully), the United Steelworkers Union and the OHS Branch of the Department of Government Services was established in 2009 and will continue to oversee the various phases of the LWDS.

Objective

The objective of this consulting service is to act upon the recommendations contained in a report generated by McMaster University in 2002 and listed in the terms of reference section of this document.

The successful proponent will be responsible for:

1. Radiologist(s) to read, interpret, and report chest X-ray findings from a group of current and former employees at both IOCC and Wabush Mines (Scully); this will include new X-rays as well as a review of older, previously interpreted X-rays;

2. Verification that the existing silica related health surveillance programs (i.e. X-rays, pulmonary lung function [PLF], medicals, etc.) at both properties are in conformance with established health surveillance protocols;
3. A review of the existing protocols for dealing with workers who are informed of the abnormal X-rays to ensure that the hazard communication process results in workers being fully informed and given the necessary information and tools for subsequent follow-up;
4. The preparation of an information package for workers involved in the screening process, and physicians responsible for assessing and treating workers with pneumoconiosis (i.e. sub-clinical vs. clinical stages).

Project Scope

A strategy for executing the noted items within the Introduction section must be included in the proposal.

- I. The strategy for reading X-rays for evaluating silicosis shall consider:
 - The number of radiologists to be used and the qualifications of each one pertaining to evaluating silicosis (eg: ILO NIOSH B reader);
 - A hazard communication strategy for notifying prospective participants of the study and what is being asked of them;
 - A strategy for locating former workers and retirees, and in the case of deceased workers, their surviving next of kin;
 - A strategy for obtaining consent from current and former workers, or surviving next of kin in the case of deceased workers, and a means of collecting X-rays for all current workers, former workers and retirees;
 - That medical confidentiality issues have to be addressed;
 - Timeframes from the date an X-ray was taken to when it must be read for study purposes;
 - A strategy for determining whether all retirees and former workers are to be included or whether criteria should be established for targeting select groups;
 - The approach/method used for reading (and/or re-reading) X-rays either independently and/or via a panel;
 - A strategy for confirming medical diagnoses where X-ray findings are suggestive or inconclusive;
 - Quality control (QC) provisions;
 - The method of reporting medical findings back to workers as well as what they should do with that information in the case of abnormal readings;
 - The determination of X-ray requirements for radiologists (i.e. most recent only or baseline as well), consider logistics of accessing X-rays located at the Workplace Health, Safety and Compensation Commission (WHSCC)/family physicians. New X-rays will be required for those individuals who do not have current X-rays;

- A strategy for analyzing all data collected to estimate pneumoconiosis for both mining properties.
- II. While it is understood that both the unions and companies will cooperate in terms of providing records of personnel for the purposes of identifying candidates, the successful proponent will be responsible for all aspects of tracking down and communicating with participants.
- III. A strategy must be submitted outlining the analysis of data for all those determined to have abnormal X-rays in terms of, but not limited to, such items as:
- mean and overall age range;
 - distribution of length of time elapsed between first dust exposure and the most recent X-ray available for review;
 - distribution by gender and job class;
 - smokers versus non-smokers.
- IV. For any individual scoring greater than or equal to 1/0 in previous phases of the Labrador West Dust Study, the following information was used:
- Total number of years of silica dust exposure at IOCC, Wabush or any other mining property;
 - Age of worker;
 - Job history;
 - Dust exposure history;
 - Length of time since first and last exposure;
 - Date of first detection.

The suitability of this information and any other relevant information shall be assessed.

- V. The consultant shall submit a strategy for determining the number of participants required to ensure a statistically reliable study.
- VI. Silica related health surveillance program review:
- Assess the suitability of types of tests &/or questionnaires used for assessing silica related disease (i.e. PLF, X-ray, medical, occupational history);
 - Consider relevant standards, protocols, equipment as well as QC methods for X-rays and pulmonary functioning testing as well as competency of personnel involved;
 - Assess communication linkage between X-ray radiologist (WHSCC) and family/company doctor and patient;
 - Assess suitability of documentation control (confidentiality etc.).

Summary of Key Dates

<i>Activity</i>	<i>Date</i>
RFP Distribution Date:	November 30, 2010
Written notification of intent to respond to the RFP:	December 10, 2010
Deadline for Submission of Questions with respect to the RFP:	December 10, 2010
Responses to Questions:	January 4, 2011
Proposal Submissions:	January 31, 2011
Project Award Date:	February 28, 2011
Project Start Date:	March 31, 2011
Regular Project Updates:	<i>TBD by submission</i>
Project End Date:	<i>TBD by submission</i>

Proposal Evaluations

The proposals will be evaluated based on the following criteria

Relevant experience and qualifications	30%
Methodology and work plan (work quality)	20%
Project costs	25%
Knowledge and understanding of project scope and objectives	15%
Knowledge of medical issues specific to mining properties	10%

The lowest cost, highest ranking or any proposal not necessarily accepted. The Department may cancel the RFP without costs to Government.

Specific Service Requirements

The Department will require a written proposal that outlines cost, methodology and personnel that will be assigned including their qualifications. We will also need to consider start and completion dates for site visits and completion of reports. The successful proponent will need to outline any additional information they feel is necessary to complete the project. As previously discussed, there are a number of logistical issues that will need to be addressed such as:

- Administrative process for obtaining all required X-rays including identifying and contacting workers, former workers and retirees;
- Actual process of acquiring and reading X-rays (radiologists);
- Notification to workers of individual results;
- Information required to be tracked or obtained for workers identified as existing or new cases;
- Other than current and retired workers criteria will need to be developed for identifying high risk former employees.

General Service Requirements

The project being awarded is subject to a contract approved by the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador. The successful proponent will be required to adhere to the confidentiality requirements of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador which will be outlined in the contract. Should it be deemed necessary that the contract extend beyond one fiscal year the extension is subject to available funding. The proponent is responsible for all costs associated with the submission, including travel associated with any presentations or meetings if required. Awarding of the project may be subject to meeting with committee and senior officials of the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador.

Submission Requirements

As stated above a tripartite Steering Committee from the Unions, Mining Properties and Government has been established to oversee the LWDS follow-up. The point of contact representing that committee and the Occupational Health and Safety Division will be Industrial Hygienist Danika Drover (709-729-3130) email DanikaDrover@gov.nl.ca . In addition Senior Industrial Hygienist Nancy Hounsell (709-729-4450) email nhounsell@gov.nl.ca and Occupational Health Manager Gerald Rowe (709-729-5861) email geraldrowe@gov.nl.ca will be contacts for liaising in respect of the project. Questions respecting the RFP must be submitted in writing to Gerald Rowe no later than 10 days after the RFP distribution date and will be responded to in writing within 35 days of the RFP distribution date.

Proposal packages including six (6) hard copies will be received up to
2:00 PM Newfoundland time, January 31, 2011 to:

Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Government Services
Government of Newfoundland and Labrador
Occupational Health and Safety Division
15 Dundee Avenue
Mount Pearl, NL, A1N4R6
Attention: Mr. Gerald Rowe, Manager, Occupational Health
Fax: 709-729-3445
Email: geraldrowe@gov.nl.ca

Late submissions will not be accepted.