
Downsizing deals - Workers at Irish mine accept cost-cuts

Monday, 26 Jan, 2009

It is reported that miners at Europe's largest zinc site have accepted a cost cutting package aimed at preventing closure of the Tara mine and the loss of nearly 700 jobs.

A union spokesman said that "It's been carried by 60% in favour, 40% against." Siptu union which represents around 350 of the Irish mine's 670 workers. The 350 are made up of miners, laborers and mill operators.

The spokesman added that remaining employees including management, engineers and clerical workers who are represented by separate unions have yet to vote.

Swedish copper and zinc miner and smelter Boliden, which owns Tara Mine, declined to comment. A spokeswoman said the company would comment after all the unions have voted, expected late on last Friday.

Union leaders and management worked out the package, including measures to cut overtime and cap bonuses at the site in Meath, north of Dublin, to try and stave off closure.

Boliden said last month that it was cutting zinc production at its Finnish and Norwegian smelters due to falling demand.

Unions estimate more than 2,000 people employed in companies that provide support services to Tara workers and the Tara site could also be at risk if it were to close. Some 2.7 million tonnes of ore are mined annually at Tara, which yields zinc and lead concentrates containing up to 200,000 tonnes of zinc and 40,000 tonnes of lead metal.

For more news visit at www.steelguru.com