



Type what you want to search

Search

02/08/2019



Vale Reports on Progress of Preventive Measures in Barão dos Cocais (Minas Gerais)

New inspection of the Sul Superior dam will be carried out on Sunday (February 10)

Until early afternoon, Vale had accommodated 205 people in hotels and another 188 in the homes of relatives in the town of Barão dos Cocais (Minas Gerais) and region, as part of the preventive measures set out in the Emergency Action Plan for Mining Dams (PAEBM) of the Sul Superior dam. The security measure - that included blocking access to evacuated areas - was implemented after the PAEBM's emergency status rose to level 2 by order of Brazil's National Mining Agency. Inhabitants from Barão dos Cocais were initially taken to a gym in the city and are now being assisted at the Nossa Senhora do Rosário Municipal School, located at Rua Padre Mauro Faria, 134. The service will be available throughout the day during the Emergency Protocol.

Vale has placed a multidisciplinary team of psychologists, social assistants and doctors at the gym and in hotels. Assistance includes supply of medicines and other items and special meals that may be required. Vale will continue supporting the population in temporary accommodation until things get back to normal. Teams from Vale, the Civil Defense, the Military Police and the Civil and Military Fire Service joined a task force to visit and evacuate the communities.

The company emphasizes that this decision was made as a precautionary measure. The dam's status initially rose to the first emergency level, among the three possible levels established by law. Subsequently, the company was required to escalate the status to the second emergency level and start evacuating the areas near the operation, as a preventive measure.

The Emergency Action Plan for Mining Dams (PAEBM) was implemented earlier on Friday (2:30 am), with Vale sounding the sirens within the Self-Saving Zone, the area downstream of the Sul Superior dam at the Gongo Soco mine, warning residents to flee. The company contacted the relevant authorities and provided logistics using buses and vans.

The action covers approximately 500 people in the communities of Socorro, Tabuleiro, Piteiras, and Vila Congo, all located in the city of Barão dos Cocais, 100 km from Belo Horizonte. According to authorities, 31 people refused to leave their homes. The defense agencies will collaborate and make a new attempt to take these people to a safe zone.

This task force has set up a control station at the University Aberta do Brasil, in Bairro Cidade Nova, where the teams will be standby to assist the population.

Sheltering of animals is being arranged by the authorities with the support of veterinarians and biologists. The evacuated animals will be taken to a farm in the region, to be rented by Vale.

Dam Stability Monitoring Measures

This Sunday (10), a German company specializing in stability analysis will make a new inspection and issue an opinion report. After activating the emergency plan, Vale continues to monitor the dam conditions every four hours. Vale's team did not detect any abnormality in the last check. Until this new report is issued, the warning level will remain as "level 2" and the population will remain accommodated in a safe area outside the Self-Saving Zone, which is the area downstream of the dam extending up to 10 km, as defined in the Emergency Action Plan for Mining Dams (PAEBM).

Vale will continue monitoring the dam's stability conditions and will install an equipment that detects millimetric movements in its structure.

The company is working closely with local authorities to monitor and implement all recommended safety and assistance measures, and will keep the communities continuously informed about the issue.

About the Dam

The Sul Superior dam is one of the remaining ten inactive upstream tailings dams owned by Vale and is part of the decommissioning acceleration plan announced in the Press Release "Vale announces the decommissioning of all its upstream dams" on January 29, 2019. The above-mentioned dam used to support the production of the Gongo Soco mine, which had its iron ore production halted by Vale in April 2016.

More information

