

## Bin Items

Raised by Industry and State Attendees

### BLM Bond Adjudication Workshop

August 11, 2004

1. **E-filings** for bond forms. Investigate use Adobe Acrobat Writer (.pdf) to fill in forms electronically.
2. **Schedule FO training** session in bond adjudication process, similar to the one given to NvMA.
3. **Bond Handbook.** Make copies of Nevada's Bond Handbook for the public when updated and available.
4. **Volunteers.** Explore use of volunteers (i.e., retired exploration geologists, Nevada Geological Society) to screen bonding questions, process mining claims, etc.
5. **NSO/FO Communication.**
  - a. There may be a lack of communication in the overall bond process. "CC:" all bonding requests/FO decisions (and other bond-related correspondence) to the operator to NSO, Branch of Minerals Adjudication to increase communication. The NSO should, after a reasonable period, continue to notify FOs of those operators who have not submitted bonds after being notified to do so.
  - b. Explore ways to foster better (3-way) coordination between NSO, FOs, and the operator/bond principal on bond submissions.
    - i. *(Continue)* Concurrent NSO bond adjudication and FO notice processing *[NV-923 has been doing this for several years]*.
    - ii. Put operation BLM serial number on check when submitting.
    - iii. NSO Bond Adjudication visit to FOs *(See 2. above)*
6. **Business Office/Cashier/Adjudication Communication.** Check linkages/communication between NSO Business Office, Cashier, and Branch of Minerals Adjudication concerning foreign checks, so there is no mistaking bond checks for MCR checks. Because finance staff know that foreign checks are not accepted in MCR, some foreign bond checks may be returned as not acceptable. Also, some domestic checks are being considered foreign and have unnecessarily been put through the 30-day foreign check screening process.
7. **Place-Card.** Consider use of a place-card in the bond "stack" when additional information is requested. After notification and XX days to respond, case would be moved to bottom of "stack." *[NV-923 does not maintain a "stack" of bond files. There are two file cabinets (3 feet wide by 7 feet high each) with files organized in alphabetical order by name of Bond Principal. One shelf is dedicated to files in a pending action state and is organized by the date triggering an action required by NV-923. Also, the notification that a response is needed by some future date would require another decision document to be generated by NV-923 staff. This creates more work for an already understaffed group and may be counter productive.]*

8. **Bond Scoping Meetings.** Explore feasibility, efficiency, and benefits of setting up a (1-hour and scheduled in advance) “Pre-Bond Submission” scoping meeting process to ensure bonds are submitted properly.
9. **Cash bonds.** Think outside the box to process faster.
10. **“Bonding for Dummies.”** Create a “Bonding for Dummies” Web page and include some examples of correctly filled out bond forms.
11. **Staffing Up for Peak Periods.** Consider a process where operators could notify the Chief, Branch of Adjudication (NSO) of anticipated increases in bond submissions, so NSO can plan ahead.
12. **Create “screening umbrella/shield”** over adjudicators to alleviate them from answering easy questions and explaining how to fill out forms (e.g., items 8 & 11 above), freeing them to focus on adjudicating bonds. For example, the NSO Branch Chief and Staff Assistant for Minerals Adjudication, the Information Access Center (IAC) supervisor and staff, and FO Surface Management staff could screen phone calls and walk-in requests for bond adjudication processing information and forms assistance. Also, FO decisions involving requests for bond submissions could refer operators to the Branch of Minerals Adjudication (775-861-6599 or -6536) and not individual bond adjudicators. Also, a Nevada Mining Association representative suggested the use of retired exploration geologists as a possible source of volunteer help for the NSO Information Access Center (IAC; Public Room) to help answer mining related questions and fill out forms.