

Press release

September 14, 2022

URM development goes into next phase: Arctic Canadian Diamond Company awards IHC Mining with contract for underwater mining crawler

Arctic Canadian Diamond Company (“Arctic Canadian”) and IHC Mining have reached the next important milestone in the development of the underwater remote mining (URM) system for the extraction of diamond-bearing kimberlite ore from deep open pits at the Ekati Diamond Mine in the Northwest Territories of Canada. Arctic Canadian has now awarded IHC Mining with a contract to build and deliver an Underwater Mining Crawler for the URM system. This contract follows the first milestone of the Launch and Recovery Platform being awarded by Arctic Canadian for the URM system, earlier this year. The platform is scheduled for delivery by the end of 2022.

Recently, an expert team from the Netherlands visited the Ekati Diamond Mine in Canada to see the facilities and discuss further implementation of the URM at site. Taco de Boer, Manager Mining Consultancy at IHC Mining: “We received a very warm welcome. Everybody we met at the site is very excited and committed to making this innovative project a success. The facilities are well suited for supporting the URM and preparations are already ongoing.”

Arctic Canadian and IHC Mining started their cooperation in 2018, to jointly develop an innovative and integrated mining solution. The starting point for the development of the underwater remote mining system, was to economically extract kimberlite from marginal kimberlite pipes and from deep extents of completed open pits. An important focus is to develop a mining solution that would have a much lower environmental impact than conventional mining methods. As the URM crawler is only mining the kimberlite ore and minimal waste, it significantly reduces the mine’s footprint. The URM solution could allow the Ekati Diamond Mine to extend its lifetime by at least 10 years.

The underwater mining crawler is a remote operated continuous mining machine, equipped with the latest underwater control and positioning equipment. The ore is directly excavated with a drum cutter in small layers and eliminates the need for blasting explosives. From the crawler the ore is pumped to the surface of the flooded pit via a vertical pipeline system to the Launch and Recovery Platform, from where the ore is transported further to a dewatering plant. The crawler system is capable of operating at a water depth of up to 400 meters.

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“Many other mining solutions were evaluated over the past 15-20 years, but the mining crawler is the technological breakthrough for kimberlite diamond mining we were looking for,” says Jon Carlson, Head of Exploration and Project Development at Arctic Canadian. “With this solution we are taking the next step in the future of diamond-bearing kimberlite mining.”

The mining crawler will be built at Royal IHC’s premises in the UK and delivered to Arctic Canadian late 2023. It will then be trialled in the Lynx pit in the summer of 2024, together with the other components of the URM solution. The goal will be the extraction of approximately 150,000 tonnes of Lynx kimberlite ore.



Arctic Canadian Diamond Company and IHC Mining’s Underwater Mining Crawler for the Underwater Remote Mining System. The crawler will help recover diamond-bearing kimberlite ore from deep open pits at the Ekati Diamond Mine, in the Northwest Territories of Canada.

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Note for the editors, not for publication:

About IHC Mining

For every phase in the mining life cycle for raw materials, IHC Mining provides reliable, integrated solutions, fully tailored to specific demand for mineral resources. By means of the state-of-the-art equipment that we design and build – and the services we deliver – our customers can improve operational efficiency, lower the cost per tonne and make their activities more sustainable. We have a proven track record in solutions for mineral sands, tailings rehabilitation, battery minerals, gold, diamonds, tin and other commodities. In addition, with our experts working on a global basis, we guarantee a local presence and industry leading support on every continent.

IHC Mining is part of Royal IHC, a leading designer, builder and supplier of integrated vessels, equipment and services to customers in the dredging, offshore, mining and defence industries. We deliver reliable solutions that improve operational efficiency and allow for a more sustainable performance. As we navigate new waters, our aim remains unchanged: to discover the smartest and safest way forward for both our customers and our people.

Together, we create the mining future.

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This press release can also be found on our website www.royalihc.com.

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About Arctic Canadian

Arctic Canadian Diamond Company Ltd. is a Canadian mining company and a significant producer and supplier of premium rough diamond assortments to the global market. The company owns and operates the Ekati Diamond Mine, located in Canada's Northwest Territories. In addition to its mining and exploration operations, Arctic Canadian Diamond Company Ltd. has offices in Canada and Belgium.

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