

# 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



Friday, 22 May 2020

## SUPPORT FOR VICTORIA'S VITAL MINING AND QUARRY BUSINESSES

The Victorian Government is taking action to limit the impact of the coronavirus pandemic on Victoria's resources sector and help businesses to safely continue their operations.

Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes today announced Earth Resources Regulation will defer the collection of rent and annual fees worth \$3.5 million until January 2021 to aid the immediate cashflow of mines, quarries and exploration companies.

The Government has previously announced a freeze on all fee increases that were due to come into effect in July.

In wider support under the Government's \$1.7 billion Economic Survival Package, payroll tax refunds and waivers to small and medium sized businesses totalling more than \$486 million have been paid across the state, and \$10,000 Business Support Fund grants paid to 36,400 eligible businesses with wages bills below the payroll tax threshold.

The Victorian Government's infrastructure agenda and continued record minerals exploration will play a significant role as the state's economy rebuilds and recovers from the coronavirus pandemic.

The *Building Works* package complements this support, providing \$2.7 billion towards hundreds of shovel-ready projects, helping create jobs to get people back to work.

The quarry sector will be vital in unearthing the rock, sand and stone needed for this building blitz – in recognition of this, the Government will also streamline planning to help strategically important quarries to grow and new sites to be developed, to aid the flow of raw materials over the coming years.

Earth Resources Regulation already has a streamlined approval pathway for minor changes to existing quarries – it will now fast-track the approval process for works to supply critical material for infrastructure projects at a time when businesses are facing additional pressure.

The regulator will consider the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic in its decision-making process for new licence and authority approvals, and for changes to licence and authority conditions such as expenditure requirements.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaclyn Symes

*"Businesses in our resources sector have done a fantastic job in keeping the industry operating – this is a practical way that we can ease the pressure on them and help keep people in jobs."*

*"Ensuring that our quarry sector can continue to grow and invest means it supports local jobs, communities and our infrastructure agenda."*