

Overseeing Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation: Implementation of the new Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority

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ABSTRACT

On 30 June 2020, the Mine Land Rehabilitation Authority superseded the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner as the independent overseer of Victoria's declared mines rehabilitation. Declared mines are geotechnically and hydrogeologically complex and their closure and rehabilitation are correspondingly complex. Currently, only the Latrobe Valley brown coal mines are declared, with the three mines at different stages of rehabilitation and closure planning: Hazelwood ceased mining in 2017, Yallourn scheduled to end mining in 2032 and Loy Yang in 2048.

The Authority is required to:

- Coordinate rehabilitation planning activities and monitor and evaluate risks posed by geotechnical, hydrogeological, water quality or hydrological factors for declared mine land.
- Provide assurance to the Victorian community that the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy (LVRRS) is being effectively implemented by public sector bodies and mine licensees.
- Inform, educate and engage with Victorian communities, and ensure locals have a say in relation to the planning for rehabilitation of declared mine land.
- Provide advice and recommendations to the Minister for Resources in relation to the regulatory framework, outcomes of stakeholder engagement, and planning for rehabilitation, monitoring, maintaining and management of declared mine land.
- Investigate, audit and report on public sector bodies and mine licensees in relation to the implementation and effectiveness of rehabilitation planning activities, and on matters referred by the Minister for Resources.
- Monitor, maintain and manage declared mine land in accordance with the relevant post-closure plan, establish and maintain a register of declared mine land, and have the ability to purchase, acquire and dispose of declared mine land or land in close proximity if required.

To deliver its remit, the Authority is adopting content-led, consensus-building approaches to engage with stakeholders and community groups. The presentation will explore the value of these approaches for building a shared understanding of the risks and opportunities created by mine closure.