

Abitibi Metals Appoints Proven Mine Builder and Operator David Bernier as Chief Operating Officer

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Highlights:

- Former Chief Operating Officer of [Foran Mining Corp.](#) (CAD \$3 billion market cap), where he led the advancement of the McIlvenna Bay polymetallic deposit from PFS through to Project Construction
- Over 30 years of mine development and operational leadership across Canada
- Proven expertise in mine design, permitting, construction, and production across polymetallic and precious metals operations
- Extensive experience integrating Indigenous engagement, regulatory approvals, engineering, and execution to advance mining projects
- Former Canadian Country Manager for Pan American Silver, overseeing multiple operating assets in the Timmins region
- Previously General Manager at Dumas Contracting, delivering mine development and construction services to major mining companies including Alamos Gold, Glencore, Vale, and Newmont

London, January 15, 2026 - [Abitibi Metals Corp.](#) (CSE: AMQ) (OTCQB: AMQFF) (FSE: FW0) ("Abitibi" or the "Company") is pleased to announce the appointment of David Bernier as Chief Operating Officer, effective immediately.

Mr. Bernier is a highly respected mining executive with more than 30 years of experience advancing mining projects across Canada from development, through construction and into operations. His appointment marks a key milestone as Abitibi advances toward its next stage of growth and long-term value creation.

Most recently, Mr. Bernier served as Chief Operating Officer of Foran Mining Corporation, where he led the advancement of the McIlvenna Bay polymetallic deposit from feasibility through detailed engineering and into construction. In that role, he was responsible for integrating permitting, mine design, processing, tailings management, infrastructure, Indigenous engagement, and execution planning into a financeable development program, positioning the project for successful buildout and operations.

Prior to Foran, Mr. Bernier served as Canadian Country Manager for Pan American Silver, where he was he oversaw multiple operating assets in the Timmins region with responsibility for production performance, capital programs, regulatory compliance and community and Indigenous relations. He previously held senior site leadership roles at the Bell Creek Complex, including Project Manager, Mine Manager, and General Manager, leading the operation through several successful expansion and optimization phases.

Earlier in his career, Mr. Bernier was General Manager of Dumas Contracting, where he provided mine development and contracting services to leading global miners including Alamos Gold, Glencore, Vale, and Newmont. Mr. Bernier has also held senior operational roles at assets owned by KGHM International and Glencore.

Jonathon Deluce, Chief Executive Officer of Abitibi Metals, commented: "This is a pivotal moment for Abitibi Metals. We are operating in a world that is increasingly short of high-quality, high-grade critical mineral assets, particularly in stable jurisdictions like Québec. Opportunities like B26 are rare and advancing them responsibly requires proven execution.

Dave Bernier brings the mine-building experience and operational discipline needed to convert a scarce, high-grade critical minerals asset into long-term value. Combined with our aggressive growth strategy and expanding resource base, his leadership materially strengthens our ability to advance B26 and position

Abitibi as a meaningful participant in the next phase of the global critical minerals cycle. We are fortunate to have a leader join with Dave's stature and reputation, and I look forward to working with him as we advance B26 on all fronts."

Mr. Bernier, COO, commented: "Abitibi has assembled a rare, high-grade polymetallic asset in one of the best mining jurisdictions in the world, and I see a clear opportunity to move B26 from ongoing exploration success into a structured, executable development pathway. My focus will be on strengthening the technical, operational, and project foundations so the Company can responsibly advance the asset toward development, financing, and long-term value creation."

Stock Options:

In accordance with the Company's omnibus incentive plan, the Company has granted a total of 400,000 incentive stock options (the "Options") to certain officers of the Company. The Options are exercisable at \$0.55 per common share for a period of 5 years and will vest in line with Company policy.

About Abitibi Metals Corp:

Abitibi Metals Corp. is dedicated to acquiring and exploring mineral properties within Quebec, with a particular emphasis on high-quality base and precious metal assets that offer significant potential for growth and expansion.

The company's flagship B26 Polymetallic project which has been optioned from SOQUEM, hosts a substantial and growing resource base.

- Indicated: 11.3Mt at 2.13% CuEq (1.23% Cu, 1.27% Zn, 0.46 g/t Au and 31.9 g/t Ag)
- Inferred: 7.2Mt at 2.21% CuEq (1.56% Cu, 0.17% Zn, 0.87 g/t Au and 7.4 g/t Ag)

The B26 project is strategically located just 5 kilometres north of the formerly producing Selbaie mine. This proximity provides the project with ready access to all necessary infrastructure required for mine development

In addition to the B26 Deposit, Abitibi's portfolio includes the Beschefer Gold project, historical drilling has identified four notable, historical intercepts with a metal factor of over 100 g/t gold highlighted by 55.63 g/t gold over 5.57 metres (BE13-038) and 13.07 g/t gold over 8.75 metres (BE12-014) amongst four modelled zones. These promising findings highlight the potential for further gold discoveries within the project area.

ON BEHALF OF THE BOARD

Jonathon Deluce, Chief Executive Officer

For more information, please call +1-226-271-5170, email info@abitibimetals.com, or visit <https://www.abitibimetals.com>.

The Company also maintains an active presence on various social media platforms to keep stakeholders and the general public informed and encourages shareholders and interested parties to follow and engage with the Company through the following channels to stay updated with the latest news, industry insights, and corporate announcements:

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/AbitibiMetals>

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/company/abitibi-metals-corp-amq-c/>

Neither the Canadian Securities Exchange nor its Regulation Services Provider accepts responsibility for the

adequacy or accuracy of this release.

Note 1: Technical Report NI 43-101 Resource Estimation Update Project B26, Quebec, For Abitibi Metals Corp., By SGS Canada Inc., Yann Camus, ing., Olivier Vadnais-Leblanc, g eo., SGS Canada - Geostat., Effective Date: November 1, 2024, Date of Report: February 26, 2025

Forward-looking statement:

This news release contains certain statements, which may constitute "forward-looking information" within the meaning of applicable securities laws. Forward-looking information involves statements that are not based on historical information but rather relate to future operations, strategies, financial results or other developments on the B26 Project or otherwise. Forward-looking information is necessarily based upon estimates and assumptions, which are inherently subject to significant business, economic and competitive uncertainties and contingencies, many of which are beyond the Company's control and many of which, regarding future business decisions, are subject to change. These uncertainties and contingencies can affect actual results and could cause actual results to differ materially from those expressed in any forward-looking statements made by or on the Company's behalf. Although Abitibi has attempted to identify important factors that could cause actual actions, events or results to differ materially from those described in forward-looking information, there may be other factors that cause actions, events or results to differ from those anticipated, estimated or intended. All factors should be considered carefully, and readers should not place undue reliance on Abitibi's forward-looking information. Generally, forward-looking information can be identified by the use of forward-looking terminology such as "expects," "estimates," "anticipates," or variations of such words and phrases (including negative and grammatical variations) or statements that certain actions, events or results "may," "could," "might" or "occur. Mineral exploration and development are highly speculative and are characterized by a number of significant inherent risks, which may result in the inability of the Company to successfully develop current or proposed projects for commercial, technical, political, regulatory or financial reasons, or if successfully developed, may not remain economically viable for their mine life owing to any of the foregoing reasons, among others. There is no assurance that the Company will be successful in achieving commercial mineral production and the likelihood of success must be considered in light of the stage of operations.

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