



# MINE REHABILITATION

## NSW MINERALS COUNCIL FACT SHEET

### What is rehabilitation?

Rehabilitation is an integral component of mine site operations and planning for rehabilitation and ultimately mine closure is considered across every stage of mine planning, development and operation. Rehabilitation involves re-establishing a safe and stable landform and final land use commensurate with agreed post-mining land use planning objectives and completion criteria.

The NSW mining industry is committed to rehabilitating mined land to a condition that supports an agreed post-mining land use. Mine owners do this, not only because this is a requirement under the lease, licence or other approvals granted, but because it is the right thing to do. This also helps to ensure that mine owners remain a responsible and accountable member of the communities in which they operate.

A mine owner makes a commitment to the NSW government and the community before mining occurs that disturbed land will be progressively rehabilitated during operations to an agreed final post-mining

land use. This is established through the process of gaining approval to develop the mine and outlined in detail through extensive Mining Operations Plans, or Rehabilitation Management Plans approved by the government.

By progressively rehabilitating disturbed land, mine owners ensure this important component is not left to the final stages of mining, thereby enabling areas to become available for post mine productive use much sooner.

### Comprehensive regulation of rehabilitation

The Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), the Resources Regulator, and the Division of Resources and Geoscience play a role in regulating mine rehabilitation in NSW. The consent to mine requires industry to provide annual rehabilitation



progress against their objectives as approved by DRG at the approvals and EA/EIS phase.

The government requires mining companies to provide a financial security for the full cost of rehabilitating the mine should the mine owner, for whatever reason, default on its rehabilitation commitments and obligations. The value of the rehabilitation security is commensurate with the extent of disturbance and is reviewed regularly. More information on rehabilitation security deposits can be found at:

[www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au](http://www.resourcesandgeoscience.nsw.gov.au)

DRG is implementing a Rehabilitation Reform Program to revise the regulatory framework for rehabilitation and to streamline rehabilitation reporting requirements. A key component of this reform is the requirement for mining companies to provide digital geographic information outlining the area of disturbance and the extent of rehabilitation on an annual basis. The DRG plans to make this data publicly available for external review through a government web portal that will provide a visual representation of the extent and progression of rehabilitation work carried out by NSW mining companies annually.

The NSW mining industry continues to work closely with the key NSW Government agencies and other stakeholders through the planning and approval process to develop rehabilitation objectives that will provide the most appropriate mine closure outcomes. More information can be found in the Closure and Relinquishment fact sheet.

## NSW mining industry principles

Mine owners consider various actions and principles to help them meet their rehabilitation requirements, including:

- **Stakeholder engagement** – Mine owners engage with relevant stakeholders throughout the mining process, including community consultative committees to provide information on rehabilitation activities.
- **Management of risks** – Mine owners identify environmental and social risks and opportunities to ensure their effective management through the rehabilitation process and post closure land use plan.
- **Progressive rehabilitation** – Mine owners

undertake progressive rehabilitation throughout the whole mining process to minimise the area of land that is disturbed. Progressive rehabilitation highlights that mining is a temporary land use and rehabilitation is a priority for the NSW mining industry.

- **Integration of rehabilitation into planning** – Mine owners integrate rehabilitation objectives into mine planning and scheduling.
- **Best-practice rehabilitation** – Mine owners utilise available rehabilitation methods to achieve the desired quantity and quality of rehabilitation. Many NSW sites have implemented innovative rehabilitation projects and initiatives to overcome technical challenges and achieve quality environmental outcomes (e.g. cropping or grazing trials on rehabilitated mined land).
- **Industry collaboration** – The NSW mining industry regularly shares knowledge of rehabilitation techniques to ensure continuous improvement of practices, which helps to lift the overall performance of industry.
- **Ensure rehabilitation is well resourced** – Mine owners provide adequate financial and human resources throughout the mining process, to ensure that rehabilitation and closure plans are effectively implemented, and objectives are achieved.
- **Monitor and review rehabilitation** – Mine owners monitor and maintain rehabilitation works against mutually agreed completion and successful rehabilitation criteria and provides regular progress reports to regulators.
- **Improve community awareness of rehabilitation** – Mine owners publish annual reviews with updated rehabilitation information on their websites. Many sites also host open days to encourage the community to visit the site and learn about the mining process, including key rehabilitation projects underway.

For more information:

Please visit [www.nswmining.com.au](http://www.nswmining.com.au)  
<https://landusefacts.com.au/>