



13 December 2022

The Hon. Nicole Manison
Deputy Chief Minister, Minister for Mining and Industry
GPO Box 3146
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Minister,

RE: INDEPENDENT MONITOR ANNUAL ENVIRONMENTAL PERFORMANCE AUDIT REPORT 2022 – MCARTHUR RIVER MINE

McArthur River Mining Pty Ltd (MRM) references the Independent Monitor (IM) Annual Environmental Performance Audit Report 2022 dated October 2022 (IM Report), which covers the period 1 May 2021 to 30 April 2022 (the 'review period'). MRM appreciates the IM's detailed report and thoroughness of the environmental performance review. MRM acknowledges the important role that the IM continues to play in independently reviewing the environmental performance of MRM's operations and identifying priority areas for mitigation and management of potential impacts.

Overall conclusions

MRM is pleased to note that the IM found no significant environmental issues requiring urgent investigation or attention during the audit period, concluding that this was due to MRM's continued attention on key environmental risk areas and the implementation of management actions to avoid or reduce environmental risk.

The IM reported that MRM achieved a high level of compliance with the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) recommendations outlined in *Assessment Report 86*. The IM also reported that MRM had a high level of compliance with conditions outlined in Variation of Authorisation 0059 (which they found to be an indicator of high level of environmental performance) and Waste Discharge Licence 174.

The IM reported that the McArthur River and its tributaries are considered to be in good health. This finding supports the conclusion reached by MRM and external experts in its recent annual environmental monitoring reports, that the NT EPA's overarching environmental outcome is being met.

Current update

The IM highlighted 26 (out of 481) conditions where MRM achieved part compliance. The part compliances were not considered to be of significant environmental issue or consequence such that they would require urgent investigation or attention. The majority were of an administrative nature and were of no physical environmental consequence, which have had limited impact on MRM's environmental performance. MRM has an action plan in place to address all Opportunities for Improvement associated with the part compliances ahead of the next IM review. These are tracked through MRM's Obligations Register.

The IM highlighted levels of metal concentrations above the maximum permitted concentration found in one species of fish (Eastern rainbowfish) in an isolated section of Barney Creek. The fish was caught in an area adjacent to major mine infrastructure, where localised impacts are expected. Importantly, with regards to this result the IM's concluded:

"The review of monitoring data to date indicates there is an extremely low risk to human health from consuming the monitored fish species caught in the McArthur River catchment in the vicinity or immediately downstream of the mineral lease."

"Consistent with the river system's health findings reported in the 2021 AEPAR, the McArthur River and its tributaries overall were considered to be in good health."

The IM also noted that metal concentrations in aquatic fauna in Barney Creek has improved over time:

"Reductions in tissue metal concentrations since 2018 appear to be attributable to the management actions (described above) taken to remove potentially contaminated sediments from the Barney Creek channel."

Notwithstanding, MRM is implementing the following preventative and mitigative measures in response to its Trigger Action Response Plans (under its Adaptive Management Plan) as well as the Opportunities for Improvement identified in the IM Report:

Preventative Measures:

- trialling a new binder additive to reduce dust generated in operational areas of the McArthur River Mine, close to the Barney Creek haul bridge;
- planned to conduct trials during 2023 on the use of new water atomiser sprays in the Mill to reduce dust generated in this area; and
- investigation into the viability of clean water extraction from the Wiki Borefield to enhance operation of the installed dust suppression system.

Mitigative Measures:

- continued the existing sediment removal program along Barney Creek, which has previously proven effective in reducing metals in fish, as demonstrated by monitoring results from previous years; and
- commenced investigating the viability of extending the sediment removal program to the lower reach of Barney Creek to assess the effectiveness as an ongoing mitigation measure.

Additionally, the IM noted a number of successes at the Mine, including the ongoing McArthur River Diversion Channel revegetation program, water quality monitoring results near Surprise Creek following the implementation of the Tailings Storage Facility Interception Trench, and positive results of the Purple-crowned Fairy Wren relocation program.

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you require any additional information regarding the above on 08 8975 8287 or Adam.Hatfield@glencore.com.au.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Adam Hatfield". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Adam Hatfield
McArthur River Mining Pty Ltd