



## EDG10: Surface Disturbance Notice for Exploration Activities

Prospecting operations not covered by Condition 1 of the Exploration Licence Conditions require an assessment and determination under Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*, and written approval from the Department prior to the commencement of operations. Activities which require a Part 5 Determination will require a site inspection and an assessment of the proposed activity by one of the Department's Environmental Officers.

Notice of proposed operations is undertaken via a Surface Disturbance Notice (SDN) or Review of Environmental Factors (REF). The type of notice can be determined by choosing the appropriate category of activity described below.

Please refer to Exploration Licence Conditions for additional detail.

**Category 1 Activities** – Do not require a Surface Disturbance Notice – unless activities meet the definitions of Category 2(a) or 2(b). Refer to definitions below.

**Category 2 Activities** – Require a Surface Disturbance Notice – unless activities meet the definitions of Category 3 (a) or 3 (b). Refer to definitions below. Note: an REF may be required if DPI considers an additional level of assessment is required for the activities proposed.

**Category 3 Activities** – Require a Review of Environmental Factors (Refer to ESB 18 - Guidelines for Review of Environmental Factors). Submission of a REF will negate the need for submission of a Surface Disturbance Notice. Note: An EIS may be required if the level of impact is considered likely to be significant in terms of Part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*.

For activities requiring submission of a Surface Disturbance Notice, you will be advised in writing within 4 weeks of submission of the outcome of the assessment.

### 1 Definitions - Categories of Prospecting Operations

#### Category 1: Reconnaissance and low intensity activities, including:

- (a) Geological mapping
- (b) Airborne surveys
- (c) Sampling and coring using hand held equipment
- (d) Geophysical surveys and downhole logging, but not seismic surveys
- (e) Shallow reconnaissance drilling involving no more than minimal site preparation
- (f) Minor clearing or cutting of native vegetation
- (g) Minor excavations excluding costeaning or bulk sampling
- (h) Vehicle access that does not require construction of new tracks

#### Category 2: Operations which have potential for moderate disturbance to the land surface, native vegetation or other environmental value, including:

- (a) Operations under Category 1 (c) to (h) within or adjacent to Sensitive Areas\*
- (b) Operations under Category 1 (c) to (h) of a concentrated or cumulative nature
- (c) Seismic surveys
- (d) Excavating or bulk sampling not exceeding 60 cubic metres
- (e) Non-intensive drilling involving no more than moderate site preparation, excluding drilling holes exceeding 400 millimetre diameter
- (f) Camp construction

- (g) Access tracks, drill pads or line clearing involving no more than moderate native vegetation disturbance

\* see definition 2 for Sensitive Areas

**Category 3: Operations which have potential to cause significant environmental impact involving, for example, considerable land surface disturbance or native vegetation clearing, including:**

- (a) Operations under Category 2 (c) to (g) within or adjacent to Sensitive Areas\*
- (b) Operations under Category 2 (c) to (g) of a concentrated or cumulative nature
- (c) Excavations or bulk sampling in excess of 60 cubic metres
- (d) Shaft sinking or tunnelling
- (e) Drilling holes in excess of 400 millimetre diameter
- (f) Intensive drilling, such as for resource definition purposes.
- (g) Access tracks involving formed construction

\* see definition 2 for Sensitive Areas

## **2 Sensitive Areas**

For the purposes of the licence, Sensitive Areas include the following:

- (a) land reserved as a State Conservation Area under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;
- (b) land declared as an Aboriginal place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;
- (c) land identified as wilderness under the Wilderness Act 1987;
- (d) land subject to a 'conservation agreement' under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;
- (e) land acquired by the Minister for the Environment under Part 11 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;
- (f) land proposed to be reserved as a national park or nature reserve under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974;
- (g) land within State forests mapped as Forestry Management Zone 1, 2 or 3;
- (h) wetlands mapped under SEPP 14 - Coastal Wetlands;
- (i) wetlands listed under the Ramsar Wetlands Convention;
- (j) lands mapped under SEPP 26 - Littoral Rainforests;
- (k) areas listed on the Register of National Estate;
- (l) areas listed under the Heritage Act 1977 for which a plan of management has been prepared;
- (m) land declared as critical habitat under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995;
- (n) land within a restricted area prescribed by a controlling water authority;
- (o) land reserved or dedicated under the Crown Lands Act 1989 for the preservation of flora, fauna, geological formations or other environmental protection purpose; and
- (p) any other land identified as Sensitive Land by the Department.

It should be noted that some of these areas are also "exempted areas" under the Act.

## **3 Activities in Exempted Areas**

Exempted areas are defined as land set aside for public purposes. They include travelling stock routes, road reserves, water supply reserves, state forests, and public reserves/commons.

The Mining Act requires the Minister for Mineral Resources to consent to any prospecting in an exempted area. This applies regardless of the surface disturbance category of activities which may be undertaken. Requests for approval to prospect in an exempted area are to be submitted to the Titles Branch of the Department, along with a Surface Disturbance Notice or REF, if required. Inclusion of the views and requirements of the agency or council controlling the exempt area may speed up the consent process.



Describe the equipment to be used (include any chemicals required): (attach additional pages as necessary)

Provide details of disturbance (including access, drilling area, clearing requirements and drill pits etc): (attach additional pages as necessary)

Describe mitigation strategies/management protocols to manage environmental impacts\*:  
(attach additional pages as necessary)

\* Impact mitigation strategies and management protocols should focus on the disturbance caused by the activity and the nature of the sensitivity of the land affected. Proposal of appropriate strategies and protocols to limit disturbance and ensure likely impact is minimal will be taken into account in the Department's assessment of whether or not an additional specific determination is required.

#### **4 Nature and sensitivity of land to be disturbed**

Does the activity have the potential to affect environmentally sensitive land? Consider possible impacts of the activity on land adjacent to, or downstream from the EL.

- land reserved as a State Conservation Area under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- land declared as an Aboriginal place under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- land identified as wilderness under the Wilderness Act 1987
- land subject to a 'conservation agreement' under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- land acquired by the Minister for the Environment under Part 11 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- land proposed to be reserved as a national park or nature reserve under the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1974
- land within State forests mapped as Forestry Management Zone 1, 2 or 3
- wetlands mapped under SEPP 14 - Coastal Wetlands
- wetlands listed under the Ramsar Wetlands Convention
- lands mapped under SEPP 26 - Littoral Rainforests
- areas listed on the Register of National Estate
- areas listed under the Heritage Act 1977 for which a plan of management has been prepared
- land declared as critical habitat under the Threatened Species Conservation Act 1995
- land within a restricted area prescribed by a controlling water authority
- land reserved or dedicated under the Crown Lands Act 1989 for the preservation of flora, fauna, geological formations or other environmental protection purpose
- any other land identified as Sensitive Land by the Department (describe below)

#### 4b Nature and sensitivity of land to be disturbed

Please specify the nature of the sensitivities: (attach additional pages as necessary)

#### 5 Category of Activities

Based upon the activities described above, and any potentially sensitive areas identified, please select the relevant category for the activity.

##### Category 1: Reconnaissance and low intensity activities, including:

- Geological mapping
- Airborne surveys
- Sampling and coring using hand held equipment
- Geophysical surveys and downhole logging, but not seismic surveys
- Shallow reconnaissance drilling involving no more than minimal site preparation
- Minor clearing or cutting of native vegetation
- Minor excavations excluding costeaning or bulk sampling
- Vehicle access that does not require construction of new tracks.

##### Category 2: Operations which have potential for moderate disturbance to the land surface, native vegetation or other environmental value, including:

- Operations under Category 1 (c) to (h) within or adjacent to Sensitive Areas\*
- Operations under Category 1 (c) to (h) of a concentrated or cumulative nature
- Seismic surveys
- Excavating or bulk sampling not exceeding 60 cubic metres
- Non-intensive drilling involving no more than moderate site preparation, excluding drilling holes exceeding 400 millimetre diameter
- Camp construction
- Access tracks, drill pads or line clearing involving no more than moderate native vegetation disturbance

##### Category 3: Operations which have potential to cause significant environmental impact involving, for example, considerable land surface disturbance or native vegetation clearing, including:

- Operations under Category 2 (c) to (g) within or adjacent to Sensitive Areas\*
- Operations under Category 2 (c) to (g) of a concentrated or cumulative nature
- Excavations or bulk sampling in excess of 60 cubic metres
- Shaft sinking or tunnelling

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- Drilling holes in excess of 400 millimetre diameter
- Intensive drilling, such as for resource definition purposes.
- Access tracks involving formed construction

\* see Definition 2 for Sensitive Areas

## 6 Surface Tenure and Land Use

### Exempted Area\*

- State Forest
- Reserve
- Common
- Road reserve
- Stock Route
- Other (describe)

### Land Use

- Pastoral
- Agricultural
- Irrigation
- Urban/suburban
- Forestry
- Other (describe)

### Tenure

- Freehold
- Pastoral lease
- Western land lease
- Other leasehold
- Crown Land
- Other (describe)

\* The Mining Act requires the Minister to provide consent for any prospecting proposed within exempted areas. This applies regardless of the category of activity undertaken.

## 7 Notification of Agreements with Landholders

Property Name	Landholder / Contact	Phone	Access Agreement	
			Verbal	Written
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
			<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## 8 Certification

I certify that the information contained in this application is true.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Position/title: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Information for Titleholders

Lodgement by mail		
The Senior Environmental Officer at your nearest regional office. OR The Administration Officer Environmental Sustainability Branch NSW Department of Primary Industries PO Box 344 Hunter Region Mail Centre NSW 2310		
Lodgement by email		
The relevant environmental officer at your nearest regional office OR <a href="mailto:environment@dpi.nsw.gov.au">environment@dpi.nsw.gov.au</a> (note that there is currently a 5MB size limit for lodgement by email)		
Lodgement in person		
MAITLAND	516 High Street Maitland NSW 2320	Phone: (02) 4931 6605
SINGLETON	1 Civic Avenue Singleton NSW 2330	Phone (02) 6571 8788
WOLLONGONG	84 Crown Street Wollongong NSW 2500	Phone (02) 4222 8333
ORANGE	161 Kite Street Orange NSW 2800	Phone (02) 6360 5333
BROKEN HILL	32 Sulphide Street Broken Hill NSW 2880	Phone (08) 8088 9300
Enquiries		
Phone:	(02) 4931 6605	
Fax:	(02) 4931 6790	
Email:	<a href="mailto:environment@dpi.nsw.gov.au">environment@dpi.nsw.gov.au</a>	
Web:	<a href="http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au">www.dpi.nsw.gov.au</a>	