

Samarco starts preparing the Alegria Sul Pit for Tailings Disposal

Next week Samarco will start the works for the preparation of the Alegria Sul Pit in the Germano Complexo, located in Mariana and Ouro Preto. The site will be used as an area for the disposal of tailings from the ore beneficiation process and will have an overall capacity of 16 million cubic meters.

The pit is the structure resulting from the mining process. Because it has a rocky and stable formation, it allows the safe containment of the waste deposited in it.

It is expected that the interventions will last about 10 months, involving, at the peak of the works, approximately 750 direct and indirect employees. Samarco has committed to hiring 75% to 80% of local labor.

"The start of activities to implement the new tailings disposal system is a fundamental step towards the resumption of our operations. The Alegria Sul pit is a confined place, which provides even greater safety," says Samarco CEO Rodrigo Vilela.

In December 2017, Samarco obtained the preliminary (LP) and installation (LI) licenses from the Environmental Agency of Minas Gerais (Semad), which authorize the preparation of the site.

Letter of Commitment

Over the past few months, negotiations have been held with the Minas Gerais Public Prosecutor's Office (MPMG), which evolved into the signing of a Letter of Commitment on this past Friday (September 28) in Belo Horizonte.

The document provides for the contracting of an independent audit to monitor the implementation of the Alegria Sul Pit Tailings Disposal System. The audit will be responsible for attesting the technical and environmental safety of the Pit and its cost will be borne by Samarco.

Business continuity

In order to be able to resume production, Samarco also depends on the completion of the Corrective Operational Licensing (LOC) process of the Germano Complex. Applied for in September 2017, the license will validate all Germano licenses which were suspended in October 2016 by Semad.

As outlined in the LOC's Environmental Impact Study (EIA), Samarco plans to use a filtration process for the sandy tailings which represent 80% of the total tailings generated by the iron ore beneficiation, and thickening/dewatering of the slimes, which account for the remaining 20%.

The filtration will remove the water from the sandy tailings, allowing the material to be stacked. The dewatering of the slimes will reduce the volume of material to be deposited in the Alegria Sul Pit (Cava). Both processes will allow the recirculation of water for use in the production process.

With the stacking of the sandy tailings and the disposal of the thickened slimes, Samarco will extend the useful life of the pit from 20 months to seven years. During this period, Samarco will continue the study and evaluation of medium and long-term alternatives for the continuity of its activities.