



Resource Development (Phils.) Inc.

NEWS RELEASE

TVIRD Keeps Roads Safe and Accident-Free in ZamPen



Driving defensively. In addition to its fleet of company vehicles, TVIRD maintains heavy equipment and school buses for the growing population of more than 850 students in Canatuan Public Elementary and Secondary School. Drivers from the company's Mobile department are trained in safely maneuvering through various terrains and under the harshest conditions. TVIRD's Canatuan mine site never experienced a fatal accident since starting its mining operations in 2004.

Siocon, Zamboanga del Norte / August 2013 – Since it ramped-up mining in Sitio Canatuan, town of Siocon in Zamboanga del Norte, transporting resources and personnel has been a vital part of operations at TVI Resource Development Philippines Inc. (TVIRD). The company has constructed and maintains the 45-km road in Baliguian – a neighboring municipality – and the 16-km Paduan-Candiz-Tungawan route. Including the 79-km thoroughfare linking Siocon to RT Lim, TVIRD maintains a road network of some 140

kilometers. And because safe and efficient mobility is valuable to its business, the company continues employing measures that ensure the wellbeing of both its personnel and the community.

Recently, 63 TVIRD drivers underwent a two-day training aimed to enhance their proficiency and orientation towards safety. The activity was initiated by the company's safety and human resource departments and was conducted by occupational safety and health (OSH) practitioner Engr. Wendell dela Cruz from Synerquest Management Consultancy Services Inc. – a DOLE-accredited consultancy firm.

While company drivers have been performing exceptionally over the years, the training was recommended in order to provide them with additional skills that can easily help them land jobs both here and abroad once mining operations are concluded, according to TVIRD Safety Department Manager Arturo Abad.

TVIRD is the first mining company given the nod by the national government to operate under the Mining Act of 1995. Currently, it is mining copper and zinc in the ancestral lands of the Subanons in Sitio Canatuan, which is located north east of Siocon. Canatuan has been host to the mining firm since 2004.

“We never experienced fatal accidents ever since. Nonetheless, the training will upgrade their driving skills, instill the right attitude towards work as well as make them conscious of their responsibility towards their passengers, other road users and themselves,” Abad added.

Nearly 10,000 vehicular and traffic-related accidents have been recorded in the Philippines in 2012. Among these, more than 50 percent result from automobiles while the remaining are motorcycle and truck-related. As a result, there have been over 1,100 fatalities during the same period, according data from the Land Transportation Office in the Zamboanga Peninsula Region. These give a greater impetus for TVIRD to conduct its training on driving safety.

Driver fatigue

“Do not drive when you're tired, sleepy or sleepless. Never drive when you are intoxicated or under the influence of alcohol. Do not drive when you have taken drowse medication or when in doubt of your driving condition,” advised Dela Cruz who also revealed that overworked drivers have statistically caused several road accidents in the country.

Dela Cruz also emphasized three important things so one can become a defensive and competent driver: “First, a driver must have a good attitude towards work. Second, his vehicle must be in good running condition. And third, the driver must have the ability and capability to drive and is also in good physical condition. If drivers have these, we may call him a defensive driver,” he added.

In 2012, about 35 people died because of road accidents while 92 were injured in Zamboanga Peninsula alone, disclosed PNP Regional Command Chief Inspector and Spokesman Ariel Huesca in a recent interview.

“These (accidents) happen because of human factor such as wrong overtaking, wrong turning, over speeding, drunk driving, mechanical defect of vehicles, bad road conditions – even animals crossing the road,” he said.

However, Abad said that those incidents can be avoided by safe and competent drivers.

“These can be avoided by a disciplined driver. I’ve been in Canatuan since 2009, and under my watch, we haven’t experienced fatal accidents. I think we have developed a culture of safety that has been cascaded not only to our employees but also the community,” he said.

Nelson Calexterio, a driver assigned to the company’s top executives and visiting dignitaries shared that they mandatorily check the condition of vehicles before driving employees or visitors to different destinations. Disciplined drivers always check their vehicles’ batteries, lights, oil, water, brakes, tires and other vital components, he added.

“It (the training) was educational for me and for my fellow drivers. It was worth our time and upgraded our skills as professional drivers,” said Calexterio.

Exit plan

For the second consecutive year in 2012, TVIRD bested other large local mining companies in its respective metallic category, garnering the Philippine Mine Safety and Environment Association’s (PMSEA) Safest Mining Operations Award and the Platinum Award for excellence in environmental management – the highest accolade received under the surface mining operations category. The Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE) also conferred it the 2012 Gawad Kaligtasan at Kalusugan (GKK) and the Safety Milestone awards for its responsive health and safety programs.

TVIRD will be implementing its mine rehabilitation and closure plan on its current mining operations at the end of the 2013. Already, an air of melancholy is felt by everybody in the Subanon community as well as its employees. The acceptance of its imminent closure has already sunk in – including its consequence.

“Mine closure is inevitable. We cannot stop it since mine ore is already depleting. But we are hopeful that TVIRD will come back to mine again in our homeland. This early, I am sad but there is still hope since we’ve already given the company our permission to mine a part of our land just near the current mine pit. If government allows it, we’ll be happy to welcome the company again,” quipped Subanon employee Lydia Dandana.

About TVI

TVI Resource Development (Phils.) Inc., is the Philippine affiliate of TVI Pacific Inc. (TSX: TVI), a publicly-listed Canadian mining company focused on the exploration and production of precious and base metals from district scale large system, high margin projects located in the Philippines.

We are committed to exploration and mining practices that promote transparency, responsible stewardship of the environment, and the inalienable rights to life, dignity, and sustainable development of our host communities.

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