

Intense rains force temporary suspension of exploration activities at La Granja Project

Access blocked by mud and rockslides.

Lima, February 22, 2008. Intensive rains of the last several days in the region of Cajamarca, specifically in the districts of Querocoto, Huambos, and Querocotillo, have caused mud and rockslides that have blocked road access to Rio Tinto's La Granja exploration camp, as well as to neighboring communities. None of these avalanches have caused injuries to people in the area.

Rio Tinto suspended its exploration activities on February 19. Exploration activities will resume when climate conditions permit and access to the camp is reestablished consistent with the safety requirements with which the company always operates. For this reason, a large part of the personnel that work in the camp are being transported to the city of Chiclayo.

Rio Tinto has been working in coordination with local health authorities to support the transfer of medical personnel to attend to the needs of affected neighboring communities. In addition, the company has contacted national authorities to provide needed assistance to the inhabitants of the area.

About La Granja Project

The La Granja copper project is located in the district of Querocoto, in the province of Chota, in the region of Cajamarca. The Rio Tinto Group obtained the project in late January 2006 through a public bidding process carried out by the Peruvian Government. Rio Tinto evaluates the possibility of developing La Granja Project through the prefeasibility studies. In this stage the geological, environmental, social and economical conditions are analyzed in order to decide if it is viable to construct a mine.

About Rio Tinto

Rio Tinto is a leader in finding, mining and processing the earth's mineral resources. The Group's worldwide operations supply essential minerals and metals that help to meet global needs and contribute to improvements in living standards. Major products include aluminium, copper, diamonds, energy products (coal and uranium), gold, industrial minerals (borates, titanium dioxide, salt and talc), and iron ore. Wherever Rio Tinto operates, the health and safety of its employees is the first priority. The Group seeks to contribute to sustainable development, minimizing adverse effects and working as closely as possible with host countries and communities. The group is currently present in Australia, North America, South America, Asia, Europe and South Africa.

Contacts with the Press:

Ximena Mariategui Communications and External Relations Coordinator Telephone: +511 610 7878	Ricardo Labó External Affairs Assistant Manager Telephone: +511 610 7878
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