

Ok Tedi's Swift Response to COVID-19

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ABSTRACT

Ok Tedi Mining Limited (OTML) is a majority state owned company that operates an open pit copper, gold and silver mine located in the Star Mountains of the Western Province (WP), Papua New Guinea (PNG). The total sales of concentrate in 2019 was USD1.12 billion, contributing 4% to the PNG GDP.

OTML directly and indirectly employees ~3800 personnel, and provides direct and indirect support for ~160,000 people living within the company town, local host and mine impacted communities.

OTML's operations are located within a remote region prone to landslips, flooding, dry weather and earthquake events, whereupon OTML maintains a robust emergency response and Major Incident Management (MIM) system for a range of scenarios including pandemic.

OTML activated the MIM Team (MIMT) in February 2020, due to increasing COVID-19 concerns. The MIMT implemented a COVID-19 Operations Management Plan (COMP). The objective of the COMP is to ensure the safety, health and well being of employees, families, contractors and host communities, whilst continuing to safely operate.

The COMP comprises a comprehensive range of programs including medical surveillance and tracing, onsite testing capability, isolation facilities, domestic and international travel restrictions, and distancing, hygiene and awareness programs with the workforce, contractors, local businesses, schools, churches and host communities.

OTML worked closely with the PNG Joint Agency Taskforce, WP Taskforce and the National Department of Health including assistance with transport of medical PPE, community testing programs and border security personnel.

The timely and effective implementation of the COMP together with the support and cooperation of all stakeholders contributed to no cases of COVID-19 being confirmed within OTML's area of influence to date. Confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported in the nearby West Papua Indonesian border region, reinforcing the need to remain vigilant and maintain basic hygiene, distancing, surveillance, readiness and awareness programs.