

## INTEGRATED MINING POLICY - OVERVIEW

### What is the Integrated Mining Policy?

- The Integrated Mining Policy (IMP) aims to reduce duplication and improve the efficiency of assessment and regulation of State significant mining developments.
- The policies and guidelines developed as part of the Integrated Mining Policy will improve transparency, consistency and accountability for assessment decisions.

### What are the objectives of the IMP?

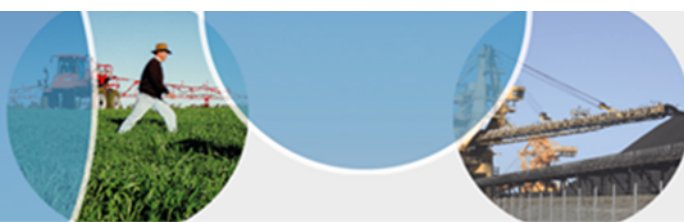
- The objectives of the IMP are to:
  - document and clarify Government requirements for the mining assessment process;
  - improve coordination and cooperation between government agencies so that matters can be considered at the same time; and
  - reduce duplication between the three key mining approvals (development approvals, mining leases and environment protection licences).
- The IMP does not change environmental standards or community consultation requirements.

### What does the IMP mean for stakeholders?

- For the community, the IMP will provide clearer and more consistent rules governing the assessment and regulation of mining.
- For industry, it will reduce duplication and unnecessary red tape by clarifying regulatory obligations and approval requirements.

### How will consultation on the reforms under the IMP be conducted?

- The Government is conducting public consultation on the IMP reforms in two stages. As part of Stage 1 the following items are currently on exhibition:
  - Standard Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements;
  - Swamp Offsets Policy; and
  - Mine Application Guideline.
- These items are being exhibited for community and industry consultation for six weeks from 28 May 2015 to 9 July 2015 at [www.planning.nsw.gov.au/onexhibition](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/onexhibition).
- The Government will consult on further Policy reforms as part of Stage Two at a later date.



## What changes will the IMP introduce?

### *Clearer assessment and approval processes*

- Under the IMP reforms, standardised model Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) and Development Consent Conditions will help to ensure greater consistency.

#### **Standard Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs)**

The Government issues SEARs (formerly Director-General's Requirements) to identify the issues the applicant must consider in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

New standard SEARs have been developed as part of the IMP. They include the information that agencies need to assess mining applications.

The SEARs permit the assessments for an Environment Protection Licence (EPL) and Mining Lease (ML) to be conducted at the same time as the assessment of the development application.

*The Standard SEARs are being exhibited as part of the Stage 1 consultation.*

#### **Standard Development Consent Conditions**

The IMP standard conditions aim to reduce duplication across the different approvals. They do this by:

- ensuring that conditions will be set and enforced by the agency that has the expertise in regulating a particular impact;
- allowing the consent authority to consider proposed conditions on environmental protection licences and mining leases, to help ensure consistency at every stage of the process.

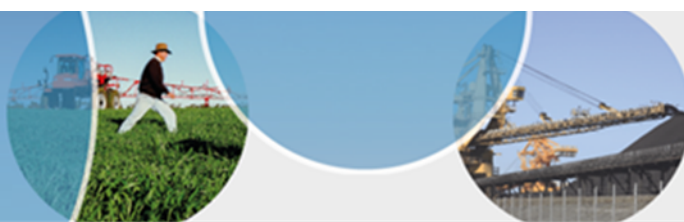
The consent authority may modify the standard development consent conditions to ensure that all identified environmental risks are properly regulated and controlled.

#### **Assessment Bilateral Agreement with the Commonwealth**

The NSW and Commonwealth Governments have been working on ways to reduce duplication and overlap. The new Assessment Bilateral Agreement allows the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment to rely on specified NSW environmental impact assessment processes to assess actions under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. This effectively creates a one-stop-shop for assessments of major developments. A new Assessment Bilateral Agreement was signed by the NSW and Commonwealth Governments on 26 February 2015.

### *Better guidance*

- New guidelines documents will clearly set out what agencies expect to be included in an Environmental Impact Statement. This will reduce the need for the Government to seek additional information from mining companies, which causes delays in the process.
- It will also help the community better understand what the Government expects and what the applicant is proposing to do.



## Mine Application Guideline

The Mine Application Guideline sets out the Government's expectations for both pre-assessment documentation and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). It requires the applicant to explain why particular decisions have been made as part of the design process and how these influence the environmental, social and economic impacts of the mine.

*The Mine Application Guidelines are being exhibited as part of the Stage 1 consultation.*

## Guidelines for the Economic Assessment of Mining and Coal Seam Gas Proposals

The Government is developing new economic assessment guidelines to ensure that the impacts of proposed projects are robustly measured and analysed in a consistent fashion using recognised economic assessment methods. The guidelines provide clear advice to applicants about preparing the assessment, and how the outputs of the assessment will inform decision-makers and the community.

## Planning Agreement (PA) Guideline

The Planning Agreement Guideline will provide a consistent framework for Planning Agreements between mining companies and local councils. The guideline will set out principles for these agreements, best practice approaches, and practical steps to help the parties develop a common understanding of the likely impacts of the mine on local and regional communities.

## Clearer government policy

- The Government expects mining companies to maintain high environmental standards, reducing impacts as effectively as possible.
- New policies (detailed below) will explain the rules companies are expected to follow in their applications.

## Swamp Offset Policy

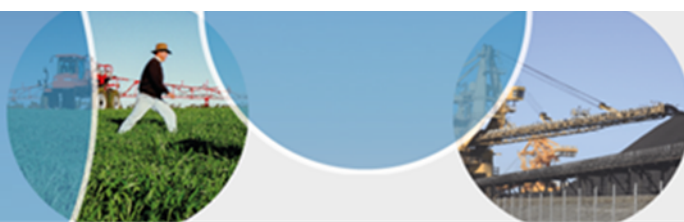
This policy extends the principles of the Biodiversity Offset Policy for Major Projects to subsidence-related impacts of mining on endangered swamps. This will fill a gap in the existing policy framework, to clearly explain the Government's position on how mining impacts should be managed in these specific circumstances.

*The Swamp Offset Policy is being exhibited as part of the Stage 1 consultation.*

## Biodiversity Offset Policy for Major Projects

This policy establishes standardised biodiversity offsetting requirements for major projects under the NSW planning system. Biodiversity offsets are used to compensate for the biodiversity values lost through development activities, including mining. Offsets transfer the responsibility for managing biodiversity to another area of land.

The policy is currently in an 18-month transitional implementation period. At the conclusion of this period, mining companies will have the option of fulfilling offset requirements by paying money into a Biodiversity Offsets Fund. It is anticipated the Fund will be established in 2016.



## **Water Regulation and Policy Framework**

To help proponents and the community better understand the full scope of government regulation on water issues, a Water Regulation and Policy Framework has been prepared. This Framework is a high-level document that sets out all current mining-related water policy requirements in NSW.

## **Voluntary Land Acquisition and Mitigation Policy**

The policy clarifies how the impacts of mine noise and dust (particulate matter) on communities and landowners should be assessed and determined by the body considering the matter.

## *Improved compliance requirements and better information for communities*

- The Government will ensure compliance with the conditions it places on development approvals.
- Some of those conditions are put in place so that mining companies can report back to the Government on their environmental performance.
- They community will be able to obtain information about how mining proposals are being carried out.

## **Post-approval Guidelines**

These guidelines are intended to establish a more consistent and less duplicative whole-of-government framework for compliance reporting and auditing. They will include Annual Review Guidelines, Web-Based Reporting Guidelines and Independent Audit Guidelines.