

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaclyn Symes MLC**

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Regional Development

Minister for Agriculture

Minister for Resources



Monday, 27 April 2020

## RESOURCES PROVIDE BUILDING BLOCKS OF VICTORIAN RESILIENCE

Victoria's resources sector is stepping up to help keep the state running – from the everyday essentials we rely on at home and at work to the materials driving the state's nation-leading construction program.

Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes today acknowledged the efforts made by companies and individuals across the sector to enforce strict biosecurity measures in line with directives from the Chief Health Officer, and which in many cases go beyond the minimum requirements.

The Victorian Government's infrastructure agenda will be a key to economic recovery from the coronavirus pandemic, and jobs in the resources sector are already at levels not seen for more than a decade.

With an average of eight tonnes of stone, gravel and sand per Victorian required every year to deliver the Government's infrastructure plan, Victoria's quarry industry will be crucial as we get to the other side of this crisis.

The challenges faced at this time has resulted in a unified response, and is seeing different jurisdictions working together and collaboration across peak bodies led by the Australian Workers Union, the CFMEU Mining and Energy Division and the Minerals Council of Australia.

In Victoria, Earth Resources Regulation is expediting necessary works approvals to ensure critical activities continue and is introducing new advertising processes for minerals licences to ensure communities are kept informed and have every opportunity to have input on local issues.

Previously, advertising of licences was required in the local press but with many publications disrupted by the pandemic, a new approach will enable locals to have their say online.

This financial year, 83 new mineral licence applications and 171 variations have been received by Earth Resources Regulation, with February marking a five-year high for exploration licence applications.

Victoria's diverse resources industry supports more than 120,000 workers in businesses large and small, many of which are in regional communities.

The resources sector has been booming with record minerals exploration and the state's second gold rush delivering more mining jobs, and the offshore gas industry is bringing new jobs to Gippsland and the South-West.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes

*"Workers in our mines, quarries and gas sites – and those who support their operations – are doing a fantastic job keeping our lights on and our vital industries running. Victorians are grateful for your hard work in these challenging conditions."*

*"The resources sector will help drive our recovery – whether it's providing more rock and sand to build new infrastructure, further growing the mining of gold or new exploration for gas and in-demand minerals."*