



How Reporting Yields Progress

Teck is not a newcomer to sustainability reporting. The company's external reporting on environmental, health, safety and community performance through an annual sustainability report began in 2001. By 2003, the industry was in a boom, but with that boom came concern. Enron's scandal had signaled a need for ethics and transparency. Yet as industry-wide pressure increased, Teck was prepared.

Challenge

In 2005, a group of socially responsible investors filed a shareholder resolution to request that Teck use the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) framework for its annual sustainability report. The resolution prompted higher accountability and greater transparency.

Response

- 1. Commit to GRI standards.** Teck chose to move forward with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) – an internationally recognized framework for sustainability reporting. Prior to operating within GRI guidelines, Teck's sustainability reports lacked key data and a framework for benchmarking its performance relative to industry peers. "Once you start using the GRI guidelines, you commit to disclosure of management methods, risks, goals, successes, failures and stakeholder engagement, and you commit to reporting it all in a balanced, credible tone," reports Carmen Turner, Teck's Sustainability Leader.
- 2. Reach Out.** Teck invited a panel of key stakeholders to review and provide feedback on their sustainability report. In response to feedback, Teck either agreed to implement a recommendation, or disagreed and provided a response to why. The sustainability report was then approved by all panel members and released on Teck's website. This simple, but effective strategy spawned an annual event at which Teck meets the GRI stakeholder engagement requirement and obtains insight to improve its reporting. The panel process is now a way of scanning trends and responding to stakeholder concerns.
- 3. Go Beyond.** In 2008, Teck became a member of the International Council on Mining & Metals (ICMM), a CEO-led group dedicated to advancing sustainable mining. Membership is rigorous, as companies must implement the ICMM assurance framework. This framework goes beyond external verification of a sustainability report and requires assurance on: 1) alignment of company policies, processes and practices with ICMM; 2) identification of material issues; 3) management of material issues; 4) reporting of material issues and 5) a GRI based report at the A+ level. "This forces us to report to the GRI at the highest level possible," notes Turner.

Result

Teck was recognized on the North American Dow Jones Sustainability Index (DJSI) in 2008. Two years later, it debuted on DJSI World. "Because of the work we're doing – not just what we are communicating – we're now starting to see an increase in recognition from external parties," says Turner.

GRI guidelines initially influenced Teck's practices and reporting, but the company has progressed to a point where it develops its own sustainability strategy. As Turner specifies: "We now have 20-year, long-term goals and 5-year, short-term goals that were developed by a cross company working group. The strategy is currently being implemented by implementation teams at each operation and we continue to further focus on engaging employees across the company. This is fully supported by our CEO and senior management team."



Looking ahead, Teck is monitoring the evolution of integrated reporting – the integration of sustainability reporting into annual reporting. Jurisdictions like South Africa have already started mandating it.

Takeaway

For those unfamiliar with reporting, Turner advises managers to get started. “The expectation to be transparent is only increasing. Regardless of whether reporting is legislated or results from stakeholder or shareholder activism, it’s better to be proactive than to be forced into a situation where you will have to report within unrealistic timeframes and play catch up.” This proactivity can protect or enhance your firm’s reputation and put you ahead of regulation.

