



NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

June 21, 2022

Audit finds improved ministry oversight for major mines, with exceptions

VICTORIA – The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation has implemented policies and procedures for the mining sector that address, with some exceptions, matters previously identified by the Office of the Auditor General.

In a new report on the [Oversight of Major Mines](#), the auditor general identifies a series of structural and regulatory changes made by the ministry that include establishing a new investigations unit, processes to write mine permits with more enforceable language, and enhancing compliance and enforcement policies and procedures.

“The ministry has made progress since our 2016 audit,” Auditor General Michael Pickup said. “Overall, the ministry’s improved oversight means it’s better equipped to address risks associated with the mining sector while the provincial economy receives benefits from mining activity.”

The report finds the ministry has established a consistent approach to addressing serious incidents and has set up an internal audit unit to evaluate the effectiveness of the ministry’s regulatory framework for mining.

It introduced a reclamation security policy for major mines, with a plan to reduce the difference between liabilities and securities held to ensure reclamation obligations can be met.

The Abandoned Mines Branch was established to mitigate risks to public safety and address environmental risks at abandoned mine sites.

“The audit finds a few areas for further improvement,” Pickup said. “For example, the ministry needs written procedures for geotechnical inspections, a consistent approach to reviewing reports from mine operators throughout the year, and a risk-based approach to address environmental concerns at abandoned mines.”

The report makes five recommendations that focus on the development and implementation of compliance and enforcement policies, historic permits, reclamation liabilities, and abandoned mines.

The ministry has accepted all of the recommendations.

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