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## Compass Minerals International, Inc. Q2 2008 Earnings Call Transcript

### Question-and-Answer Session

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#### Operator

(Operator instructions) We'll pause for just a moment to compile the Q&A roster. Your first question comes from the line of Mr. David Begleiter of Deutsche Bank. Your line is open.

#### David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank

Hi. Good morning.

#### Rodney Underdown

Hi. Good morning, David.

#### Angelo Brisimitzakis

Hi, David.

#### David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank

Angelo, just on the SOP operating cost in Q3 and Q4 on an operating ton basis, shouldn't it be slightly higher than what they were in Q2 given what you – given your commentary?

#### Rodney Underdown

Yes. I'll go ahead and take that. I think what we tried to indicate is that we did have a little bit more concentration of some maintenance cost and other items in the second quarter. So those would be on a unit basis lower in the second half. We will see, though, some higher royalty expenditures. And so net of those things, it would be relatively consistent, maybe slightly lower over the next couple of quarters.

#### David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank

And just on your SOP's volumes, this 5% year-over-year increase with full year implies negative volumes in Q3 and Q4, again, is that due to high [ph] shipments or is there something else happening?

#### Angelo Brisimitzakis

Yes. This is Angelo. I mean we're up about 5% I think on a year-to-date basis and we expect the same – about the same performance in the second half. I'm not sure about the decline.

**Rodney Underdown**

Dave, I'm talking here at the sides, I think last year's total sales were on the four – I want to say 425-range. So 5% would be up about 20,000. I think year-to-date, we're up 12,000.

**David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank**

Okay. No, you're right. I apologize.

**Rodney Underdown**

Yes. That's okay.

**David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank**

Just on your full year tax rate is now around 30%?

**Rodney Underdown**

Yes. The current rate is in the 29% to 30% range.

**David Begleiter – Deutsche Bank**

And lastly, the – are you expecting flat highway ice control volumes next year?

**Angelo Brisimitzakis**

Yes. This is Angelo. I mean, obviously, the weather will determine the volumes, and coming off a very, very strong winter this last season, we expect normal. So normal would be less volumes than last year because the last season was higher volumes. So we planned for normal. We hope for stronger than normal, but who can predict the weather.

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