

24 August 2026

Expert Panel Requests Brief Delay Prior to Decision-Making

Santana advises that the Expert Panel assessing its Fast Track Approvals (FTA) Application for the Bendigo – Ophir Gold Project issued Minute 46 on Thursday 20 August 2026. The Minute invited parties to provide comments on the Company's response to the Request for Information 11 (RFI 11) by 7 September, and then the Company to respond to those comments by 14 September.

In doing so, the Panel also suggested a brief extension would allow them to be sufficiently informed prior to making their final decision. Accordingly, the Company has filed a memo to pause the application for 10 days to do so.

The Company's Application was deemed complete by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) upon submission, with RFI 11 providing more clarification for proposed consent conditions to be assessed by the Panel, including the relocation and enlargement of a sanctuary area within the Project footprint.

Meantime, consent conditions have been worked through in workshops led by Mitchell Daysh with expert planners attending from the Otago Regional Council, the Central Otago District Council, the Department of Conservation and Kā Rūnaka, producing a tighter set of conditions for the Company and regulators alike. A further workshop this week will address remaining items, including matters arising from the RFI 11 response, ahead of an updated set of conditions being provided to the Panel by Friday 28 August.

The Company is also pleased to advise Kā Rūnaka has filed its preferred set of mana whenua conditions with the Company, whilst reserving its position. We expect to continue the korero to finalise and agree those conditions.

Santana CEO, Damian Spring said:

"We expect this is the final request for a pause from the Expert Panel before they begin their decision-making process. The Panel will advise in due course those dates. Detailed conditions are on the table with councils, the Department of Conservation and Kā Rūnaka. We are two weeks further out, but materially closer."

This announcement has been authorised for release by the Board.

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