



MEDIA STATEMENT

National Nuclear Regulator PO Box 7106, Centurion 0046

Tel: +27 12 674 7100, Email: enquiry@nnr.co.za, Web: www.nnr.co.za

05 November 2012

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Objection to a 'one sided' article appearing in the Saturday Star.

Biased and misleading comments from a non-scientific environmentalist printed in the Saturday Star Newspaper without seeking comment from relevant national competent authorities.

As a national competent authority, it was disappointing to note how an article contained in the Saturday Star of 27 October 2012 entitled: ***“Department washes its hands of deadly waste”***, distorted the facts to justify an unreasonable Court Action which as a result continues to prolong the exposure to elevated levels of radiation to the poor people living in the Tudor Shaft Informal Settlement. Notably, the NNR was not contacted for a comment prior to the publishing of this one-sided article. The NNR now seeks to present the facts relating to radioactivity issues in the Tudor Shaft Informal Settlement.

The NNR conducted a radiological survey of Tudor Shaft Informal Settlement in July 2010. The survey was undertaken to ensure that members of the public are adequately protected from radiation hazards emanating from the environment. The NNR was alerted by Federation for Sustainable Environment (FSE) that an informal settlement had formed on the tailings material in Tudor Shaft. The NNR performed a radiological survey of the settlement and found elevated levels of radiation due to the tailings material. Since these were ownerless tailings material and as a precautionary measure the NNR in January 2011 recommended to Mogale City Local Municipality (MCLM) to relocate the dwellers located on top of the tailings material. As a result the MCLM relocated several informal dwellers living on top of the tailings.



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In March 2011, the NNR met MCLM to discuss issues relating to Tudor Shaft and ownerless tailings. A key outcome of the discussion was that the NNR would develop a framework agreement for the management of ownerless Tailings Storage Facilities in the Mogale City Local Municipality (MCLM). The agreement was drafted and proposed to MCLM.

On the 13th and 14th of June 2012 the NNR and MCLM conducted a survey at Tudor shaft to identify areas for clean-up around the shacks next to the slime dump. The NNR conducted random scanning in excess of 100 m around the settlement that covered a total area of 7.96 ha. The radiation scan revealed that affected dwellings are those in close proximity to the dump with elevated levels above the allowable limit. Though dwellings located further from the dump were less affected, it was revealed that some residents used the dump as a fill material and as such triggering a need for the random scan. Approximately sixty dwellings are located within the areas identified as hot spots, which covers an area of 0.66 ha. These structures were marked with mustard paint by MCLM for ease of identification prior to relocation.

Radiological hot spots were identified to be dominantly concentrated around the following co-ordinates:

- S 26.131990 ; E027.803960
- S 26.132020 ; E027.803220
- S 26.131570 ; E027.803110
- S 26.131320 ; E027.803800 [See map]





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As a consequence of ongoing concerns and the above information the NNR deemed it necessary to adopt a proactive approach and request for assistance from a specialist in slimes removals. Mogale Gold responded and offered to assist the NNR and Mogale City Local Municipality (MCLM) in the removal of the slimes dam at Tudor shaft. The estimated duration to complete the removal project was 8 days. The plan was to keep affected area wet to ensure that no dust was inhaled as the toxic soil was being removed.

Upon removal the slimes will be transported from the Tudor shaft area to the Mogale Gold, CAMS operation which is situated approximately 6km away. Once delivered to CAMS operation the slimes will be fed into the system with the material mined at CAMS and pump to the Mogale Gold process plant from where it will be deposited into the West Wits Pit as residue. After removal of the slimes dam Mogale Gold agreed to assist MCLM were possible with the rehabilitation of the area. MCLM engaged and informed the dwellers of the process.

The slimes removal project started on 28 June 2012. The FSE launched an application in the South Gauteng High Court and obtained an interim order, stopping the removal of the slimes dump at Tudor Shaft, until all the necessary assessments have been conducted to ensure that the removal will be conducted in a manner that is safe to the public. As a result of FSE actions the affected dwellers in the Tudor Shaft Informal Settlement continue to remain exposed to elevated levels of radiation. This matter has been postponed by the High Court until a date is determined but the interim order remains in force. The NNR will not oppose the application because no direct order is sought against it, but will file an explanatory affidavit setting out the role it played in the matter.

Accordingly, the NNR refutes the notion that it will allow citizens to be put at undue risk as a result of the slimes removal from the Tudor Shaft Informal Settlement and wishes to assure the South African public that there are robust measures in place to protect persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage.



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Yours sincerely

Adv. Boyce Mkhize

CEO: NNR

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Editors information

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR)

The National Nuclear Regulator (NNR) is a public entity which is established and governed in terms of Section 3 of the National Nuclear Regulator Act, (Act No 47 of 1999) to provide for the protection of persons, property and the environment against nuclear damage through the establishment and enforcement of safety standards and regulatory practices. The NNR is responsible for granting nuclear authorisations and exercising regulatory control related to safety over the siting, design, construction, operation, manufacture of component parts, and the decontamination, decommissioning and closure of nuclear installations; and vessels propelled by nuclear power or having radioactive material on board which is capable of causing nuclear damage.

The facilities and actions regulated by the NNR are diverse and includes the operation of nuclear power reactors, research reactors, nuclear technology applications, radioactive waste management, mining and processing of radioactive ores, users of small quantities of radioactive material, transport of radioactive materials, vessels propelled by nuclear power or having radioactive material on board and to any other actions capable of causing nuclear damage to which the National Nuclear Regulator Act applies. Facilities and actions currently under NNR regulatory control includes; safety over the Koeberg nuclear power station, the



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Pelindaba research and production facilities, the Vaalputs nuclear waste repository and the mining and processing of uranium and other radioactive ores.

For more information contact;

Gino Moonsamy

Manager: Corporate Communications & Stakeholder Relations

National Nuclear Regulator

Tel: (+27) 12 674 7111

Mobile: 082 535 5365

Email: gmoonsamy@nnr.co.za

Website: www.nnr.co.za