



MAR 06 2017

MR. DANIEL MCNEELY  
MLA, SAHTU

**Oral Question 500-18(2) Norman Wells Oilfields Remediation and Reclamation**

I am pleased to follow up on behalf of myself as Minister of Lands and the Minister of Industry, Tourism, and Investment related to your questions in the House on February 3, 2017, on reclamation activities of the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT) with respect to Imperial Oil Resources Limited (IORL) facilities in Norman Wells.

The GNWT endorses the “polluter pays” principle and applies it in its regulatory decisions and interventions. The regulatory process ensures that closure planning is contemplated at all stages of permitting and licencing, including renewals. As such, it will be up to operators to meet the requirements of their licences and permits which include conditions around closure and restoration.

The Northwest Territories has a number of mature industrial operations in the natural resources sector that may initiate closure plans over the next decade. As a responsible government, the GNWT takes a coordinated and well thought-out approach to its role in all stages of resource development, from exploration to closure.

Consistent with the approach we take for our interventions at the front end of new development, the GNWT will exercise our relevant mandates and authorities in a coordinated and comprehensive way to ensure northern economic benefits from remediation operations, mitigation of socio-economic issues associated with closure, and protection of the bio-physical environment and human health and safety.

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I feel it is premature to meet on closure of IORL's facility as IORL is still in operation. However, I am willing to discuss with Cabinet and would be open to meeting with Standing Committee on the question of how, as the GNWT, we can extend our best practices employed at the front end (which include coordinated processes with senior management oversight), when we consider new development proposals, to ensure similarly robust approaches to planning for closure, when the time comes.

I trust this information has been useful. Once I have discussed further with Cabinet, I anticipate making a formal offer for a briefing to Standing Committee.



Louis Sebert  
Minister of Lands

c. Honourable Robert R. McLeod, Premier

Honourable Wally Schumann, Minister, Industry, Tourism & Investment

Mr. Gary Bohnet, Principal Secretary

Mr. Tim Mercer, Clerk of the Assembly

Mr. David Hastings, Legislative Coordinator