

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



Friday, 6 May 2022

IMPROVING CERTAINTY FOR COAL MINE REHABILITATION

The Andrews Labor Government is improving the management of coal mine land in the Latrobe Valley once production ceases.

Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford today announced enhanced provisions will be applied to Victoria's declared mines, making rehabilitation a priority.

The provisions will allow for better preparations for land rehabilitation with future generations in mind as Victoria transitions away from coal-fired energy.

Under Victoria's legislation mine rehabilitation and post-closure arrangements are operator-led and funded; these new provisions will strengthen the requirements for operators to deliver on their obligations.

The Labor Government will amend Victoria's *Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990* to ensure rehabilitation liabilities of declared mines remain the responsibility of the mining industry, in line with similar provisions passed by the Commonwealth Government for decommissioning offshore infrastructure.

A trailing liability regime will also allow the state's mining monitors to issue remedial directions to former title holders for any required future works.

As with the Commonwealth scheme, the intent is for this legislation to be backdated to the day of announcement.

A consultation paper on the provisions will be available later this year, allowing the community, mining industry, relevant agencies and other interested parties to have their say. The Government will also shortly release its Draft Declared Mine Regulations for public comment.

The Regulations aim to set clear standards for the rehabilitation plans being developed for the Latrobe Valley's three coal mines and ensure mine operators know their responsibilities.

Rehabilitation Bonds for the state's Declared Mines will also be reassessed later this year in line with the recommendations of the Hazelwood Mine Fire Inquiry.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Resources Jaala Pulford

"Provisions need to be in place for the long term when it comes to the management of the land where large-scale mining has taken place."

"This will provide Victoria with the contemporary tools required to ensure rehabilitation remains the responsibility of the coal mine operators."

Quote attributable to Member for Eastern Victoria Harriet Shing

"Latrobe Valley mine rehabilitation is complex and these reforms will ensure operators know and meet their obligations, which is in the best interests of local communities across the Latrobe Valley, and all Victorians."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au