



AGNICO EAGLE

MELIADINE GOLD MINE

Blast Monitoring Program

NOVEMBER 2021

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AGNICO EAGLE

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Agnico Eagle Mines Limited – Meliadine Division (Agnico Eagle) is the owner and operator of the Meliadine Gold Mine (Mine), located approximately 25 kilometres north of Rankin Inlet, and 80 kilometres southwest of Chesterfield Inlet in the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut. The Approved mine plan includes open pit and underground mining methods for the development of the Tiriganiaq gold deposit, with two open pits (Tiriganiaq Pit 1 and Tiriganiaq Pit 2) and one underground mine. As part of Meliadine Extension, several other pits and underground mining operations are planned to extend the life of mine until 2043.

This document presents the Blast Monitoring Program for the Mine which documents Agnico Eagle's continued strategy regarding Blast Vibration Monitoring including surface, underground and construction blasting for Mine.

The Guidelines for the Use of Explosives in or Near Canadian Waters (Wright and Hopky 1998) as modified by Fisheries and Oceans Canada for use in the North mentions the following requirements that are applicable to the Mine:

- No explosive is to be detonated in or near fish habitat that produces, or is likely to produce, an instantaneous pressure change (i.e., overpressure) greater than 100 kPa in the swim bladder of a fish.
- No explosive is to be detonated that produces, or is likely to produce, a peak particle velocity greater than 13 mm/sec in a spawning bed during the period of egg incubation.

Following testing and monitoring results in the Northwest Territories indicating the limit of 100 kPa was insufficient for the protection of the fish habitat, Fisheries and Oceans Canada amended and recommend that Agnico Eagle comply with a revised 50 kPa threshold for instantaneous pressure change.

Blasts are monitored with Instantel Blast monitoring equipment, to ensure that vibrations generated by blasting are less than 13 mm/sec and the overpressure is under 50 KPa. The blasts are monitored from up to three permanent locations on the Mine property.

The Engineering department, within the 24 hours following the blasting operation, systematically analyzes the results of all blast monitoring. Should the interpreted results exceed regulations, a blast mitigation plan would be immediately implemented.

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DOCUMENT CONTROL

REVISION	DATE	TRIGGER	AUTHOR
1	March 2017	First version of the Blast Monitoring Program	Vanessa Smith, Mine Engineer
2	March 2020	Revision due to start of underground production stope blasting and open pit operations	Vanessa Smith, Project Coordinator
3	March 2021	Update of the monitoring location and removal of the previous year results (now appendix of the Annual report)	Jawad Haloui, Engineering Superintendent
4_NIRB	November 2021	Updated to address Meliadine Extension application submission to NIRB for review and approval	Permitting Department

ACRONYMS

Agnico Eagle	Agnico Eagle Mines Limited
ANN	Artificial Neural Network
BGAM	Boosted Generalised Additive Model
DFO	Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada
GN	Government of Nunavut
IOL	Inuit Owned Lands
NIOSH	Institute of National Occupational Safety and Health
NIRB	Nunavut Impact Review Board
NWT	Northwest Territories
PAO	Peak Air Overpressure
PPV	Peak Particle Velocity
PSP	Peak Sound Pressure
PVS	Peak Vector Sum
Project	Meliadine Gold Mine Project
SD	Scaled Distance
SVM	Support Vector Machine
USBM	United States Bureau of Mines
USGS	United States Geological Survey
WHMIS	Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System

UNITS

km	kilometre
m	metre
t	metric tonne
min/sec	minutes per second
kPa	kilopascal

SECTION 1 • INTRODUCTION

Agnico Eagle Mines Limited (Agnico Eagle) is the owner and operator of the Meliadine Gold Mine (Mine), located approximately 25 kilometres (km) north of Rankin Inlet, and 80 km southwest of Chesterfield Inlet in the Kivalliq Region of Nunavut.

Nunavut Impact Review Board (NIRB) Project Certificate No.006 was issued in 2015 and the environmental assessment of the Meliadine Mine, resulting in the issuance of Project Certificate No.006 in 2015, included approval of a multi-phase approach to development, including mining of Tiriganiaq deposit using open pit and underground mining methods) and mining of the Pump, F Zone, Discovery, and Wesmeg deposits using open pit methods.

The Meliadine Extension proposes to include underground mining and associated saline water management infrastructures at the Pump, F Zone, and Discovery deposits, development of a new portal and associated infrastructures in the Tiriganiaq-Wolf area, construction and operation of a windfarm, and use of additional borrow pits and quarries. The life of the mine would be extended by an additional 11 years until 2043, closure will occur from 2044 to 2050, and post-closure from 2051 to 2060.

This document presents the Blast Monitoring Program (the Program) for the Mine. The Program is the fourth revision of this document describing Agnico Eagle Mines Limited's (Agnico Eagle) continued strategy regarding Blast Vibration Monitoring including surface, underground and construction blasting for the Mine.

Agnico Eagle developed the Program to minimize the effects of blasting on fish and fish habitat, water quality, and wildlife and terrestrial Valued Ecosystem Components (VECs). The Program considers Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) and the Government of Nunavut (GN) regulations including:

1. Guidelines for the Use of Explosives in or Near Canadian Fisheries Waters (Wright and Hopky, 1998) as modified by the DFO for use in the North;
2. Guidance provided in the Monitoring Explosive-Based Winter Seismic Exploration in Waterbodies, NWT 2000-2002 (Cott and Hanna, 2005);
3. Include a monitoring and mitigation plan to be developed in consultation with the DFO, and obtain DFO approval of the blasting program prior to the commencement of blasting;
4. Restrict blasting when migrating caribou, or sensitive local carnivores or birds may be negatively affected; and
5. Minimize the use of ammonium nitrate to reduce the effects of blasting on receiving water quality.

The Program is in effect since 2017; the Program will continue to be in effect and revised when conditions warrant doing so.

SECTION 2 • BLASTING STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Although blasting is one of the most widely used methods for rock fragmentation, it has a major disadvantage in that it causes adjacent ground vibrations. Prediction of blast-induced ground vibration is essential for evaluating and controlling the many adverse consequences of surface blasting including potential harm to nearby fish and fish habitat, water quality, and wildlife and terrestrial VECs.

Peak particle velocity (PPV) is a measure used for ground vibrations; however, accurate prediction of PPV is challenging for blasters and management alike. A study conducted by Nguyen et al (2019) compared the results of three PPV determination tools with respect to prediction accuracy: Boosted generalised additive models (BGAMs), support vector machine (SVM) and artificial neural network (ANN). Results revealed that the elevation difference between the blasting site and monitoring point is one of the predominant parameters governing the PPV predictive models. It is not currently in the mandate of the drill and blast team to predict the PPV value for any blasts but rather monitor and trend collected data. As the mine progresses, prediction could be a proactive means to avoid exceeding regulatory limits.

Singh and Vogt (1998) stated that the charge weight could affect the ground vibration only at distances close to the blasts with the effects that diminish quickly with distance. Persson (1994) stated that the magnitude of ground vibrations depended on the quantity of explosives, characteristics of the rock, distance from the blasting site and geology of the deposits.

US Geological Survey (USGS) or National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), formerly the United States Bureau of Mines (USBM) proposes an empirical vibration predictor equation to calculate the PPV produced by a blast reliant on two factors, namely maximum charge per delay and distance from the blast face. In the USGS model, a scaled distance (SD) factor was calculated based on the following equation:

$$SD = (D/\sqrt{MC}),$$

Where D and MC are distance (m) and maximum charge per delay (kg). Accordingly, the PPV is calculated using the following equation:

$$PPV = K (SD)^B$$

Where B and K are site constants and PPV is peak particle velocity (mm/s).

Such empirical approaches do not account for other controllable or non-controllable parameters such as burden, spacing, stemming and powder factor and their effect on the PPV.

2.1 Effects on Fish

The detonation of explosives in or near water produces post-detonation compressive shock waves characterized by a rapid rise to a high peak pressure followed by a rapid decay to below ambient hydrostatic pressure. The latter pressure deficit causes most impacts on fish.

The primary site of damage in finfish is the swim bladder, the gas-filled organ that permits most pelagic fish to maintain neutral buoyancy. The kidney, liver, spleen, and sinus venous also may rupture and haemorrhage. Fish eggs and larvae also may be killed or damaged (Wright 1982).

Studies (Wright 1982) show that an overpressure in excess of 100 kPa will result in these effects. The degree of damage is related to type of explosive, size and pattern of the charge(s), method of detonation, distance from the point of detonation, water depth, and species, size and life stage of fish.

Vibrations from the detonation of explosives may cause damage to incubating eggs (Wright 1982, Wright in prep.). Sublethal effects, such as changes in behaviour of fish, have been observed on several occasions as a result of noise produced by explosives. The effects may be intensified in the presence of ice and in areas of hard substrate (Wright 1982, Wright in prep.).

The detonation of explosives may be lethal to marine mammals and may cause auditory damage under certain conditions. The detonation of explosives in the proximity of marine mammals also has been demonstrated to induce changes in behaviour (Wright in prep.).

The number of shellfish and crustaceans killed by the detonation of explosives is believed to be negligible, however, little data is available. Sub lethal effects of explosives on shellfish and crustaceans including behavioural modifications are little known or understood (Wright 1982, Wright in prep.).

2.2 Effects on Fish Habitat

The use of explosives in and near fish habitat may also result in the physical and/or chemical alteration of that habitat. For example, sedimentation resulting from the use of explosives may cover spawning areas or may reduce or eliminate bottom-dwelling life forms that fish use for food. By-products from the detonation of explosives may include ammonia or similar compounds and may be toxic to fish and other aquatic biota (Wright in prep.).

2.3 DFO Amended Threshold

Fish and fish habitat can be damaged through vibrations, shock waves, and physical changes caused by blasting. The DFO has established guidelines for determining setback distances for eliminating blasting effects on fish due to pressure (acoustic) effects as well as peak particle velocity; these guidelines include:

1. No explosive is to be detonated in or near fish habitat that produces, or is likely to produce, an instantaneous pressure change (i.e., overpressure) greater than 100 kPa (14.5 psi) in the swim bladder of a fish.

2. No explosive is to be detonated that produces, or is likely to produce, a peak particle velocity greater than $13 \text{ mm} \cdot \text{s}^{-1}$ in a spawning bed during the period of egg incubation.

Following testing and monitoring results in the NWT, the limit of 100 kPa was determined to be insufficient for the protection of the fish habitat, DFO amended and recommend that Agnico Eagle comply with a revised 50 kPa threshold for instantaneous pressure change.

To keep PPV under the 13 mm/sec guideline, Wright and Hopky (1998) suggest the setback distances (m) from the centre of detonation of a confined explosive to spawning habitat to achieve 13 mm/sec guideline criteria for all types of substrate shown in [Table 1](#).

Table 1. Setback distance (m) from centre of detonation of a confined explosive to spawning habitat to achieve 13 mm•sec-1 guideline criteria for all types of substrate.

WEIGHT OF EXPLOSIVE CHARGE (kg)	0.5	1	5	10	25	50	100
SETBACK DISTANCE (m)	10.7	15.1	33.7	47.8	75.5	106.7	150.9

Concerning the instantaneous pressure change (i.e. overpressure); Wright and Hopky (1998) suggest the following setback distances to keep it under the 100 kPa guideline ([Table 2](#)).

Table 2. Set back distance (m) from center of detonation of a confined explosive to fish habitat to achieve 100 KPa guideline criteria for various substrate.

Substrate Type	Weight of Explosive Charge (kg)							
	0.5	1	2	5	10	25	50	100
Rock	3.6	5.0	7.1	11.0	15.9	25.0	35.6	50.3
Frozen Soil	3.3	4.7	6.5	10.4	14.7	23.2	32.9	46.5
Ice	3.0	4.2	5.9	9.3	3.2	20.9	29.5	41.8
Saturated Soil	3.0	4.2	5.9	9.3	13.2	20.9	29.5	41.8
Unsaturated Soil	2.0	2.9	4.1	6.5	9.2	14.5	20.5	29.0

The Meliadine Engineering team currently has historical surface data for CP4, SP2, SP4, CP6, TIRI01 and TIRI02 blasting. This data is available in the event special blasting circumstances need to be addressed.

SECTION 3 • INSTRUMENTATION

Every blast is monitored to ensure that vibrations generated by blasting are less than 13 mm/sec and the overpressure is under 50 KPa. The instrument used for blast monitoring is an InstanTel Minimate Blaster, or equivalent, which is fully compliant with the International Society of Explosives and Engineers performance specification for blasting seismographs (InstanTel, 2005). The instruments used in Meliadine are calibrated regularly following the manufacturer's recommendations and are presented in [Table 3](#).

Further permanent InstanTel Minimate Blaster instruments, or equivalent, will be installed in the surrounding area of the proposed open pits of Meliadine Extension prior to any blasting. When new instrumentation is installed, the Blast Monitoring Program will be updated.

Table 3. Meliadine Mine Blast Monitoring Hardware

MODEL	SERIAL	TRIGGER LEVEL
Minimate Pro 4 10.75	MP13824	Geo 1.000 mm/s
Minimate Pro 4	MP14133	Geo 1.00 mm/s
Minimate Pro 4 Level 75	MP14206	Geo 1.00 mm/s
Minimate Pro 4 Comm tower	MP14207	Geo 1.00 mm/s
Minimate Pro 4 Explo camp	MP14208	Geo 1.00 mm/s

The Minimate Blaster has three main parts: a monitor, a standard transducer (geophone) and a microphone (Figure 1). The monitor contains the battery and electronic components of the instrument. It also checks the two sensors to be sure that they work properly. The transducer measures ground vibration with a mechanism called a geophone.



Figure 1. Minimate Pro4 components

The transducer has three geophones that measure the ground vibrations in terms of particle velocity. They measure transverse, vertical and longitudinal ground vibrations (Figure 2). Transverse ground vibrations agitate particles in a side-to-side motion. Vertical ground vibrations agitate particles in an up and down motion. Longitudinal ground vibrations agitate particles in a back and forth motion progressing outward from the event site (Instantel, 2016).

The microphone measures the PSP (Peak Sound Pressure) also referred as to the PAO (Peak Air Overpressure). The instrument checks the entire event waveform and displays the largest sound pressure in Pa unit.

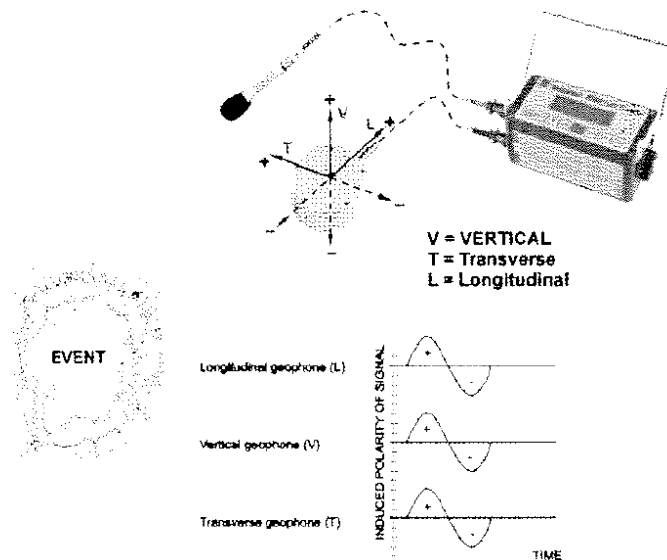


Figure 2. Sensor Orientation (Instantel, 2005)

The Minimate Blaster (Instantel) calculates the PPV for each geophone and calculates the vector sum of the three axes.

The result is the PVS (Peak Vector Sum) and it is the resultant particle velocity magnitude of the event:

$$PVS = \sqrt{T^2 + V^2 + L^2}$$

Where:

T = particle velocity along the transverse plane

V = particle velocity along the vertical plane

L = particle velocity along the longitudinal plane

3.1 Instrument Underground Installation

MP13824 is permanently installed underground in the Level 75 electrical bay of the Approved Tiriganiaq underground mine, Figure 3. The trigger level of the instrument is set to 1 mm/s and the transducer will start recording an event automatically when the ground vibrations are greater than or equal to 1 mm/s. The recording time is 20 seconds, underground blasts typically last 15 seconds, as production increases this window may have to be increased as the UG blast timing increases. This installation requires no additional protection as it is sufficiently removed from underground traffic. A similar monitoring strategy will be applied to other underground mine developments proposed for Meliadine Extension.



Figure 3. Underground Installation (L75) – (Date:2019)

3.2 Instrument Surface Installations

To improve vibration monitoring practices and data accuracy, permanent monitoring installations were commissioned in 2020 which allow the seismograph to be directly anchored into the bedrock via attachment to a steel rod drilled through the tundra. These permanent stations thereafter replaced the temporary locations used earlier in the year and throughout 2019. The L75 Electric Bay station has always been anchored in the bedrock as it is installed underground. The locations were chosen to have the optimal distance between the blasts and the water (fish habitat) and are presented in [Table 4](#) and in Figure 4 to Figure 6. These tables and figures will be updated periodically throughout Meliadine Extension to account for the startup of future pits and underground mining operations.

Table 4. Surface blast monitoring station coordinates

LOCATION	EASTING	NORTHING	
Location 1	539427.536	6988596.942	Temporary location used for TIR02
Location 2	541938.477	6989017.942	Temporary location used for TIR02
Location 3	540262.772	6988922.029	Temporary location used for TIR02
L75 Electrical Bay	539839.028	6988534.308	Permanent location used for TIR01 & TIR02
Exploration Camp	541927.162	6989073.053	Permanent location used for TIR01 & TIR02 (installed 2020-08-20)
Communication Tower P1	539803.785	6988836.212	Permanent location used for TIR01 & TIR02 (installed 2020-08-20)

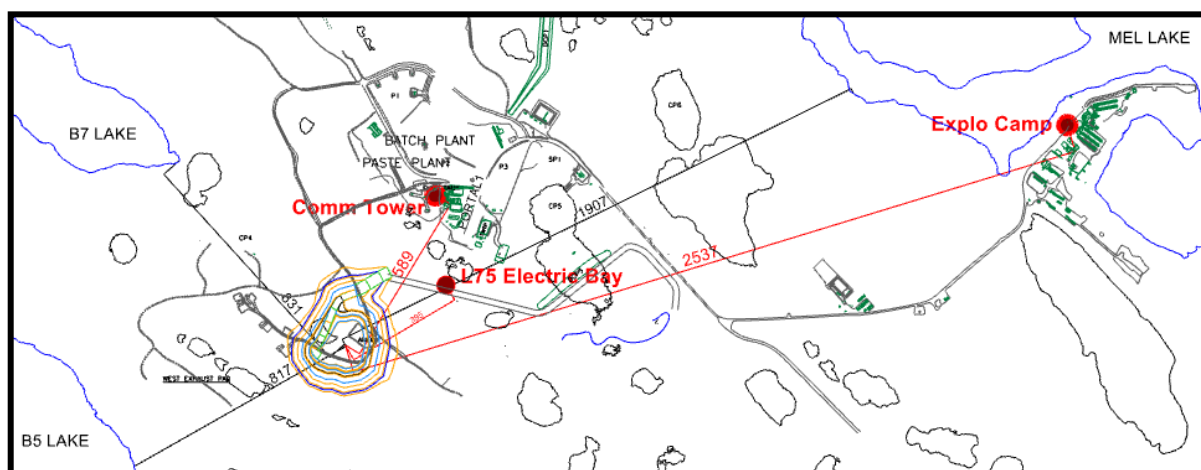


Figure 4. Surface blast monitoring station locations for TIR01 blasts (distances in meters)

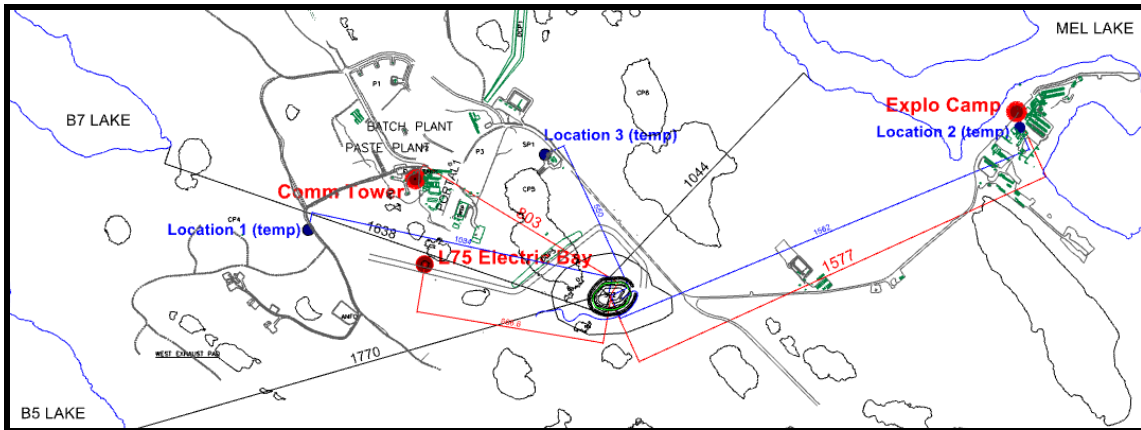


Figure 5. Surface blast monitoring station locations for TIR02 blasts (distances in meters)



Figure 6. Surface Installation (shelter & installation inside)

3.3 Instrumentation Reports

After each blast, the results are stored in a database and the report saved in the library for future reference. The blast monitoring results are interpreted, and a blast mitigation plan is implemented immediately if the vibrations or the overpressure exceed the permitted limit (see section 4). Figure 7 is an example of an InstanTel Sample Vibration Report.

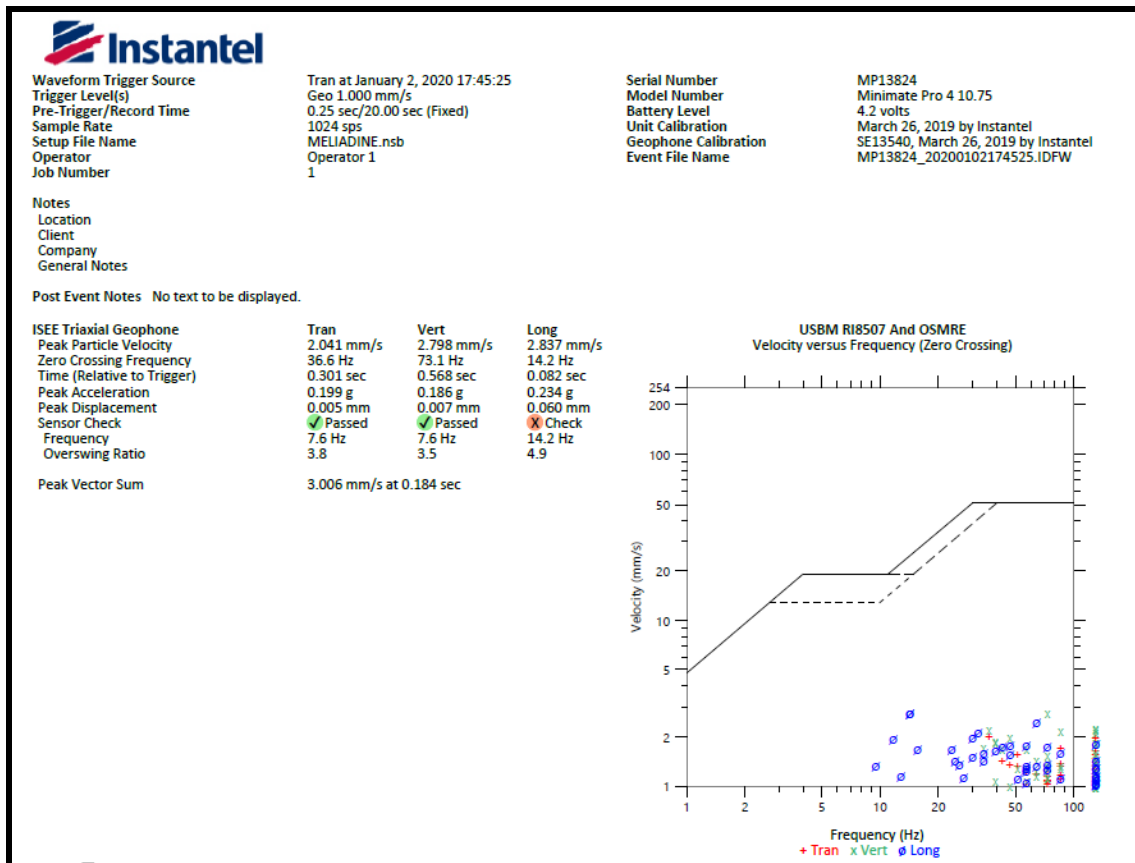


Figure 7. InstanTel Sample Vibration Report

SECTION 4 • CONSTRUCTION BLASTING

Construction blasting refers to: blasting in quarries to obtain granular material, and to different surface blasting activities for overburden removal and ground leveling prior to the construction of permanent site infrastructure.

The first surface blast monitoring campaign began in 2017; it was led by Explotech, a third-party engineering consulting service specializing in explosives and blast vibration monitoring. A full-time on-site Vibration Monitoring Program was implemented to record vibration levels experienced at an array of locations near the work. Four (4) seismographs were installed to monitor the Laydown Yard/Tank Farm blasting operations from April 2017 to June 2017 and five (5) were installed to monitor the Itivia Pit Quarry blasting operations from June 2017 to September 2017. This program was focused primarily on blast-induced damage to public and private infrastructure and minimizing the nuisance associated with blasting noise.

Since then, construction blasting were monitored in previous years for several excavations at Meliadine site and will continue to be the analysed the same way as the surface blasting.

SECTION 5 • SURFACE BLASTING

Tiriganiaq resources located close to surface are to be mined by two open pits developed above the underground mine operation. Tiriganiaq Pit 1 (Tiri01) and Tiriganiaq Pit 2 pit (Tiri02), with respective ultimate depths of 130 m and 105 m. The planned location of these pits in relation to other mine infrastructure is shown below in Figure 8. **Error! Reference source not found..** These pits are approved as part of the Meliadine Project. As part of Meliadine Extension there will be a total of sixteen open pits, at Tiriganiaq, Wesmeg, Pump, F Zone, and Discovery.

Since the start of open pit operations during April 2020, Mining Engineers & Technicians have thoroughly documented all blasting activities from design concept to final results – which include PPV and IPC measurements. If required, blasting procedure will be reviewed to ensure that the site remains within threshold limits and in continued compliance with regulations, as is part of the blast optimization process. As part of the Meliadine Extension, monitoring stations will be added based on presence of waterbodies.

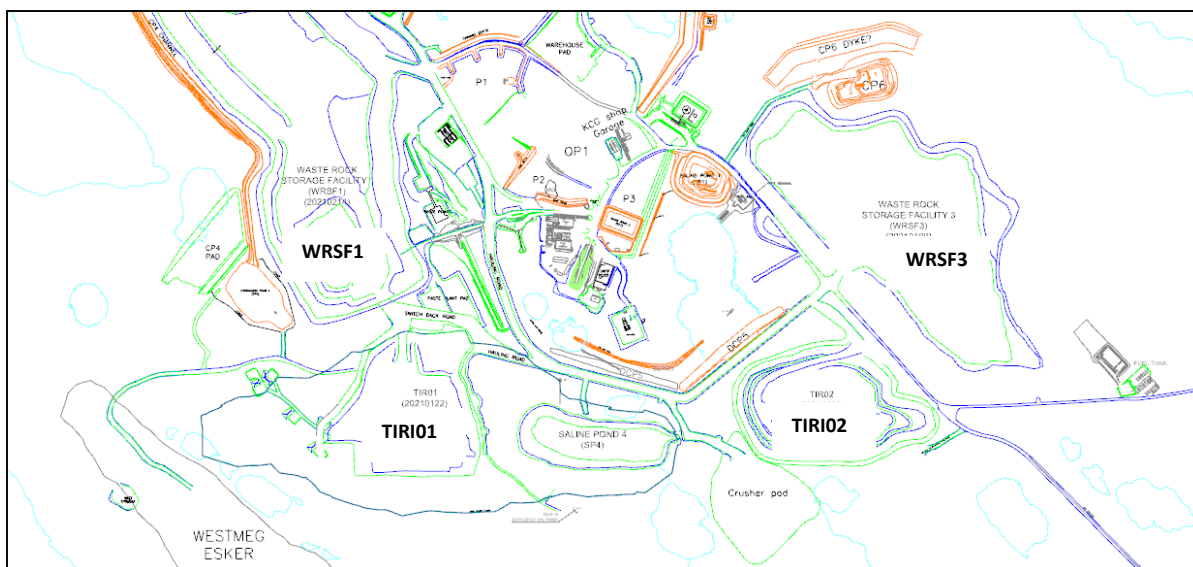


Figure 8. Open Pit Surface Plan for Approved Operations

A conventional truck/shovel operation is used for both open pits using contractor resources for the start of the project with transitioning to Agnico Eagle resources later during the project. The same drills will be used for both production and pre-shearing.

Based on selected engineering parameters, drill patterns for the selective mining zones were defined considering the material properties. The drill patterns for the non-selective mining areas are based on experiences at Meadowbank Mine, as the rock types are similar between the two mines. Moreover,

these parameters will continue to be improved as mining advances. [Table 5](#) summarizes the drilling pattern details considered for each application.

Table 5. Production Drilling Design Parameters

	Unit	Selective Mining	Non Selective Mining
Bench Height	m	5	10
Drill hole diameter	mm	165	165
Burden	m	4.1	4.65
Spacing	m	4.1	4.65
Sub-drill	m	0.5	1.0

It is expected that the overburden layer will be frozen and will require drilling and blasting prior to excavation. This material will have a drill pattern similar to the selective mining, as the tighter pattern performs better based on on-site construction experience.

Blasting with a high-energy bulk emulsion explosive is planned to target a powder factor from 0.38 to 0.71 kg/t in both ore and waste. Pumped emulsion reduces spillage and has excellent water resistance. This product will minimize nitrate leaching and thus reduce environmental impact (ammonia in water).

Each blast of the open pit operation will be monitored using permanent seismograph locations for real-time data collections and analysis.

SECTION 6 • UNDERGROUND BLASTING

The underground mine entered commercial production in Q2-2019; there is currently one underground seismograph to monitor underground blast activity.

Since the start of underground stope production, 27 stopes had blasts exceeding 10,000 tonnes of ore blasted with only one exceeding the 30,000-tonnes triggering limit for required monitoring stated in the 2017 Program. The collected data for underground blasts confirms that these blasts will not have an effect on surface fish habitat or surface spawning beds; measured values are well below the permitted threshold of 50 kPa for overpressure and 13 millimeters per second for peak particle velocity.

This management strategy will also be applied to other underground mine developments that are proposed for Meliadine Extension.

SECTION 7 • BLAST MITIGATION PLAN

Should the vibrations or the overpressure approach or exceed the permitted limit, a retro analysis is conducted to identify the factors that may have caused higher than desired results. It will be important to consider the main factors influencing blast vibration intensity (Table 6, ISEE, 1998).

Table 6. Main Factors Influencing Blast Vibration Intensity & Overpressure (ISEE, 1998)

Main Factors Influencing Blast Vibration Intensity	Main Factors Influencing Overpressure
Maximum charge weight detonating at one time	Maximum charge weight per delay
True distance (distance the waves must travel)	Depth of burial of charges
Geological conditions	Exposed surface detonation material
Confinement	Atmospheric conditions
Physical properties of the rock	Wind
Coupling	Temperature gradients
Spatial distribution	Topography
Detonator timing scatter	Volume of displaced rock
Time of energy release	Delay interval and orientation
Type of Explosive	Type of Explosive

During open pit operations, if vibrations generated by blasting exceed the thresholds of 13 mm/sec or 50 kPa, overpressure mitigation methods can be readily implemented to eliminate the effects of blasting.

Mitigation will be implemented on a case-by-case basis pending the retrospective data review. Some of the mitigation methods may include:

1. Reduction of charge per delay by decking the blast holes
2. Increasing the delay time between rows and holes to produce discrete explosions
3. Use of bubble/air curtains to disrupt the shock waves
4. Design of blasts and delay configurations to minimize vibrations.

SECTION 8 • CONCLUSIONS

Environmental issues that arise from blasting increasingly restrict mining operations; for this reason, the importance of blast monitoring and trending of ground vibration are extremely important to eliminate environmental concerns. Peak Particle velocity (PPV) being the most common single ground descriptor for regulating blast designs, parameters of the common empirical relationship between peak particle velocity and scaled distance are used at Meliadine.

Blast monitoring process will continue to ensure that blast vibrations do not cause harm to aquatic life at Meliadine. Data collection started in 2017 will continue to populate the historical database providing a more varied basis to find a more site relevant confinement factor. The data collected will help correlate different factors that could influenced vibration intensity; historical data will be considered in the future to guarantee a constant improvement in controlling blast vibrations.

Agnico Eagle has overall successfully managed to keep vibration levels below threshold limits and is committed to monitoring all blasts in order to fully comply with the requirements. Information on blast monitoring is shared publicly as part of the Annual Report process.

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Minimate pro User Guide (online: <https://www.instantel.com/media/436/download>)