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**NEWS RELEASE 96.10**

**RECONNAISSANCE DRILLING ON THE AKIE CLAIMS EXTENDS STRIKE  
LENGTH OF BEDDED MASSIVE SULFIDE MINERALIZATION TO 6 KM**

The 1996 drilling program on the Akie claims in northeastern B.C. is ongoing with one large diamond drill exploring the main Akie deposit to greater depths while a second smaller diamond drill is carrying out shallow reconnaissance drill testing of the host Cardiac Creek horizon at 1km stepouts north and south over a distance of over 7 km.

This year, six reconnaissance holes totalling 1800m of drilling have been completed, with encouraging results.

The shallow reconnaissance drilling included holes **A-96-20, 22 and 23** drilled respectively 2km, 3km, and 3.8km south of the main Akie deposit and holes **A-96-24, 25 and 26** drilled respectively 2.8km, 2.4km and 2.4km north of the main Akie deposit which is centered on section 32+00 S.

To the south, hole **A-96-20** drilled on section **52+00 S** intersected 1.5m of 5%lead+zinc. Hole **A-96-22** drilled on section **62+00 S** intersected 4.6m of laminated massive sulfides within which a 1.7m interval assayed 1.4% lead+zinc. Hole **A-96-23** drilled on section 69+70 S on the south side of the Akie valley intersected 2m of laminated sulfides in the Cardiac Creek horizon but no significant base metals.

To the north, hole **A-96-24** drilled on section **4+00 S** intersected over 10m of interbedded laminar massive sulfides and shale at the base of which a .8m interval assayed 11.6% zinc and 9% lead. Holes **A-96-25** and **A-96-26** were both drilled on section **8+00 S**, 400m south along strike and updip of A-96-24. Hole A-96-25 intersected 12m of bedded barite and shale without massive sulfides which is consistent with the sedex model of a barite fringe zone around a deeper massive sulfide deposit downdip of hole A-96-24. Hole **A-96-26**, drilled below hole A-96-25 did not intersect the target horizon due to faulting.

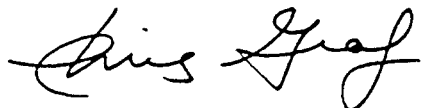
Due to the success of this reconnaissance drilling the budget has been increased and a deeper follow up hole **A-96-27**, collared between holes A-96-20 and A-96-22, is presently at a depth of 300m with a target depth of 600m.

**A-96-21**, the first of two deep holes planned to test the Akie deposit at greater depths has been temporarily suspended due to its deviation to the north towards section 30+00 S and away from its targeted pierce point on section 32+00 S. The large diamond drill has now been moved to section 35+00 S and is drilling hole **A-96-28**. This hole will be 1200m in length and is planned to intersect the Akie deposit on section 34+00 S at elevation 400m a.s.l. which will be 400 m downdip of the previous oregrade intersection in hole **A-95-18**. Depending on the results of **A-96-28**, the drill may be moved back to complete hole **A-95-21** or a new deep hole may be collared further south around section 38+00 S.

The Akie deposit itself has been intersected by 12 drill holes over a strike length of 1.4 km and a dip length of 600m and its true thickness varies from 10m near surface to over 30m at depth. The deposit remains open at depth and along strike and the drilling results indicate that the grades of zinc-lead-silver mineralization and the width of the deposit are increasing at depth towards the vent source area.

Within a much larger but lower grade resource, Ecstall estimates that a smaller **10-15 million tonne higher grade core of mineralization exists grading in excess of 10% combined lead+zinc over mineable widths of 5 - 10m**. Based on results to date the Akie exploration target is a world-class deposit containing over 50 million tonnes of 10 - 12% lead+zinc. The Akie joint venture is owned 40% by Ecstall and 60% by operator TSE listed Inmet Mining Corporation and since 1992, \$5 million has been spent on exploration.

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