



## Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner

### Regulating Rehabilitation – 19 June 2019

#### Answers to written questions

At the Regulating Rehabilitation community forum on 19 June 2019, the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner invited attendees to submit written questions, if they would prefer to do this rather than ask a verbal question. Below are the written questions and answers.

##### Legacy mines

*Q: Apparently there are some 19,000 mining sites in Victoria – many no longer active; of these only one has been completely rehabilitated – a sand quarry. What confidence can the community have in Earth Resources Regulation and the legislation given this rate of rehabilitation where virtually all mining sites have not been rehabilitated to the point that they can be returned to productive or passive use? And at what cost?*

Answer from Wes Douglass, Regional Manager Gippsland, Mine Fire & Emergency, Earth Resources Regulation.

Earth Resources Regulation responded to this question by saying that they believe rehabilitation is regularly completed successfully. The *Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act* was introduced as law in 1990, setting out improved requirements for rehabilitation. This legislation is used by Earth Resources Regulation to guide decision making and compliance activities related to rehabilitation and closure.

The Minerals Resources (Sustainable Development) Act and associated Regulations are currently being reviewed with a mind to further reform for improvements in the area of rehabilitation. This includes improved guidance to industry on rehabilitation expectations and requirements.

For the Latrobe Valley Coal Mines, Earth Resources Regulation will invest significant time and effort to ensure risks during rehabilitation and closure are adequately managed.

##### Traditional Owners' involvement in rehabilitation planning

Two people asked about the involvement of Traditional Owners in the rehabilitation planning process:

- *How much consultation has there been with (Gunai/Kurnai) Traditional Owners/First Australians in the area?*
- *Have the Kurnai Guni people been asked for their input?*

Answer from Prof. Rae Mackay, Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Commissioner.

Input from the Traditional Owners of the land that the mines now occupy is really important to rehabilitation planning. I, and the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy (LVRRS) project team, have regular meetings with representatives from the Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC), which represents Traditional Owners. These meetings are to ensure the Traditional Owners are kept apprised of the rehabilitation planning process, and to ensure they have an opportunity to provide their input into every stage of the process. Additionally, the LVRRS Regional Water Study has funded two positions with GLaWAC to ensure Traditional Owner input into the water studies. The Regional Water Study will include an Aboriginal Waterways and Cultural Values assessment, to ensure that Traditional Owners' cultural values are taken into account. A GLaWAC representative also sits on the Latrobe Valley Mine Rehabilitation Advisory Committee. I understand that each of the three Latrobe Valley mines also run their own consultations with Traditional Owners.