

## 4.3.14 MINISTER FOR MINERAL RESOURCES AND MINISTER FOR FISHERIES

### OVERVIEW

Agency	Forecast 1995-96	Estimate 1996-97	Variation
	\$m	\$m	%
<b>Department of Mineral Resources</b>			
Current Payments .....	31.8	31.1	(-) 2.2
Capital Payments .....	11.6	7.8	(-) 32.8
<b>Coal Compensation Board</b>			
Current Payments .....	3.2	4.1	28.1
Capital Payments .....	50.0	50.0	...
<b>New South Wales Fisheries</b>			
Current Payments .....	25.1	24.8	(-) 1.2
Capital Payments .....	1.3	1.2	(-) 7.7
<b>Total, Minister for Mineral Resources and Minister for Fisheries .....</b>	<b>123.0</b>	<b>119.0</b>	<b>(-) 3.3</b>

### DEPARTMENT OF MINERAL RESOURCES

#### Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments

The major recent developments for the Department of Mineral Resources include

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- the Discovery 2000 project which has enhanced the assessment of the State's mineral resources and provision of information on mineral resource potential. Implementation commenced in 1994-95 with expenditure to date of approximately \$17.5 million on advanced geological and geophysical investigations. The total funding for this project is \$35 million. The results of the first two years of the project has led to a significant increase in exploration interest in New South Wales. As part of Discovery 2000, work continues on the Broken Hill Exploration Initiative which involves advanced geophysical surveys, detailed mapping and analysis of various data, aimed at ensuring the future of Broken Hill as a major mining region;

- continued involvement in facilitating the development of new mining projects. Specifically, rapid progress was made towards the development of seven coal and five metalliferous mining projects which are now under construction;

- continued monitoring of mine safety using an index called the Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate (LTIFR), which is a measure of accidents per million hours worked in mines. In coal mines, the LTIFR for the year 1995-96 was 65, a significant improvement over previous years. The New South Wales industry is recognised as a world leader in managing health and safety. There have been a number of delegations from China, India, Pakistan and Japan to study the operation of regulation in New South Wales;
- continued use of environmental management plans. These plans allow for all the Government's environmental reporting requirements to be contained in a single document. This makes the environmental management plans an effective tool which can be used for setting the highest standards of environmental management appropriate to each mine;
- a recent restructure of the Department which has resulted in a functionally based organisation with a flatter structure which will be better able to meet the needs of clients. The Department now has three core business divisions based on the key performance areas identified in the corporate plan: Resource Assessment, Resource Allocation and Resource Management; and
- continued community liaison, with a working group being set up to examine and recommend processes to achieve direct interaction with the community with a view to providing information and seeking feedback on proposed and current development projects. The aim of the group is to also ensure appropriate and adequate networking with other government agencies at both the federal and state levels.

## **Strategic Directions**

In line with the Department of Mineral Resources' overall objective of ensuring that the people of New South Wales benefit from the responsible assessment, development and management of their mineral resources, the Department's core objectives are -

- to assess the State's mineral and energy resources and geology and distribute information to encourage exploration and development and provide a basis for land use and infrastructure planning;
- to facilitate the responsible planning and development of the States mineral resources and promote opportunities for new mineral development;
- to continually improve the standard of environmental management and rehabilitation of the State's exploration and mining operations; and
- to formulate, evaluate and promote policies and a regulatory environment which enable the growth of the State's minerals industry in a socially, economically and environmentally responsible manner.

To achieve these objectives the Department is utilising a number of initiatives -

- the "Discovery 2000" initiative is an integral part of a strategy to achieve a competitive edge in the increasing globalisation of investment in exploration and subsequent development of the mining industry. The Department will focus on making the world mining houses more aware of the State's prospectivity, the vast amount of data available and the new advanced and user-friendly information products that are becoming available;
- the creation of a new Industry Development Branch responsible for coordinating and facilitating project development and promoting investment in exploration, mining and minerals processing will give added emphasis to industry development;
- the Department is to supplement its conventional inspectorial role with a more educative and facilitating role to continue improvements in the safety performance of mines; and
- the establishment of a new Environment Unit with a range of environmental expertise. This unit will address the environmental problems of the mining industry and make a strong contribution to industry-wide adoption of best environmental practices.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

The components of the Department's \$31.1 million payments for 1996-97 are -

- \$13 million to encourage, facilitate and support the maintenance and continued improvement of good environmental practices in the State's mining industry and improve the safety and health of mine employees and to minimise the impact of mining on public safety and health;
- \$9.8 million to continue improvements to the Department's essential role in mapping, identifying, assessing and providing information on the development potential of the State's mineral resources;

- \$7.5 million to allocate and maintain exploration and mining rights through titles that enable the responsible development and management of mineral resources; and
- \$0.8 million for the promotion of mineral resources investment opportunities through bringing together mineral explorers, developers, processors and end users to achieve optimal value from the State's resources and promote responsible mining as a vital and valuable component of the State's economy.

## **Capital Payments**

The capital payments of \$7.8 million for 1996-97 provide for the following projects -

- \$4.5 million for the Discovery 2000 project which will continue mapping and collating geological and geophysical information over large areas of the State. A major focus in 1996-97 will be on the computerisation of existing hard copy geological data collected over the past ten years to assist exploration companies access to this information;
- \$2.4 million for the Information Technologies Facilities Project. This project will review, enhance and re-engineer the Department's information systems and technology in order to meet its business needs and improve on its service levels to the industry, community and government; and
- \$0.3 million to finalise rehabilitation of the Baryulgil Asbestos Mine site.

## **COAL COMPENSATION BOARD**

The Coal Compensation Board is responsible for receiving, determining and paying compensation for claims resulting from the acquisition of coal rights under the Coal Acquisition Act 1981.

Prior to the closing of the Coal Compensation Scheme to new claims in July 1994, an additional 10,000 claims were received. By 30 June 1996, compensation payments will have totalled \$374.4 million.

The Board's priority is to ensure an efficient completion of the Scheme by 30 June 1997. Strategies to accelerate the processing of claims are continually being monitored and reviewed.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

The Board is continuing the strategies to complete the payment of all compensation claims by 30 June 1997. Recurrent funding for 1996-97 of \$3.7 million has been provided for the Board to continue its processing of coal compensation claims. This includes \$600,000 allocated for redundancy payments related to the closure of the Board by 30 June 1997.

### **Capital Payments**

An allocation of \$50 million for 1996-97 has been provided for compensation payments. The outstanding liability at June 1997 (when the Board closes) is estimated to be \$10 million which will be paid out by the Department of Mineral Resources.

## **NEW SOUTH WALES FISHERIES**

New South Wales Fisheries undertakes research, management, and compliance programs in order to conserve the State's fisheries resources and their habitat, to promote sustainable harvests, to allocate the resource fairly between users, and to facilitate the further development of viable aquaculture industries.

### **Expenditure Trends and Recent Developments**

Key initiatives over the past year included -

- a review of agency operations, and an agency restructure, to ensure it is closely focused on core activities;
- a review of fisheries management directions, and the progressive introduction of restricted access for all commercial fisheries;
- the introduction of a share management fishery for abalone;
- a review of consultative arrangements with industry groups; and
- a review of the management of the trout fishery and the commencement of a review of the fishery for native freshwater fish.

### **Strategic Directions**

Recreational and commercial fishing effort has increased significantly over recent years. As a result, expenditure is being refocussed on stock assessments, the development of management plans and alternative ways of achieving compliance with management rules.

Specific actions proposed include -

- improvements in the quality of our commercial and recreational fisheries databases;
- the progressive implementation of management plans that are consistent with the principles of ecologically sustainable development for all fisheries resources;

- the development of recovery plans for threatened species; and
- increasing emphasis on education as a means of achieving compliance with management rules.

Research initiatives have created opportunities to promote the further development of sustainable aquaculture in New South Wales.

## **1996-97 Budget**

### **Current Payments**

An amount of \$24.8 million (a 1.2 per cent decrease on projected 1995-96 current payments) has been provided to the agency in 1996-97. Key recurrent initiatives to be implemented in 1996-97 include -

- an increase in the number of fisheries resources with management plans, consistent with ecologically sustainable development, in place;
- improved commercial fisheries databases and improved stock assessments of commercial fishery resources;
- completion of the process of implementing share managed fisheries for abalone and rock lobster, and restricting access to all other fisheries;
- reviews of the native freshwater finfish fishery, the spearfish fishery, and the recreational charterboat fishery; and
- the introduction of threatened species provisions in the Fisheries Management Act 1994.

### **Capital Payments**

An amount of \$1.2 million (a 7.7 per cent decrease on projected 1995-96 capital payments) has been provided to the agency in 1996-97. Key capital initiatives to be implemented in 1996-97 include -

- completion of the database enhancement commenced in 1995-96; and
- the construction of effluent ponds at major research stations to comply with EPA requirements.