

## **June 28, 2006 Media Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

### **Ratification vote nearing completion following a tentative agreement between the Public Service Alliance of Canada and BHP Billiton; vote to be counted Friday June 30th.**

Yellowknife - After agreeing to a tentative agreement with BHP Billiton, the owners of the Ekati Diamond mine, the PSAC has put the agreement out to the members of the Diamond Workers local X3050 for a vote. Voting began on Saturday, June 24, in a number of locations throughout the NT and in Edmonton, Alberta. Voting will wrap up Friday, June 30, when the ballots will be counted and the results announced.

The tentative agreement, reached with the assistance of the Chair and panel members of the Canada Industrial Relations Board (CIRB) on June 22, 2006 includes:

- annual salary increases, additional paid personal leave days based on length of service, a retention bonus, a return to work bonus and continued enhanced incentive pay
- mutual withdrawal of specified CIRB and court proceedings
- Significant contract provisions for grievances and arbitrations as well as top quality anti-harassment provisions

The Diamond Workers negotiating committee has recommended acceptance of the deal and according to Jean-François Des Lauriers, Regional Vice President PSAC North the deal must go out to the members for a vote.

“ It is now up to the members to decide if they will accept the deal or not” stated Des Lauriers. “The negotiating team is recommending acceptance and they are hopeful the members will endorse their recommendation” he continued.

According to Todd Parsons, President of the Union of Northern Workers, the deal was a difficult one to hammer out and he said “I am hopeful the members will recognize the gains they have made against this giant multinational corporation and accept the deal. Once it is in place we can build from there.”

#### About EKATI Diamond Mine

EKATI Diamond Mine is located 300 kilometers northeast of Yellowknife.

There are approximately two thousand people who may work at the mine including approximately 375 bargaining unit employees. EKATI Diamond Mine has consistently been named one of the top 100 employers to work for in Canada.

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