

# **Sudbury Soils Study**

**Public Advisory Committee (PAC) Annual Report for 2006**

Prepared by:  
John C. Hogenbirk, Chair

Reviewed by the PAC  
Submitted to the Sudbury Soils Study Technical Committee

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### ***Preamble***

*This document reports on the activities of the Public Advisory Committee (PAC) for the 2006 calendar year. Earlier versions of this document were circulated to the Technical Committee and to the SARA Group for comments on factual accuracy and other feedback. The final version of this report was endorsed by the PAC at the January 16, 2007 meeting and represents the opinions of the PAC.*

### **Acronyms & Abbreviations:**<sup>1</sup>

CSC	Communications Sub-committee
ERA	Ecological Risk Assessment
HHRA	Human Health Risk Assessment
IERP	Independent Expert Review Panel
IPO	Independent Process Observer
MOE	Ministry of the Environment and Energy
PAC	Public Advisory Committee
TC	Technical Committee
TERA	Toxicology Excellence For Risk Assessment ( <a href="http://www.tera.org">www.tera.org</a> ) - TERA is the not-for-profit company that was responsible for selecting the international experts who conducted the peer-review of the HHRA study. TERA will also convene a panel to review the ERA study.
SARA	Sudbury Area Risk Assessment Group – SARA is the consortium of consultants who conducted the study.
WG	Working Group of the Technical Committee

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<sup>1</sup> Please visit the web site for more information about these terms ([www.sudburysoilsstudy.com](http://www.sudburysoilsstudy.com))

## **1. *Background***

The Ministry of the Environment summary report<sup>2</sup> on metals in soil and vegetation in the Sudbury area identified that further soil investigations and assessments were necessary. As a result, the Ministry of the Environment and Energy, INCO Limited and Falconbridge Limited have cooperatively undertaken a sampling program for the Sudbury area that will refine the existing database. In addition, this database will be used as part of the information necessary to conduct a cooperative and voluntary Human Health Risk Assessment, and an Ecological Risk Assessment. The Ministry of the Environment, INCO, Falconbridge, the Sudbury & District Health Unit and the City of Greater Sudbury established a Soils Public Liaison Committee as one of its means of consulting with the local community and seeking technical advice prior to and during these studies.

At the October 30, 2001 Public Liaison Committee meeting it was agreed that the Study would best be served by the creation of two separate committees. Hence, a Technical Committee was established to provide the best available scientific support for the Study and a separate Public Advisory Committee was established primarily to strengthen the Study's effectiveness in consulting and communicating with the community at large.

## **2. *Purpose*<sup>3</sup>**

Members of the Public Advisory Committee provide their comments to the Technical Committee on deliberations surrounding the activities assessing the health and environmental impacts of metals in the Sudbury environment including:

- a) the sampling and reporting of community soil metal levels;
  - b) the development and implementation of community Human Health Risk Assessment/Ecological Risk Assessment studies, particularly the components of the studies that deal with public consultation and communications;
  - c) the initiation of any remedial works recommended by the conclusions of the Human Health Risk Assessment/Ecological Risk Assessment studies;
  - d) all associated public communication and consultation activities.
- o The PAC will be maintained at least until such time as the Human Health Risk Assessment and Ecological Risk Assessment are completed and distributed to the public.
  - o The PAC is not responsible for the scientific or technical review of the study.
  - o In addition, the PAC will provide opportunities for members of the public to express their concerns or to ask questions about any aspect of the Sudbury Soils Study.

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<sup>2</sup> Metals in Soil and Vegetation in the Sudbury Area (Survey 2000 and Additional Historic Data) September 2001, Ontario Ministry of the Environment

<sup>3</sup> Extracted from the PAC's Terms of Reference, dated January 17, 2006

### **3. Membership**

The Terms of Reference for the Committee calls for it to be comprised of a maximum of twelve members who live in the City of Greater Sudbury community at large, including one member to represent each of the Whitefish Lake and Wahnapitae First Nations communities. Membership is selected to best represent a cross section of the community impacted by the Study. Committee members are selected by a joint committee of the PAC and the Technical Committee. Committee members from the Whitefish Lake and Wahnapitae First Nations are selected by Band Councils from those communities.

### **4. Meeting Schedule and Participation**

The PAC held five public meetings in 2006: three meetings were held at Science North and one each at College Boreal and Tom Davies Square. There was one working committee meeting in 2006.

- PAC meetings are held every two months, with working committee sessions convened as required.
- PAC, TC, SARA and the IPO frequently communicate by phone or email.
- PAC members are invited and regularly attend Technical Committee Meetings. The Chair of the Public Advisory Committee has observer status at Technical Committee meetings. There were typically two to three PAC members (including the Chair) at TC meetings in 2006.
- PAC members are on the distribution list for TC minutes and agendas.
- A PAC observer sits on the Communications Sub-Committee.
- There was an average attendance of 66% of PAC members at PAC meetings.
- The PAC convened one working committee session to discuss administrative matters. The Independent Process Observer attended this session.
- There was no change in the membership of the PAC in 2006. As of December 2006, the PAC comprised 10 members:

John C. Hogenbirk, Chair	Dick Cowan
Gary Hrytsak, Vice-Chair	Aino Laamanen
Ersin Abdullah	Rubina Nebenionquit (Whitefish Lake FN)
Darrel Alston (Wahnapitae First Nation)	Bob Somek
Nicole Breau	Carol Zippel

- The majority of the TC Working Group have been in attendance at PAC meetings. Other members of the TC have been in attendance at a number of PAC meetings.
- Most PAC meetings have been attended by representatives from the SARA Group.
- There were five to ten members of the public at each PAC meeting.
- Seven members of the PAC attended the Public Briefing Session on the IERP for the HHRA (Sep. 19).
- Three members of the PAC attended the full two-day IERP Session on the HHRA (Sep. 20-21). The IPO, members of the TC, consultants to the TC and the SARA Group were in attendance at this session, which, with the exception of the PAC and IPO, was closed to the public.

**5. *Summary of Themes Tabled with the PAC***

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Group</b>	<b>Meeting Date</b>
Progress Report	WG	Jan. 17
	WG	May 16
	WG	Sep 19
	WG	Nov. 21
Public Communications		
Communication Plans	CSC	Jan. 17
Report on participation in Earth Day	PAC	May 16
Independent Expert Review Panel		
Synopsis of the Sep 19-21 IERP sessions	SARA	Nov. 21
Special Presentations:		
Sudbury by the numbers: the information legacy	SARA	Mar. 21
Recent environmental improvements at Falconbridge	Falconbridge	May 16
Recent environmental improvements at INCO	INCO	May 16
Public Briefing on the Peer Review process	TERA	Sep. 19
Affirmation of Xstrata Nickel's intent to support the study and its commitment to conduct their "business in a manner that is beneficial to both the company and to the community". <sup>4</sup>	Xstrata Nickel	Nov. 21
TC Key Progress and Decision Summaries	TC	Tabled at all meetings
Questions from members of public	Solicited from members of the public in attendance at all meetings	

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<sup>4</sup> The full letter was read at the November 21, 2006 PAC meeting and became part of the public record.

## **6. Summary of Major PAC Recommendations**

Topic	Meeting Date
Revisions to PAC policy on public presentations	Jan. 17
Clarity needed from TC on sun-setting of the TC & PAC	Jan. 17
IPO reports to be tabled at PAC meetings for information	Jan. 17
Questions about the level of public access to the IERP sessions (HHRA & ERA)	Jan. 17
Need to specify where the data will be stored after the study is completed	Mar. 21
Clarity needed on levels of access to data after study is completed—need to balance the protection of confidential and private data versus the requirement for independent researchers to access the detailed data	Mar. 21
Need for the companies to continue to communicate with the public on recent and planned environmental improvements at INCO and Falconbridge. And the need to continue the dialogue between the communities and companies.	May 16
Central and easily accessible location needed for PAC meetings	May 16
Need for regular feedback on the type of questions from the public received by the SARA Group through email, the website and by phone	Sep. 19
A request that the new owner of Falconbridge be asked to re-affirm the company's commitment to the study and to any remediation, if required.	Sep. 19
Continued support for public open houses in the major communities to coincide with the release of the penultimate HHRA and ERA reports	Sep. 19
A request that the new owner of INCO be asked to re-affirm the company's commitment to the study and to any remediation, if required.	Nov. 21
Re-iteration of the need for an adequate and meaningful opportunity for the public to comment on the HHRA and ERA reports before they are made final.	Nov. 21
More involvement in review of TC material prior to public release.	On-going
More input in review of communications prior to public release.	On-going

It continues to speak to the good working relationship that the PAC enjoys with the TC and the SARA Group, that all of the PAC's recommendations have been considered and, for the most part, addressed by the TC and the SARA Group.

## **7. Concluding Remarks**

The Public Advisory Committee works to facilitate meaningful, two-way communication between the people of the study area and the study principals, namely the Technical Committee and the SARA Group. As residents of the study area, the volunteer members of the PAC are keen to do their part to ensure the success of the study. As the study nears fruition, the PAC will continue to build on the strong professional relationship that they have with the TC and the SARA Group to help keep the lines of communication open and meaningful. In particular, the PAC will continue to work on the following issues:

- Help to clarify the roles of study participants to the public: For example: What are the roles and responsibilities of the PAC, the TC, the Working Group, the SARA Group, the scientific advisors, TERA and the independent expert review panel?
- Seek to understand public expectations and help to convey the questions and concerns of the public to the TC.
- Help to clarify the nature and process of the study. For instance: What questions will be answered with regard to human and ecological risk? What will happen after the final report is submitted?

#### **8. *Acknowledgements***

The PAC would like to thank those members who served their two-year term and those who continue to serve on this voluntary committee. We appreciate the time and effort put forth by the Technical Committee, the SARA Group and other experts. The PAC appreciates the support and advice of Franco Mariotti, Independent Process Observer. We thank the members of the public for attending PAC meetings and Open Houses, and for contributing to the discussion. The PAC would like to thank Toxicology Excellence for Risk Assessment (TERA) for their professionalism in convening the international experts and conducting the HHRA review. We thank Julie Sabourin for her administrative support.