

Statement from the Department of Infrastructure, Energy and Resources

Mine rehabilitation in Tasmania

- The Tasmanian Government plays an active role in rehabilitation of mine sites through a number of avenues:
 - The Abandoned Mines Rehabilitation Trust Fund;
 - Forfeited security deposits; and
 - Partnerships with industry.
- In the financial year 2011-2012, the Trust Fund spent \$150,000, with a particular focus on tailings remediation works at Royal George, as well as shaft capping to improve public safety throughout the state;
- At Royal George \$65,000 was spent in financial year 2011-2012 on earthworks, drainage improvements, vehicle barriers, lime and fertiliser and revegetation works. A further \$52,000 has been spent in 2012-2013 on follow-up works. The program has seen significant improvements with the stabilisation of tailings and germination occurring throughout the site.
- Total expenditure for financial year 2012-2013 for the Trust Fund is expected to be \$400,000 with a renewed focus on remediating acid mine drainage legacies around Zeehan, and in the northeast.
- Of the forfeited bonds, approximately \$35,000 was spent during the financial year 2011-2012 Scotia Mine for repairs and environmental baseline surveys. A further \$400,000 is budgeted for on-ground works in 2013-2014.
- The Savage River Rehabilitation Program (SRRP) is a joint partnership between Grange Resources and the Tasmanian Government to remediate the significant legacy mining issues at Savage River mine. The total budget for this project is \$12 million with expenditure during the 2011-2012 financial year of \$775,000.
- The Tasmanian government is currently investigating options to reduce acid mine drainage at Mt Lyell.
- Government agencies work closely with industry to ensure positive rehabilitation outcomes, from project inception to mine closure. Industry is actively encouraged to work on previously disturbed sites so as to effectively rehabilitate existing mining legacies. For example BCD at Lefroy and Mangana, and Mancala at Burns Peak.

The Royal George Mine

Royal George tin mine closed around 1920

Area of tailings approximately 7 hectares

Rehab file created January 2005

2005

- Proposal to relocate tailings into existing open-cut and rehabilitate tailings footprint rejected by Committee (too expensive? – 4 options presented ranged from \$500,000 – \$800,000).
- Site investigations by MRT including test-pits, soil sampling and water sampling (WG)

2006

- Review of rehabilitation options prepared by Pitt & Sherry.

2007/08

- Commenced program in line with recommendations of P & S report
- Preliminary design for diversion drainage investigated including land survey (P & S).
- Revegetation report prepared (Tim Duckett).
- Minor water sampling by WG.

2008/09:

- Quotes/proposals for finalising diversion drainage design sought. GHD successful consultant. GHD prepared design and costed construction.
- 3 year program of applying ag-lime and fertiliser to tailings commenced (Tim Duckett). This is to prepare for revegetation. Lime application should also help bind metals – reduce solubility.

2009/10:

- Committee rejected diversion drainage because estimated construction cost exceeded budget (GHD estimate \$167,000)
- Diversion drainage design modified to smaller scale and additional sediment retention options investigated after tailings mobilised during wetter than average winter (2009).
- Year 2 of lime and fertiliser.
- Native seed collected (Wildseed) in preparation for commencement of revegetation trials in next budget.

2010/11:

- Construction of sediment retention berms (up to 12-15 berms anticipated but the intention is that not all need to be constructed in 1 campaign if limited by budget).
- Continuation of lime and fertiliser program.
- Commencement of limited revegetation.
- Installation of vehicle barriers (earth bunding).

2011/12:

- Continuation of lime and fertiliser program.
- Continuation of revegetation including fenced plots.
- Improvements to drainage.
- Repairs/maintenance to vehicle barriers.

- 2011-12 spend = \$65,200

2012/13:

- Continuation of lime and fertiliser program.
- Continuation of revegetation including fenced plots.
- Anticipated 2012-13 spend = \$52,000

Revegetation is attempted on areas of the tailings as they become amenable to germination from lime and fertiliser addition.

This is monitored each year and suitable areas targeted for work.

To date approximately 4 hectares have been revegetated – it is expected the majority of tailings will be finished in 2013-14.