

Case Study | Rio Tinto Aluminium, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean, QC

Promoting occupational health & safety in a risky industrial environment

Rio Tinto Aluminium is a leader in the global aluminium market. The company has significant infrastructures in the Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean Québec region: 5 aluminum smelting plants, port facilities, six hydro-electric hubs and a 142-kilometer-long railway.

Major concerns, multiple challenges

There are many challenges:

- **Geographic**, due to the surface area of each infrastructure and the distance between them;
- **Operational**, because of the scope of activities, whether maritime, rail or related to power generation and aluminum production, etc.;
- **Financial**, as operational efficiency and cost management remain important topics within the company;
- And most of all **human** challenges since nearly 15,000 individuals move around regional sites every day.

Rio Tinto naturally allocates a lot of effort into Health, Safety and Environmental Protection (HSE) to address these challenges. The management team is committed to controlling and mitigating risks, as well as the associated consequences. Among this team is Guillaume Drolet, Regional Director of Corporate Security, whose mission is to ensure the protection of 5,000 employees, 10,000 suppliers, nearly \$10 billion worth of assets and Rio Tinto's interests and reputation.

In order to improve its productivity and maintain its competitiveness in the Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean region, Rio Tinto relies on many specialized service providers, including GardaWorld, since 1999, for their security services.

Employee health and safety at the core of the partnership

Like Rio Tinto, GardaWorld's senior management team is deeply committed to the safety, health and well-being of their employees, clients and partners. Well beyond legal requirements such as wearing personal protective equipment (PPE) or adopting safe behaviors, GardaWorld strives to:

- Continuously maintain a safe workplace through implementing appropriate processes, investigating incidents, and correcting potentially harmful behaviours;
- Constantly apply operational best practices;
- Use procedures and trainings that ensure the safety of employees and the general public

GardaWorld has taken a proactive approach to Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) that takes into account Rio Tinto Aluminum's four fundamental safety pillars:

- Physical security (protection of their people, assets and reputation)
- Investigation, risk assessment and mitigation
- Fire safety and fire-fighting
- Emergency response and Business Resilience and Recovery Plan (BRRP)

These shared values are reflected by processes that aimed at managing the inherent risk in an industrial environment such as Rio Tinto's. This is done first and foremost by analyzing the risks at Rio Tinto's sites according to the scope of responsibilities that GardaWorld's security guards have to fulfill. Then by transmitting the results of the assessment to employees to educate them about OHS regulations applicable to the client's sites, with an emphasis on their role in maintaining a safe working environment for not only themselves but their coworkers as well.

Through this joint commitment to OHS, GardaWorld is now a strategic partner of Rio Tinto that supports their operations by protecting their infrastructures and securing their thousands of workers: GardaWorld's security guards, patrol officers and firefighters watch over Rio Tinto's sites in the Saguenay Lac-Saint-Jean region 65,000 hours per year.

Close collaboration on a daily basis

The partnership is not only about providing personnel, it is also a close working relationship on a daily basis. M. Drolet has no control over the hiring process, the selection of personnel, the scheduling and dispatch or disciplinary measures as planned by his suppliers – any direct communication is forbidden. Indeed, the Canada Labour Code prohibits companies like Rio Tinto from initiating or having a relationship of subordination with the employees of its suppliers. In other words, Mr. Drolet cannot impose a particular management upon his contractors. He consequently pays close attention to initiatives that GardaWorld develops and implements to meet his needs.

Mr. Drolet counts on each of his suppliers to be present on the ground and to help employees to adopt best practices because, as he explains, “the way an organisation manages OHS topics is in direct correlation with the company's overall management. Addressing OHS challenges goes far beyond simply drafting policies; it is about making employees adhere to a corporate culture that encourages them to adopt safe work practices and behaviours”.

Streamlined communication between GardaWorld and Rio Tinto's teams, as well as within GardaWorld management structure – from security guard to account manager –, is essential to maintain a trusting environment. Communication encourages employees to report potentially dangerous situations, therefore prevents incidents.

On a day-to-day basis, any risk or incident is communicated to Rio Tinto's managers while GardaWorld's managers take corrective actions as soon as possible. Accident reports are also produced quarterly to measure OHS initiatives' performance and ensure continuous improvement. Thus, the client can assess GardaWorld's reliability at any time.

Continuous training for operational excellence

Specifically, GardaWorld's supervisors on each Rio Tinto site receive OHS training that allows them to verify that their security guards are operating both safely and according to the client's security policy. They are

responsible to raise awareness of the importance of risk assessment among their teams. Supervisors also conduct monthly site inspections to identify specific needs or potentials gaps in training and, develop additional prevention efforts according to the risks identified by employees.

Before being assigned to a Rio Tinto site, GardaWorld's security guards receive training on law requirements, major hazards, emergency procedures and more. Once on site, they receive an additional training specific to their work environment and their duties given by their assigned supervisor – a Rio Tinto representative attends the training as well. The site supervisor reminds them that they have a role to play in their own safety and that of their colleagues: employees must adopt OHS best practices, refer to the OHS manual available on each site in case of doubt and cooperate with management on any OHS topic.

Last but not least, GardaWorld's OHS department shares, each month, an informational bulletin featuring sensitive, i.e. emergency preparedness, or seasonal, i.e. safe work in winter, OHS topics to account directors, site supervisors and field security guards.

Fostering a corporate culture based on collaboration where every employee is empowered, educated and trained to participate in the achievement of HSE objectives is an ongoing challenge for GardaWorld. Continuous supervision, communication and training are vital to maintain employees' vigilance and active involvement.

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