



Environmental Management Principles

EXPLORATION AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

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1. INTRODUCTION

The New South Wales Government will apply the following environmental principles to all prospecting and exploration.

Licence holders must be familiar with and comply with all environmental and heritage legislation applying to their activities as well as industry codes and best practice guidelines. Key guidelines are

- Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association Limited: APPEA Code of Environmental Practice (1996)
- Environment Australia: Best Practice Environmental Management in Mining. Onshore Minerals and Petroleum Exploration (1996) ISBN 0 642 19437 8
- NSW Minerals Council (1998) Guidelines for Environmentally Responsible Mining in NSW.

2. CONDITIONS AND APPROVALS

Exploration activities must comply with conditions of exploration licences requiring protection of the environment and rehabilitation of all disturbance.

Initial approval of an exploration licence constrains activities to those which will have a minimal impact. While licence conditions categorise typical exploration activities, the licence holder must consider impact of an activity taking into account the sensitivity of the area.

Further approval is required before a licence holder undertakes an activity which have other than a minimal impact.

3. SECURITY BONDS

A security deposit or bond must be lodged by a leaseholder to guarantee the anticipated costs of rehabilitation. Security deposits may be amended at any time to reflect the nature of activities being undertaken. If the licence holder does not fulfill the obligations of the licence, the bond may be applied towards the cost of fulfilling such obligations. Security bonds for companies holding multiple leases exploration licences may be aggregated.

4. DISTURBANCE OF LAND

All land disturbing activities, including vegetation removal, must be minimised.

All disturbed land must be rehabilitated by the licence holder, as soon as practicable, to a stable and permanent landform:

- compatible with the surrounding land fabric,
- with no adverse environmental outside the disturbed area, and
- with maintenance needs no greater than the surrounding countryside.

5. WORK AREAS

Work areas must be situated so as to minimise disturbance to the local environment and be at sites acceptable to the land-holder. Site areas are to be maintained clean, tidy and litter free.

6. AGRICULTURAL AND IMPROVED LAND

Access to agricultural and improved land will be subject to such constraints as the land-holder may reasonably impose. The land-holder must be compensated for any damage that occurs.

7. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT OF ACTIVITIES

The licence holder must provide a review of environmental factors and seek approval prior to undertaking any activity that:

- affects threatened flora, fauna or habitat,
- affects Aboriginal relics or places, or
- causes other than minimal impact taking into account the sensitivity of an area

Officers of the Department of Mineral Resources will assess the review provided in terms of the applicable Acts and Regulations. Approval may include the imposition of further conditions, constraints, or protocols to ensure activities will not have an adverse impact, or a call for an environmental impact statement.

8. CONSERVATION OF SIGNIFICANT SITES

Conservation of Aboriginal, archaeological, historical and geological sites of significance must be in accordance with National Parks and Wildlife guidelines.

- conserving any Aboriginal relic or declared Aboriginal place unless a consent or other authority has been issued,
- taking all precautions in excavating or otherwise disturbing land of any Aboriginal relic or declared Aboriginal place,
- ceasing works that might further disturb relics, if relics not covered by a previous consent are discovered, and
- reporting any discovery

An authority from the National Parks and Wildlife Service is required before Aboriginal places or relics can be knowingly disturbed.

9. SURFACE AND UNDERGROUND WATERS

Surface water run-off must be managed so that erosion, excessive siltation or flooding does not occur.

Unless specifically exempted, all drill holes must be capped and full length sealed to prevent collapse of the surrounding surface, discharge of groundwater and/or gases, and contamination of aquifers.

10. PUBLIC SAFETY

Operations must not endanger people, stock or fauna. All excavations must be immediately backfilled or have a temporary safety barrier commensurate with the nature of the risk. Drill holes exempted from full length sealing must be sealed below ground level.

11. LEASE CANCELLATION

Security bonds will be retained until the licence holder has submitted a completion report detailing compliance with all rehabilitation requirements and conditions of title.

12 INSPECTION AND AUDIT

Environmental Officers of the Department of Mineral Resources may conduct site inspections and audits to verify compliance with conditions of title and this policy.

For further information and contact details see www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/minerals
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