Will introduction of EoRs improve Governance of TSFs in Australia

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WILL INTRODUCTION OF EORS IMPROVE GOVERNANCE OF TSFS IN AUSTRALIA

The term Engineer of Record (EoR) is commonly used in North America and South Africa to define the responsible person for design, construction and operational phases of a project. This terminology is gaining momentum in Australia but what does it really mean? Recent updates to international TSF guidelines suggests appointing an EoR is good practice, but where does the responsibilities of the EoR start and finish. Interestingly both Samarco and Mount Polley failures had active EoR’s in place. This suggests that nominating an EoR alone is not the answer to mitigating the potential for a TSF failure. Appropriate construction and operational practices are key to the success of the design of TSFs. All too often, operators ignore the operating plans developed by the designer. To be successful, a key consideration of the EoR role is involvement in the operational phase of the TSF. This requires “buy-in” from the mine managers and a change in the way a TSF is perceived by sites. This paper explores how the role and responsibility of the EoR can assist to improve governance of TSFs if implemented effectively and what role the client has to ensure the success of the EoR.