



Media release: Immediate

Thursday 20th September 2007

Airship damaged on the ground by a severe wind – De Beers diamond exploration programme in Botswana will continue.

A Zeppelin NT airship, operated by the Zeppelin Company on contract to De Beers Exploration in Botswana, had an accident on Thursday while tethered to its ground mooring. The accident happened at the exploration base set up in the vicinity of the Jwaneng Mine. The Zeppelin was not flying at the time of the accident. The South African ground crew member on board was injured and received medical attention for bruises and cuts and will remain in hospital over night for observation. His family have been informed about his condition and he has been visited by company management who will continue to provide full assistance.

The De Beers head of exploration, Charles Skinner commented; “Our first priority was the injured crew member who has been successfully evacuated and has already received medical attention in a hospital. We are deeply relieved that he is expected to make a speedy and full recovery.”

The airship was not operating at the time, but was docked with the crew member on board as is the standard practise for this airship. The airship became detached from the mast-truck after an unusual and sudden wind occurrence and has been damaged. The extent of the damage is being assessed. The Botswana Civil Aviation authorities were immediately informed of the incident and will visit the site tomorrow. The Zeppelin airship is a highly specialized craft and the operator, Zeppelin, is sending a specialist from Germany to assist with the investigation at the site.

The impact on the De Beers exploration programme in Botswana is that the Zeppelin component of the aerial and land based work programme is suspended. The company commented that while this will, in the short-term, impact on it, De Beers has other technologies which will enable the company to continue with the much larger and longer term exploration programme. De Beers and the Zeppelin Company will consider the alternatives available following a detailed review of the incident. De Beers regrets the loss incurred by our partners, the Zeppelin Company.

The management of De Beers Exploration in Botswana are at the exploration camp site and the airship, which is on the ground, poses no danger to the local community or to the environment. The company remains committed to its staff and contractors involved in this project and confirmed that the airship is fully insured. End

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