

## REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

### Report of the Committee's study visit to Kilroot Salt Mines

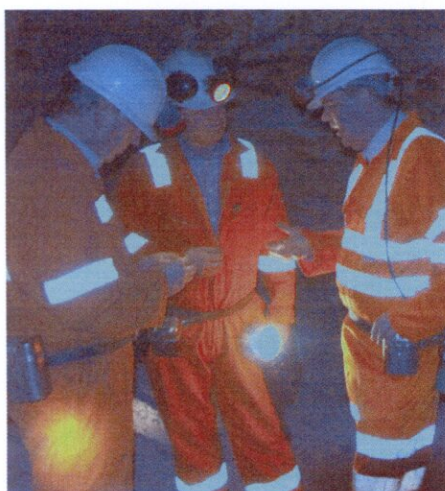
Wednesday 17 February 2010

On Wednesday 17 February 2010, the Committee held its weekly meeting in public at the Clarion Hotel, Carrickfergus, before going on to the salt mines at Kilroot, outside Carrickfergus, Co. Antrim.



Irish Salt Mining and Exploration has been mining de-icing rock salt at its Kilroot mine for over 30 years, and is a major supplier to local authorities in Northern Ireland, Great Britain and further afield.

Members received a safety briefing from mine staff before going on a guided tour, by vehicle, of the mine and on-site storage and processing facilities.



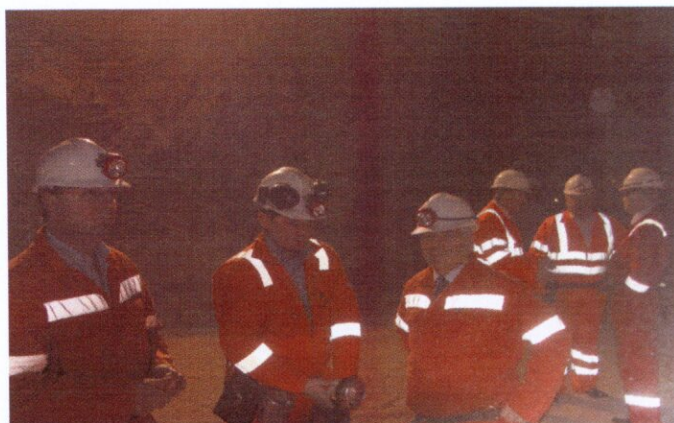
The Committee's interest in visiting the salt mines arose from the severe winter weather experienced across Northern Ireland in early 2010, and the vital role in keeping open key transport corridors played by Roads Service, in managing the supplies of salt available for gritting.

The rock salt used by Roads Service for de-icing has a chemical purity of 90%, and when spread on a reasonably heavily trafficked road, it is an effective de-icer, until sustained temperatures fall below 10 degrees Celsius.

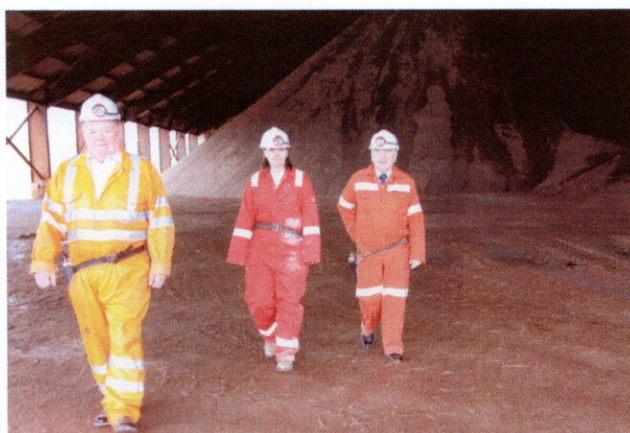


It is estimated that, to the end of January this year, Roads Service had used more than 60,000 tonnes of salt gritting the roads across Northern Ireland. This compares to previous years when the lower tonnage spread reflects the winter weather experienced.

Winter Service Year	Volume of salt spread (Tonnes)
2006/07	41,694
2007/08	41,973
2008/09	88,250



During the recent severe weather, Roads Service was able to replenish its own stocks of salt at a rate of approximately 1,000 tonnes per day.



All processing is done underground, and the mine has a six acre storage facility on site. The mine also has its own ship loading facility on the north shore of Belfast Lough. This deep water berth is capable of handling vessels of up to

25,000 tonnes, and materials are conveyor-loaded directly from storage to vessel.

The Committee Members would like to thank the staff of the Clarion Hotel and the staff and management of Irish Salt Mining and Exploration, Kilroot for their warm welcome and assistance during their recent visit.

