

## > The Power of Partnership



The continuing success of Athabasca Basin Security (ABS) demonstrates the value of Orano Canada's northern contracting strategy. Orano's McClean Lake mill was among the first customers of ABS when the company was formed in 2002. Since then, ABS has grown and diversified to become a leading company with 300 employees providing a full range of industrial security services to top tier of global mining companies including Orano.

ABS is owned by Athabasca Basin Development, which is owned by the largely Dene communities of the Athabasca Basin region. ABS creates economic development and employment opportunities for people of the Basin and is now expanding across Western Canada. In September, Canadian Business and Macleans ranked ABS on the Growth500 list that recognizes Canada's fastest growing companies.

Orano's Veronique Loewen recently discussed the company's success with ABS CEO Ron Hyggen (Photo).

**On behalf of Orano, I congratulate you and everyone at ABS on being named to the Growth 500 ranking. National recognition is quite an achievement for a company from northern Saskatchewan. How did you achieve that?**

Thank you Veronique. To be one of only eight companies from Saskatchewan to make the Growth500 list this year is something our team is truly proud of. This recognition reflects the strength of our company and the dedication of our team. Continued growth and diversification means economic development and employment opportunities for our shareholder communities and that's the real win.

**When did Athabasca Basin Security start working with Orano (and its predecessor companies)? And, how did the contracting relationship come about?**

ABS began working with Orano in 2002. Prior to this time Orano and the leadership in the seven Athabasca Basin communities met and discussed how the northern communities could get involved with providing services for McClean Lake. The result was the creation of Athabasca Basin Development (ABD) led by Geoff Gay. Athabasca Basin Security was formed and the McClean Lake security contract was purchased from the Prince Albert Grand Council (PAGC).

**What are some of the things that have made it a lasting relationship?**

The unique characteristic with the relationship between ABS and Orano is that it is more like a partnership rather than a traditional vendor-client relationship. This does not mean that we do not have to deliver high-quality service that is safe, competitively priced and efficient. This simply means that we have an open relationship where both parties are constantly in contact and exploring ways to enhance the service.



## Orano Canada's Update on its activities and Community Involvement

### **How has working with Orano benefited ABS? And, what are some of the changes/improvements that you have seen in the relationship?**

The largest benefit is one of economic self-sustainability in the north. Besides the obvious value from generating profits, the major impact on our northern communities is from providing meaningful employment to a large number of our Indigenous people from the surrounding area. Our average length of service amongst our employees at McClean Lake is approximately five years and this has a major positive impact on the lives of our employees and their families.

Adding in janitorial services to our contract several years ago has been of significant benefit. This addition allowed ABS to better build succession plans for our employees and we have seen many of our staff begin in janitorial and later advance into security positions. With our latest service addition of medical services we are optimistic that this trend will continue and will result in employees seeking further certification in the medical field and advance their careers.

### **What does the relationship between Athabasca Basin Security and Orano look like in the future? (I hear we've just renewed our contract. Awesome news!) What are some of the things that are planned to make sure it remains a good partnership for both parties?**

I believe the relationship between ABS and Orano is stronger than ever. Both parties understand the value of having a strong and positive relationship. Through the downturn, ABS and Orano continued to work closely and recently successfully renewed the services contract.

### **Is there anything you'd like to add?**

I love what I do and believe very strongly in my team. This includes all of our employees as it is our frontline employees that are the face of our company and through the support of our management team provide the high level of service we are now known for.

## **Wishing All The Best to Our Summer Students**

This summer we were happy to welcome five northern Saskatchewan residents at our McClean Lake site to help with summer activities during our mill summer shutdown. These students had the opportunity to share with our employees some of the knowledge they gained through their studies and learn some new skills while working at our site. Some of the activities they did while on site included helping with the pond clean-up, painting, providing support to the mill operators in their daily tasks, performing radiation monitoring tasks, working in the warehouse issuing and receiving parts, assisting the carpenter and site services team. Nicole Soshyski from Creighton assisted in our Radiaton department, Elden Sayazie from Black Lake and Alyx Mercredi from Fond du Lac worked with our services group, while Richie Robillard worked in our warehouse. And, Jennifer Noey, from Camsell Portage, who had been our Environmental Trainee for a year, finished that program and stayed with us through the summer. We wish Nicole, Elden, Alyx, Richie and Jennifer all the best for the continuation of their studies. Thank you all for your help with summer.



## **Stay Connected**

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