

# Media Release

**The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC**

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



Tuesday, 7 September 2021

## RECORD MINERALS DEMAND BOOSTS LOCAL ECONOMIES, JOBS

The Victorian Government is supporting the minerals sector to deliver growth across the state, with record expenditure providing jobs and investment in regional communities.

New data released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) revealed minerals exploration spending across Victoria is at record levels, hitting \$52.1 million for the June 2021 quarter. It's the highest expenditure for a three-month period ever recorded in the state and a 40 per cent increase on the same quarter in 2020.

ABS data shows statewide annual minerals exploration expenditure increased to \$183.8 million for 2020-21, up by more than 35 per cent. Since 2016, the average quarterly growth rate has been more than double the national average.

The record-breaking increases in minerals exploration mirrors growth in the state's mining sector – in 2019-20 gold production was at its highest level in more than a century. Demand for minerals and metals is increasing due to their use in everyday technology products and in the state's infrastructure projects.

Earth Resources Regulation last week issued a minerals exploration licence to Stavely Minerals, allowing the company to search for minerals in an area 25 kilometres west of Ararat. The newly awarded licence is the fifth issued following the 2018 Stavely Ground Release.

Stavely Minerals expects to spend up to \$3 million over five years on exploration and will receive a \$480,000 TARGET Minerals Exploration grant to help fund early-stage activities, bringing investment and jobs to the community.

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions will hold online information sessions in early October to help locals learn more about Stavely Minerals' planned activities, landholder rights, safeguards and explorer obligations.

Minerals exploration licences have also been issued to North Central Gold Exploration, to conduct activities in an area west of Donald and to Currawong Resources, to explore an area 25 kilometres to the east of Castlemaine.

Early-stage exploration activities such as mapping, sampling and rock testing are the first steps in establishing if minerals are present. If development is considered viable, it typically takes many years to progress toward mining, including meeting regulatory controls.

To access privately owned land in Victoria, minerals explorers require landholder consent. Land access consent tools are available to aid negotiations between landholders and exploration companies at [earthresources.vic.gov.au/landaccess](http://earthresources.vic.gov.au/landaccess).

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford

*"Exploration is bringing vital revenue and jobs to regional communities because the companies searching for minerals are using the services of local businesses – whether it's specialist contractors or motels and cafes in town."*

*"With our increasing use of technology and every wind turbine requiring two-and-a-half tonnes of copper, there is a boom in minerals exploration and that's good news for Victoria."*

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