



ISLAND PASSAGE
Development Canada Limited

First Large-Scale Mineral Exploration Program Underway on Bougainville since the 2001 Peace Accord between Papua New Guinea and Bougainville

Arawa, Bougainville, Papua New Guinea – May 1, 2024 – Island Passage Development Canada Limited (IPDC or the Company) announces the commencement of a mineral exploration program by its PNG subsidiary, Island Passage Development Limited (IPD) on the EL02 exploration license in Bougainville, Papua New Guinea. IPDC, in partnership with Isina Resource Holdings Limited (IRHL), a customary landowner company, are jointly exploring the 261 square km mineral property located in south central Bougainville in the Crown Prince Range, nine kilometres along strike to the southeast from the historic Panguna copper gold mine.

This marks the first undertaking of a large-scale mineral exploration program on Bougainville outside the special mining lease held by Bougainville Copper Ltd (Rio Tinto – CRA) since 1965. The new exploration program is also historic because EL02, which is held by IRHL, was the first valid license for metals exploration on Bougainville issued under the Autonomous Bougainville Government's 2015 Mining Act.

Steven Topesi, Director of IRHL and Chairman of the Central Veterans Association comments, "We the Kongara (EL02) people on Bougainville have always said no to claims on our mineral resources by outsiders. From these mountains we lead the struggle for the return of our stolen rights from Colonial claims. Now, as the recognised owners of our minerals, we are proud to be the first landowner company to invite an outside partner, Island Passage, to join with us to explore and develop what we have.

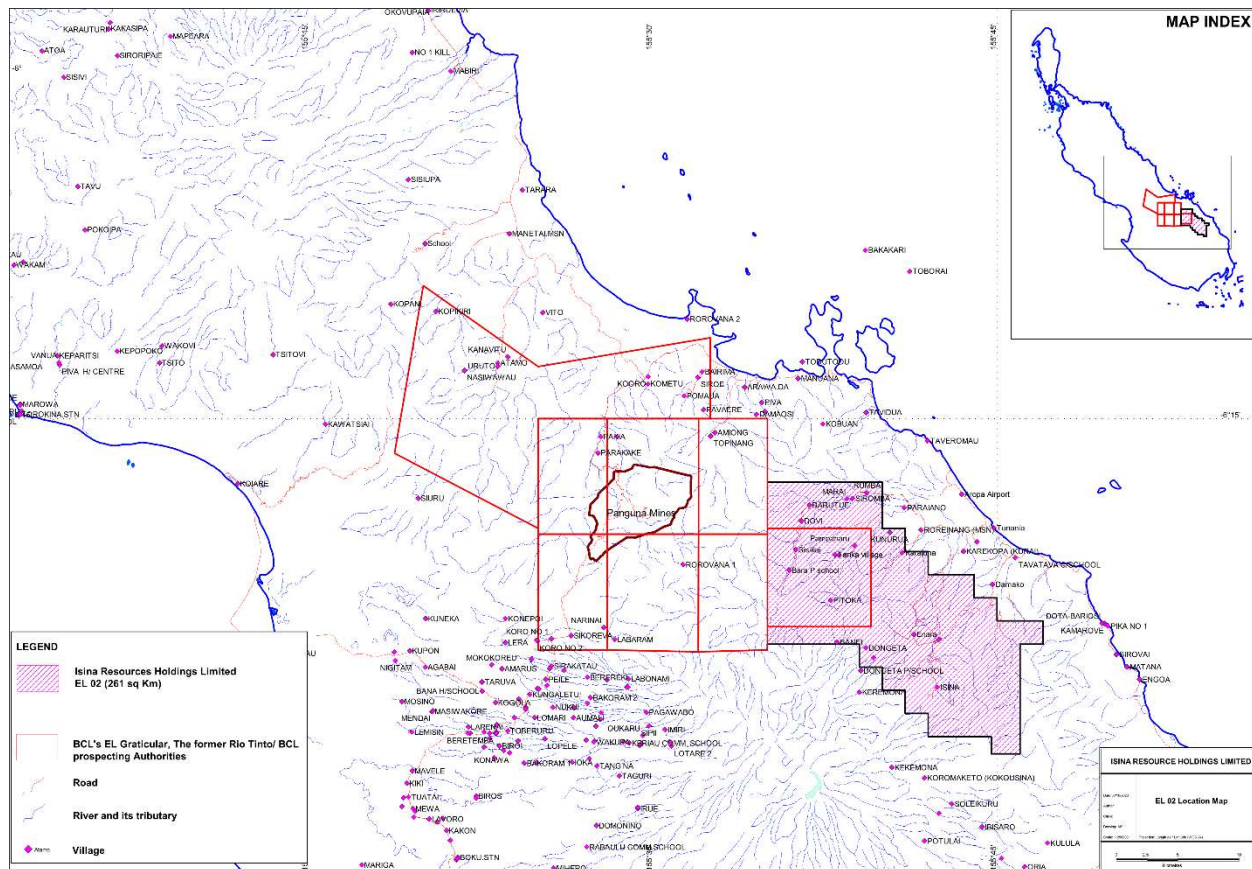
The Company initiated the exploration program in March with a plan for several months of systematic stream sediment and panned concentrate sampling to blanket the northwest trending prospective corridor on the license. The team on the ground is led by several Indonesian geologists who are experienced on the island and specialised in porphyry copper geology and exploration in similar terrains and climate from around the Ring of Fire. The Company's geologists are supported by a team of over 30 Bougainvilleans who have undergone field operations training.

Prior to the commencement of the sampling campaign, an advance team from IRHL began building social awareness of the upcoming exploration with customary landowners and neighbors. In dozens of meetings all over the license area, the team conveyed the details of the plan and put logistical support in place. The overall effort is being coordinated by IPDC co-founder Lindsay Semple from Arawa, where IPD and IRHL are based.

The current campaign is expected to continue through to July, after which results will be compiled and a phase two follow up campaign will be initiated.

Donald McInnes, Co-Founder and CEO of IPDC, commented on the significance of the return of systematic exploration to Bougainville, *"For 17 years beginning in 1972, Bougainville was host to one of the world's largest copper-gold mines. Today, the world is chasing new supplies of critical and precious metals, and demand is driving gold and copper to new highs. Island Passage Development is committed to working with the customary landowners of Bougainville through an innovative partnership to reassess*

the mineral potential of Bougainville and to provide a sustainable future under the new mining law that is ahead of its time.”



History

The Island of Bougainville is one of the most prospective and under-explored porphyry copper terranes in the world. Since the closure of the world-class Panguna Mine in 1989, the development of Bougainville's mining industry has been frozen, except for the rise of small-scale artisanal alluvial mining.

The Bougainville Mining Act (2015) is modern mining legislation that contains the following provision that is unique among the world's mining laws, Section 8 of the 2015 Act states;

8. Property in Minerals – customary land

All minerals existing on, in or below the surface of land in Bougainville are the property of the owners of the customary land.

This decree, through Section 8 of the Act, puts the mineral resource owning landowners at the table with their development partners, not as mere bystanders. By unambiguously empowering the customary landowners the Act acknowledges direct ownership of the resources, requires participation and sets the stage for accomplishment. It is an antidote to the adversarial mining regimes that currently plague the world.

Under the provisions of the Bougainville Peace Agreement, the Bougainville Mining Act is administered by the Autonomous Bougainville Government (ABG), independent of Papua New Guinea and its separate mining act.

EL02 is one of only two valid exploration licences on Bougainville and the only one under active exploration.

A Long Term Effort

This program is the result of an 18 year long intensive effort started in 2005 with an initiative by Lindsay Semple. The effort brought together the Paramount Chiefs, the ABG, and other leaders to understand the terms and conditions that would create a viable path for resumption of mining activity after the trauma of The Conflict, an eight year long civil war sparked by mining that led to the deaths of over 15,000 people. The effort and investment only made sense in light of the generally accepted vast mineral potential of Bougainville and the island's need for infrastructure and economic development.

IPDC has entered into a comprehensive earn-in agreement with IRHL (the licence holder) to earn up to a 70% interest in the project assets. Once vested through its investment in the exploration of the mineral resources on the license, IPDC and IRHL will proceed to develop the projects and assets together.

Current Mining Activity

Virtually unknown until 2007, today the island has alluvial gold production of approximately 35,000 ounces per annum – largely by Bougainvilleans at the village and community scale. New gold occurrences are being discovered on a regular basis and worked sporadically by the village artisanal miners.

Government Policies towards Mining

The Autonomous Bougainville Government has made several material statements about the future prosperity of Bougainville being linked to the reemergence of a modern sustainable mining industry.

In June of 2023, the Autonomous Bougainville Government published a 50 year vision document called “One People, One Nation, One Vision”.

In it can be found the following;

“Goal: By 2052, Bougainville will have built a modern, diversified, and sustainable economy based initially on mining and thereafter on agriculture, fishing, forestry and tourism with a thriving private sector and prolific economic opportunities for all our people.”

“Economic potential: Bougainville is blessed with valuable natural resources, including one of the world's most vital commodities – extractive resources in the field of copper and gold. The development of the Bougainville's mining sector can help to secure the foundations of a sustainable and vibrant economy. The revenue from the sector can be invested in education and health services for families and in helping farmers to increase their productivity so that our agriculture sector becomes a leading driver of private sector jobs. This revenue can also help to fund the infrastructure necessary to build a diversified economy and transform Bougainville into a modern nation.”

Extracted from [BOUGAINVILLE long term VISION 2052 \(abg.gov.pg\)](#)

About Isina Resource Holdings Ltd. IRHL was founded in 2009 with the directors drawn from the chiefs of the nine major clans and their subclans in south Central Bougainville. As the custodians of their customary clan-owned land, the forty-three directors represent the customary landowner families. In an exercise of sovereignty over their mineral rights, they applied for and were granted EL02 over their lands. The licence boundary is situated 9 km SE of the Panguna open pit along the Crown Prince Range, and extends a further 26 km to the SE. The tenement contains wholly within it the area known as P.A.7B which was one of the seven BCL (Rio Tinto) exploration tenements that it held surrounding Panguna.

About Island Passage Development Canada Ltd. A private Canadian company purpose built in 2022 to facilitate the finance, technical, commercial, and business development expertise that will be necessary to drive exploration and development on Bougainville. The Company is founded on the principle of responsible resource development in partnership with indigenous and customary landowners, and its leadership has a long track record of success on multiple such ventures.

About Island Passage Development Ltd. The PNG company is 100% owned by IPDC to bring exploration finance and technical capacity from Canada to Bougainville to carry out exploration on EL02.

For further information please go to islandpassage.ca

Or follow IPDC on Facebook at [\(3\) Island Passage Development | Facebook](#)