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Vale announces production plans at Canadian operations

Vale announces that it is proceeding with plans to increase nickel production at its strike-bound operations in the Canadian provinces of Ontario and Newfoundland and Labrador, where unionized production and maintenance workers have been on strike for close to eight months.

Vale resumed partial production in its Sudbury mining site in Ontario in September 2009 with a focus on copper - operating two high-copper mining zones and the company's Clarabelle Mill to produce copper concentrates. In January 2010, the focus shifted to nickel, with resumption of a one-furnace operation at the company's Copper Cliff smelter. The furnace has been operating at full capacity since, drawing down nickel inventories to produce a nickel oxide matte for the Company's refinery in Clydach, Wales and producing at a nominal rate of 11 million pounds of nickel per month.

We are currently ramping up mine production in Sudbury to secure an uninterrupted supply of feed for the furnace and expect to be in position to maintain full, uninterrupted production by the end of the second quarter. The Clydach Refinery, meanwhile, is currently operating at a rate of 2.5 million pounds of nickel per month and is expected to be back at full capacity by April, producing 7.9 million pounds of nickel per month.

In Newfoundland and Labrador, Vale has resumed production at the Voisey's Bay Ovoid mine and the mill - which supplies nickel concentrates to Vale's operations in Thompson, Manitoba and Sudbury, Ontario and copper concentrates to clients in Europe. The Voisey's Bay site is currently operating on a two-week on, two-week off campaign basis, producing 3.5 million pounds of nickel per month and 2.8 million pounds of copper per month.

More information



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