

OCTOBER 2004

# Ingot

ALCAN PRIMARY METAL BRITISH COLUMBIA



## Calling all Alcan retirees

You're invited to submit Christmas greetings that *ingot* will publish in the December issue. Greetings can be sent to:

Retiree Xmas Greetings, c/o Alcan, P.O. Box 1800, Kitimat, B.C., V8C 2H2 or emailed to [ralph.reschke@alcan.com](mailto:ralph.reschke@alcan.com).

For Alcan employees, retirees and their families

## HOT TOPICS



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Kitlope heritage site celebrates 10 years. See page 2.



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Vending machines now issue safety gear. See page 4.



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Alcan donates equipment to NESTA site. See page 5.



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Employees undergo high-angle rescue training. See page 6.

## DIRECTOR'S THOUGHTS: Looking ahead to 2005

# Cost control and safety figure high

APM-BC director Paul Henning comments on some of the major challenges facing Kitimat-Kemano in 2005.

August and September proved to be extremely busy due to budget 2005 preparation, plant visits and community / economic development presentations.

In terms of the 2005 budget much praise is deserved by our accounting team for the many hours it worked in consolidating our plan. Major challenges in 2005 will be:

- Environment, hydrogen fluoride (HF) emission compliance and the probable limit on polyaromatic hydrocarbons (PAHs);
- Cost control: we have a tight financial budget, and have to meet our 2005, five-year plan



▲ Paul Henning

commitment, so spending to the plan and delivering on our cost-saving opportunities will be critical;

- Production: we are not planning to generate more power than our plant and Long Term Electricity Purchase Agreement (LTEPA) requirements in 2005 due to the continued low reservoir levels and the need to hit 87.2 per cent current efficiency or better to deliver our hot metal plan. Metal sales will again be challenging as sheet specifications continue to tighten (but with good demand) and billet again

Continued on page 2

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It's one of the crown jewels in B.C.'s provincial parks...

# ...and it continues to shine brightly 10 years later

Members of the Haisla First Nation and representatives from industry and government gathered in the spectacular Kitlope Valley to celebrate the 10th anniversary of the Kitlope Heritage Conservancy Protected Area.

It's hard to believe that 10 years have passed since West Fraser voluntarily relinquished its timber cutting rights in the Kitlope Valley, opening the door for the creation of the world's largest intact coastal rainforest conservancy area.

To mark the occasion, members of the Haisla First Nation and representatives from industry and government gathered in the spectacular Kitlope Valley in August to celebrate the creation of the conservancy area.

Organizers had probably read a British Columbia government website about the Kitlope that states, "Summers here are often as wet as the winters, so don't let weather influence your plans." Apt words because after a summer of incredible weather, it rained the entire weekend.

However, the rain did little to dampen the spirits of those who gathered to witness the celebration, people like environmental services intern Deanna Smith, one of many Haisla First Nation who attended the celebration.

The event was meaningful for Deanna not only because it was a direct link to her cultural heritage, but because it also put into perspective the Human Geography and Anthropology courses she had completed at



▲ Haisla First Nation elder Cecil Paul shares a quiet moment with Tim Zettler, son of Alcan environmental engineer Shawn Zettler, during 10th-anniversary celebrations of the creation of the Kitlope Heritage Conservancy Protected Area.

Northwest Community College earlier in the summer.

"There wasn't a set agenda for the weekend," explains Deanna. "People just got up and spoke about their involvement with the creation of the park."

Representatives from the Haisla included elders Cecil Paul Sr., Ken Hall, Bea Wilson and Louise Barbetti and former chief councillor Gerald Amos.

B.C. government reps included former B.C. premier Mike Harcourt and former Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Environment, Lands and Parks, John Cashore. Skeena MLA Roger Harris was present and there were also representatives from Alcan, West Fraser and Eco-Trust in attendance.

The most poignant moment for all must have been the sight

of a traditional, hand-carved canoe as it slowly appeared out of the mist on its approach to the mouth of the Kitlope River.

On-board the canoe were a group of Haisla youth, and true to tradition, before landing the canoe, they requested permission to land their vessel from several Henaaksiala elders who were waiting onshore to greet them.

It was in inspiring sight for environmental services engineer Shawn Zettler, who took part in the event. "The canoe was welcomed ashore by the elders and by Haisla singers and the celebration took place at the site where a new totem pole has been erected to replace one taken from the area at the turn of the 19th century."

It was this very pole that was the subject of a recent film by the National Film Board of Canada and much to the interest of those in attendance, the NFB's *The Totem* was screened in the evening.

There's no doubt that the Kitlope Heritage Conservancy Area has had a profound effect on the people who were responsible for its creation and that it will continue to create a sense of awe and wonder in those who visit this spectacular B.C. jewel.

## page 1 ... Looking ahead to 2005

being more variable in both demand and value.

And of course safety, we're a long way from our target of 0.6 lost-time incidents (LTI) per 200,000 man-hours, and 1.2 recordables. Our internal plant objective is to be injury free in 2005.

I had the opportunity to visit Aluminium de Grèce (ADG), our smelter in Greece in September. It proved to be a valuable trip for many reasons. The plant is 40 years old, employs 1,200 people and the work force lives in the village beside the plant, not dissimilar

to ourselves. The reason for the visit was to look at the safety systems and activities they have in place.

Safety performance and, for that matter production, is excellent and consistent. In 2004, ADG is operating at 0.4 LTI frequency rate, compared to our 1.3. We spent two full days visiting all operating areas but more importantly, taking part in the safety observations. The key takeaways for me were:

- Simple but effective communication;
- Involvement at all levels in the organization;

- Structured and planned inspections, with clear follow up.

Perhaps most importantly, safety performance was part of normal day-to-day operations in the plant.

Throughout September and October, I held communications sessions within the plant and the community, not only to share what Alcan is today in a global context and how Kitimat fits into that context, but also to discuss our key assets and how we operate them. The feedback I received from employees and the public was appreciated and useful.

New manual captures 'best practices'...

# ...to reduce our environmental impact

What's the best way to work around environmentally sensitive areas? What should you do in case of a spill? How do you construct a silt-fence? The answers can be found in APM-BC's new Environmental Best Management Practices Manual.

One of the goals of Alcan's *EHS First* program is to minimize the impact that Alcan operations have on their surrounding environment. It's a particularly challenging objective in B.C. because our operations are spread over a substantial part of northern British Columbia and in all cases – Kitimat, Kemano and the Nechako Reservoir – are bordering on environmentally sensitive fish and wildlife habitat.

It's a challenge that environmental engineer Shawn Zettler has been thinking about for the past four years. He now believes the challenge has been met thanks to the development of a best management practices manual for the environment.

"*EHS First* challenges us to look for ways to continuously improve our operations, to reduce the footprint of our operations," explains Shawn. "We strive not only to meet regulatory standards, but to benchmark to quality control levels beyond compliance."

"I believe the implementation of this manual will support *EHS First* objectives," Shawn says, adding that it should also improve the regulatory approval process for Alcan, improve the provincial and federal government's confidence in our ability to respect environmental regulations and reduce the potential for non-compliances.

The manual is divided into sections, each one of which looks at a specific type of work activity that takes place in the external environment. Whether it's brushing back overgrowth from the edge of a creek, dressing shoulders along roadways or using hay bales to slow down the erosional effects of surface runoff – it's all covered.

**The manual will be available to all employees whose work impacts environmentally sensitive areas.**

"Our plan is to post the manual to the Integrum database in early 2005 but implementation will occur as early as December," says Shawn, "with the target audience being planners and project engineers. In reality, it will be available to all employees whose work impacts environmentally sensitive areas. The more who read it the better."

Feedback from government agencies that have reviewed the manual has been positive and Shawn is already making plans to hold employee training sessions to introduce the manual sometime in the spring of 2005.



▲ Environmental engineer **Shawn Zettler** holds up a copy of the new Environmental Best Management Practices Manual. The manual contains guidelines that will help employees and contractors minimize the impact their work has on the environment.

The manual was written by Brad Pollard, a biologist with Terrace-based Acer Resource Consulting Ltd.

Brad worked closely with environmental services to develop the clear, easy-to-understand language used throughout the manual.

## IN THE PLANT

Visitors from around the world toured Kitimat Work's

### Tour season comes to a close

**The summer days of tourists traveling through the plant on the Alcan tour bus with tour guides Anne Berrisford and summer student Jessie Rowsell have ended.**

Over 2,200 people toured Kitimat Works this summer, which includes 469 visitors who attended during the 50th anniversary weekend on Sunday, August 1. Local residents and international travelers from Canada, the United States, Sweden, Denmark, Australia, Japan, Kenya, Thailand, Korea, Brazil, Germany, Austria, Switzerland and China visited this year to learn about the aluminium smelting process.

Tour guide Anne Berrisford and summer student Jessie Rowsell also conducted special tours for children from local schools and the

summer Riverlodge programs, students from the Northwest Community College and for crewmembers of the *HMCS Oriole*.

Anne says, "The tours at Kitimat Works are very popular. You can tell by the number of people who come from around the world. Also, the tourists always comment on the friendly employees in the plant. The employees in the smelter are really great and are very accommodating when we tour through their area."

▶ Vintage potroom equipment greets visitors to Alcan's Kitimat Works.



This vending machine doesn't take quarters...

# ...and it doesn't issue candy bars either!

A simple idea has the potential to generate substantial gains in *EHS First* objectives. It's going through first trials here at Kitimat Works.

**T**hey can be found across the plant, dispensing anything from chocolate bars and bagged snack foods to soft drinks and juice. We're talking about vending machines of course and if you think that's all these machines dispense, you're in for a surprise.

Located in the personal protective equipment room of lines 7 & 8 is a vending machine that does more than vend food items. It dispenses safety equipment. Specifically, it issues many of the common respirator parts that are used by employees who work in the potrooms.

Mark Annibal, former chief planner and warehouse project sponsor and John Hall, reduction safety coordinator, came up with the idea during marketing classes that are part of Simon Fraser University's liberal and business studies degree program (Kitimat cohort). The idea is a spin-off of the A/B warehouse consolidation project, improving 24/7 access to critical safety supplies, and waste reduction.

The premise is simple: take a vending machine, customize the dispensing mechanism to handle the items to be dispensed, fill it up and give access to employees. But, like any good idea, making it a practical and effective reality involved a few more steps.

First, support had to be obtained from area management. Presentations by Mark and John convinced the reduction and safety organizations that it was worthwhile pursuing. Mark then visited two other companies that had installed similar equipment



▲ **Mark Annibal** stands beside the new Distri-Mag vending machine located in the Lines 7 & 8 personal protective equipment room. The unit has been setup to dispense replacement filters and parts for the respirators worn in the area.

to find out what worked and what didn't. He also met with area OHS reps to address concerns held by employees who would eventually use the equipment.

The next step was to lease a Distri-Mag vending machine and set it up as a pilot project. The personal protective equipment room in lines 7 & 8 was selected as the test site and on September 13, the unit went into operation.

Its operation is straightforward. Employees in lines 7 & 8 have been issued a personal identity number (PIN) which

gives them access to the machine's contents. The PIN is entered on a keyboard followed by the item number and, voila, out pops the desired component. Parts range from mask straps and replacement filter cartridges to batteries and battery cases for the RACAL units...just about anything that is required for the proper maintenance of the respirator equipment.

The unit is networked to the warehouse so that when supplies get low stores delivery personnel receive notice to replenish it. It's also networked to the safety department so that usage levels

can be monitored to make sure that the correct respirator equipment is being supplied.

The Distri-Mag system also fulfills a 'due diligence' requirement, as the Workers' Compensation Board requires employees to be fit-tested and to wear the correct size of mask. If you have been fitted for a small, medium or large mask, that will be the only one that is accessible to you – no more guess work or grabbing whatever is available.

"The bottom line is that this machine, if implemented across the plant, can make a huge contribution to Alcan's *EHS First* mandate," concludes Mark. "From an environmental point of view it will help reduce waste and from a health and safety point of view it will help keep employees PPE in optimum operating condition and will increase access and service level."

Mark would like to take this opportunity to thank Judy Pirrotta and Heli Skitko (program administration and training), the warehouse personnel, Line Fortin (IT support), the safety department, area OH&S representatives, the local BOC Gases representative, and Planning Technologies for Industries Inc. (based in Trois-Riviere, QC) for their technical support.

As you can see the success of this project relied on many individuals and departments.

## AT-A-GLANCE

### Nechako Reservoir Update

As of October 8, the reservoir elevation was 2793.05 feet above sea level. The long-term-average (LTA) for this time of year is 2795.34 feet above sea level. Due to significantly higher precipitation, the inflow in September has been higher than the average with 155 per cent of the LTA.

Spillway discharges are currently set at 30.0 cubic meters per second and will be maintained at this rate until the end of March, 2005.

Paying tribute to Alcan retirees and employees



**Glenn Craig** Warehouseman Glenn Craig, far left, receives hearty congratulations on the occasion of his retirement from warehouse co-worker Jim Robertson. Looking on is power operations maintenance and engineering superintendent Ralph Braun. Glenn hired on with Alcan in March, 1980 as a warehouseman in Kemano. However, most people will remember Glenn from his many years as a mate aboard the Kemano passenger boats *M.V. Nechako* and *M.V. Wachwas*. Speakers at Glenn's retirement included Jim, Mike Smith, Mark Annibal and warehouse supervisor Barb Taylor, who reminisced about Glenn's days in Kemano. Presentations from the union were made by CAW Local 2301 representatives Rick Belmont and Bill Garvin. In thanking those in attendance, Glenn confirmed he wouldn't be letting the moss grow under his feet as he was setting off almost immediately to join his wife Esther at their retirement home in Chemainus, B.C.

◀ **Glenn Craig** says so long to friends and colleagues.



▲ **Alcan Primary Metal - B.C. director of operations Paul Henning** uses the jaws of life to take a bite out of a training vehicle at the Northern Emergency Services Training Academy (NESTA). Paul visited the site on Thursday, September 23 to hand over the keys to a piece of Alcan equipment that was being donated to NESTA: a fork-equipped front-end loader, valued at \$20,000. The donation of the front-end loader will help improve the training opportunities that can be offered at the site. Fire-fighting crews from across the Pacific Northwest come to the site located on Forest Avenue to train and hone their skills.

## KWSA Fun Bowling

The first annual KWSA Fun Bowling Tournament has been scheduled for Saturday, November 6, starting at 6 PM.

All Alcan employees are invited to register for this fun event. Enter individually or as a team. The cost is \$10 per person, which includes bowling and prizes.

Entry forms and registration fees should be sent to:

**Ron Correia, MDP 60 (local 8453)**

**Mike Correia, MDP 83 (local 8414)**

### Individual registration

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

### Team registration

Team Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Team Members: (up to four people)

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

### Rental Property

I'd rather forget about the time a rental property we owned sat empty for a year.

It was a small office. The tenant – there one day, gone the next – had declared bankruptcy, leaving behind scattered stationery and a broken lease.

The tax department helped us out by allowing us to deduct the advertising and other expenses during that empty year. But we would rather have had a tenant even if that meant helping out Ottawa with a share of the rent.

Whether you already own or plan to buy or sell revenue property

– residential, commercial or industrial – you must review vacancy rates to help you assess the true return on your investment, or the buying/selling prices.

Every time a tenant leaves, you have to fix up the property to attract a new tenant. While the place is empty, there's a steady cash drain for advertising, insurance and property taxes, perhaps a mortgage. If an agent finds the next tenant, you have to pay a commission.

These expenses can take a big bite out of that property's income for the year. If property values

have risen, that's some consolation – but only on paper.

Hopefully you keep reasonably accurate and current records. So by next January or February – or latest, when you file your tax return – separate not only each group of assets but also each individual investment. Look back over the life of each investment: has it been earning its keep?

When you buy revenue property, expect to pay more for a place with a long-term tenant, less for a place that's been sitting empty for a while. If you are selling, you can charge more/less, respectively.

If you are buying a vacant place, find out why it is vacant. If you find difficult neighbours, poor construction or other problems, offer considerably less – or walk away.

When a good tenant leaves a property you own, find out why. Rectify problems promptly. I remember once looking at a down-at-the-heels place that could have been made so much more attractive with only minor repairs.

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Mike Grenby is a speaker, author and independent personal financial adviser. He writes an award-winning "money" column which appears in newspapers across Canada.

No — it's not a scene from the Hollywood movie S.W.A.T, it's...

# ...High angle rescue training

Kitimat Works' plant protection and Kemano's emergency response crews rappelled from rooftops, climbed into cranes and scaled hoop ladders as part of a two-week high angle rescue training course.

**E**mployees participated in classroom discussions and mock rescue training exercises arranged by plant protection member Laura Taylor and taught by instructors Martin Lalonde and Paul White from Fall Protection Group INC.

To arrange the high angle rescue training Laura needed to contact all the areas of the plant the participants would be entering, identify all the hazards, lock-out locations and area specific rules.

## Training

High angle rescue training is a requirement of *EHS First* and Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) regulations. Alcan has offered this training to employees since 1989 before it was regulated by WCB.

Participants were instructed in the proper use, care, and checking of their equipment, fall restraint, fall arrest, rappelling, confined space rescue and rescuing a victim using a SKED.

"The training is valuable," says first time participant Kemano employee Rick Moretti, "it could help us save a peer's life one day."

Lee Luka who also works in Kemano agrees and says, "if you get hurt or hung up you should try to relax because the people that come and help you are professionals and they take your safety as well as theirs into consideration."

## Rescue scenarios

Rescue scenarios were staged at various high-risk areas throughout the plant such as rooftop catwalks, DC4 crane, Liebherr Crane at the wharf and towers.

"The rescue scenarios help us with team communication; each one gives us different insights into real problems we might face," says Kemano



▲ **George LeBleu**, far right, gets ready to rappel while instructor **Martin Lalonde**, centre, explains rappelling to **Ralph Kerman**, far left, **Lee Luka**, second from left, and **Jerrad Zuchotzki**.



▲ Kemano employee **Michael Kant** checks his landing spot as he rappels from building 550.

employee Brian Oates.

Plant protection employee George LeBleu agrees and comments, "When we return to the classroom we discuss the good and bad points of the training exercise. We get other people's views on how they saw the situation and express our ideas on what can be improved."

## Live victims

To create realistic situations a 'live victim' is used in each rescue scenario. Participants take turns role playing an unconscious victim, a person trapped in their fall protection equipment or an employee suffering from a heart attack.

"We make the scenarios as close to real life as possible," explains instructor Martin Lalonde. "When the team members are strapped into a SKED or a harness they feel what it's like to be a victim."



▲ **Rick Moretti**, left, assesses the condition of 'victim' **Brian Oates** caught in the hoop ladder as **Jerrad Zuchotzki**, right, connects the rope to the rescue harness. Above, **Michael Kant** checks the rigging.



▲ From left, **Ralph Kerman** prepares the spine board and instructor **Paul White** checks equipment in the rescue vehicle while **George LeBleu** and **Brian Oates** pack the spider straps used to secure a patient to the spine board.

Can you hear me now?...

## Hearing loss is no joking matter

Hearing loss is one of the most under-rated health consequences of working in industry. Sadly, it is also one of the most prevalent injuries.

Noise is not a new hazard. It has been a constant threat since the industrial revolution. Too much noise exposure may cause a temporary change in hearing (your ears may feel stuffed up) or ringing in your ears (tinnitus). These short-term problems usually go away within a few minutes or hours after leaving the noise. However, repeated exposures to loud noise can lead to permanent hearing damage.

The industrial hygiene department wants to bring this message home to smelter employees: hearing loss doesn't always mean things will get quiet.

"In fact, it can be quite the opposite," says Marc-Andre Lavoie, industrial hygiene supervisor. "Ongoing exposure to loud noise can lead to constant ringing in the ears, a medical



▲ Industrial hygiene technician **Jim Thorne**, left, collects data from a noise dosimeter being worn by lines 3 - 5 anode operator **George Orr**. The IH department wants to raise employee awareness about noise exposure in the workplace.

condition known as tinnitus."

This condition can have a profound impact on a person's life. It can reduce the ability to

hear higher frequency sounds (such as your grandchildren's voices), it can lead to problems falling asleep and it can make it impossible to use telephone equipment.

"There are areas around the plant where noise levels exceed 90dB," continues Marc-Andre. "Long-term, unprotected exposure at that level can result in permanent damage to the hearing."

According to Marc-Andre and industrial hygiene (IH) technician Jim Thorne, it all comes down to education. That's why they, along with fellow IH technician Barry Boudreal, are developing plans for an industrial hearing conservation campaign in early 2005.

The campaign will include training sessions for employees who work in areas where noise levels pose a risk to their hearing. Information about the

training sessions will be communicated to area supervisors prior to the start of the sessions.

"There's a misconception out there that if you're wearing hearing protection, you'll be safe," says Jim. "The fact is, manufacturer's ratings can be misleading, so even wearing what you believe may be the right hearing protection may not give you 100 per cent protection. The training session will highlight what equipment is suitable for specific areas in the plant."

But reducing noise at the source remains the best solution.

"We're working on a noise awareness manual that outlines how to deal with noise through source control solutions" concludes Marc-Andre. "It should be ready in time for the start of the noise awareness campaign."



# MILESTONES

Employees celebrating anniversaries with Alcan

## 30 Years



▲ **Celeste Raposo**  
Supervisor Safety Department  
Administration

## 25 Years



▲ **Mike Correia**  
Mobile Equipment Operator



▲ **Steve Tomlinson**  
Superintendent Technical  
- Reduction Services

## 20 Years



▲ **Barb Taylor**  
Supervisor Warehouse

## 15 Years



▲ **Jean Nidd**  
Project Cost Analyst

## New Hire



▲ **Mike McKie**  
Refrigeration Mechanic



▲ **Todd Newton**  
Millwright

## Alcan offers Flu Vaccine Clinics for employees

**Date** November 3 and 4

**Time** 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.

**At** Building 176 (medical building)

**Cost** Free

Flu vaccines are offered to all Alcan employees. No appointment is necessary. Employees will be asked to remain in the medical building reception area for 15 minutes following the injection. Contact occupational health nurse Kathie Bock at local 8489 for more information.



# Ingot

ALCAN PRIMARY METAL BRITISH COLUMBIA

*ingot* is published every last Friday in the month by Alcan Primary Metal - British Columbia, for its active and retired employees and their families. Office telephone: local 8519 or (250) 639-8519 or by email: [cathie.stevens@alcan.com](mailto:cathie.stevens@alcan.com). Our address is:

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[www.alcaninbc.com/kitimat/index.html](http://www.alcaninbc.com/kitimat/index.html). **Please respect *ingot***

**deadlines for copy, revisions and photographs. The deadline for the next issue is November 5th.**

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## Alcan Retirees Christmas Social

The management team of Alcan Primary Metal - BC invites all Alcan retirees to an Open House to share in some Christmas cheer and exchange greetings with friends. The hall will be decked with boughs of holly and we look forward to meeting you at the fifth annual Alcan Retirees' Christmas Open House.

**Date**

**Thursday, December 9**

**Time**

**2:00 to 4:00 p.m.**

**Place**

**Kitimat Rod  
and Gun Club**