



Village of Tahsis

Our File No.

Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure
Courtenay Area Office
500 Comox Road
Courtenay, BC
V3N 3P6

May 8, 2017

Attention: Kevin Carter, Operations Manager

Re: Review of Audit and Monitoring Reports – Head Bay Forest Service Road

Thank you for meeting with Village staff on April 7th in your offices. On behalf of Council, I am writing with the Village of Tahsis' findings and observations based on the 2012-2016 audit and monitoring reports regarding the Head Bay Forest Service Road ("HBFSR").

Findings

- From 2012 to 2015, the Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure ("MOTI") conducted between 4 and 5 in-process audits each year on issues such as road surface, dust control and whether the correct formula was used for the application of magnesium chloride and calcium chloride.
- In 2016, two in-process audits were conducted. No in-process audits have been conducted since May 2016.
- All audits were conducted during summer months, except 2 in 2013.
- Each audit report found the road met requirements.
- MOTI staff advised that there were "no good reasons" why the number of audits had declined and why no audits have been conducted for almost a year.
- From 2012 to 2014 monitoring reports were sent to Emcon Services Ltd, but that stopped in 2014. MOTI staff could not provide an explanation as to why Emcon no longer receives monitoring reports.
- MOTI staff drove the HBFSR in November 2016 and February 2017 but did not produce monitoring reports.

Observations

- In light of Emcon's poor performance in maintaining the HBFSR over the past 9-12 months, we would have expected MOTI to have produced at least a small number of audit and/or monitoring reports during this period.
- The monitoring reports are snapshot descriptions of the road conditions, not contract compliance findings.
- The dearth of winter audit and monitoring reports is a major gap in MOTI's data.
- MOTI has not used the data collected for contractor performance assessment or planning purposes which indicates that the reports have not been used effectively.
- MOTI has not conducted short response time audits of Emcon's performance on the HBFSR.

We are encouraged by MOTI's plans to chip seal 5 kilometers of the road this summer and look forward to hearing more details regarding the location of this improvement and to what degree Council's input has been reflected in those plans. We also are interested to learn the plans regarding brushing, ditching, base stabilization and other foundational work.

From the Winter Stakeholder Surveys, you know that communication from Emcon is non-existent. We will want to hear from MOTI what it is doing to ensure the contractor communicates road conditions, its road maintenance activity and other relevant information proactively, regularly, consistently and accurately.

We understand that you would like to present the HBFSR plans to Council this spring. We will certainly accommodate your schedule to ensure that happens.

Sincerely,



Mayor Jude Schooner

Cc: Erik Lachmuth, Vancouver Island Area Manager
Ashok Bhatti, Regional Director, South Coast Region
Sandra Toth Nacey, Director, Highways Department, Business Management Services Branch