



File: EA1213-02
March 26, 2025

Seth Bohnet
Director, Strategic Infrastructure
Department of Infrastructure
Government of the Northwest Territories
P.O. Box 1320, Yellowknife, NT X1A 2L9

Via email: seth_bohnet@gov.nt.ca

Mackenzie Valley Highway Project, Government of the Northwest Territories

Dear Mr. Bohnet,

Re: Directives to provide timely responses and a concordance table in the DAR Addendum

The Mackenzie Valley Environmental Impact Review Board (Review Board) is concerned that the Government of the Northwest Territories (GNWT or “the developer”) responded to less than half (49 of the 119) of the information requests (IRs) that were due by the deadline of February 28, 2025. In its [cover letter](#), the GNWT indicated that it will provide the outstanding responses to the remaining 70 of these IRs by April 11, 2025.¹ The GNWT has continued to provide responses to these IRs since the missed deadline, but several are still outstanding.

Timeliness of IR responses

The Review Board is committed to an environmental assessment process that is both fair and timely. It is working to meet the dates in the current [draft workplan](#). By not providing IR responses by the deadline, the GNWT reduces the time that the Review Board and parties will have to consider the responses. Considering the above missed deadline for the majority of the IRs, the Review Board wishes to emphasize the importance of the GNWT meeting its

¹ April 11, 2025 is also the GNWT’s deadline to submit the 1) Developer’s Assessment Report Addendum and 2) responses to 16 other IRs which are due then (see the Review Board’s [February 27 Notice of Proceeding](#)).



remaining deadlines, to enable the Review Board to maintain the current schedule for the environmental assessment.

The next step in the environmental assessment process is for the developer to submit the DAR addendum. If the Review Board determines that the information in this document is adequate to start the public hearing phase of the EA, then parties will prepare their interventions for the hearing. This means parties may still have sufficient time to review the IR responses despite them being late, depending on the content and quality of the responses² and the degree of follow-up to the responses that parties require. If substantial information is missing in the DAR addendum, or only provided at the last minute for parties to consider, this could affect the workplan.

If the GNWT cannot meet further deadlines in the draft workplan, it should write to the Review Board to indicate it requires an extension, rather than simply not meeting the deadlines.

Tracking IR responses

The Review Board anticipates that parties may find it challenging to track the responses to IRs, due to the number and the GNWT's method of responding to each IR in a separate PDF on different days as they are completed. This increases the importance of the DAR addendum as a single document that brings together all of the information from the analysis phase for parties to consider in one place, instead of having parties search across many stages and documents. When parties prepare their interventions, the Review Board expects that a concordance table will be a valuable tool, to allow parties to quickly and easily cross check the location of information they asked about. Any new IR responses submitted in the DAR Addendum or on April 11, 2025 should be included both on the ORS and in the DAR addendum.

Directives to the GNWT

The Board provides the following directives:

Directive: The GNWT will provide timely responses to remaining IRs and will meet deadlines set in the workplan or will write to the Review Board requesting an extension.

² including the details about proposed mitigation that meet the requirements that the Review Board identified in its [January 23, 2025 Directive](#) to the GNWT



Directive: The GNWT will provide a concordance table as part of the DAR addendum. This will be designed to help parties quickly and easily find the responses to questions they asked during round 2 information requests.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Catherine Fairbairn at 867-766-7054 or cfairbairn@reviewboard.ca.

Respectfully,

JoAnne Deneron

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JoAnne Deneron".

Chairperson

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