



Mining Development and Closure Proposals and Approvals Statements framework

Under changes introduced to the *Mining Act 1978* (Mining Act), prior to undertaking mining operations the activities must be included in a Mining Development and Closure Proposal (MDCP) and be recorded on an Approvals Statement.

The purpose of the 'Mining Development and Closure Proposals and Approvals Statements framework' is to reduce regulatory and administrative duplication in assessment processes, approval documentation and compliance monitoring. The framework streamlines decision-making, eliminates documentation duplication and improves the efficiency of environmental approval applications and assessments.

What is a MDCP?

MDCP replaces the requirement to submit a Mining Proposal (accompanied by a Mine Closure Plan (MCP)).

A MDCP's primary purpose is to demonstrate to the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration (the department) that proposed mining activities can be conducted in accordance with the department's ['Environmental Objectives Policy for Mining'](#).

The form and content of an MDCP is set out in the Mining Regulations 1981 and further detailed in the department's ['Guideline for preparing Mining Development and Closure Proposals'](#).

Table 1. Key changes between MDCP and Mining Proposal

Aspect	MDCP	Mining Proposal
Lodgement	Resources Online (replaces EARS online).	Environmental Assessment and Regulatory System (EARS) online.
Risk assessment	Environmental risk assessment of the mining activities must be undertake using the department's standard framework (presented in MDCP guidelines).	The Mining Proposal must include a risk assessment for mining activities including a description of methodologies and framework used.
Environmental and closure outcomes	The MDCP must include environmental and closure outcomes. The department has developed a list of standard environmental and closure outcomes (presented in the MDCP guidelines) which will be applicable to most mining operations. Site specific outcomes can be proposed where the department's standard outcomes are not appropriate. Agreed outcomes are recorded on the Approvals Statement.	The Mining Proposal must include site specific environmental outcomes that the mining operation will achieve.
Mine Closure Plan	Not required at lodgement. The closure information submitted in the MDCP is used to demonstrate that the department's objective for rehabilitation and mine closure can be met. Closure information presented in the MDCP includes closure designs for key landforms, identification of closure knowledge gaps and opportunities for progressive rehabilitation. The due date for the MCP is recorded on the Approvals Statement.	All Mining Proposals must include an MCP.

Stakeholder engagement is still a key aspect of the MDCP framework. The MDCP must provide details on the active engagement that has been undertaken with key stakeholders regarding the proposed mining activities including discussions on rehabilitation, closure and post mining land use. The department expects early and ongoing engagement with directly impacted stakeholders, such as landholders, reserve vestees, Traditional Owner groups and post-mining land managers, which is essential to manage expectations and reduce the risk of directly impacting stakeholders.

What is an Approvals Statement?

Following assessment of an MDCP, should the proposed activities be approved, an Approvals Statement will be issued to the tenement holder. The Approvals Statement defines the scope and limits of the mining activities approved, along with any relevant conditions (environmental outcomes), closure outcomes, and the date for submission of the MCP.

Once a site has been transitioned to the new framework the Approvals Statement will provide a single source for industry and the community, to identify all approved mining activities across all tenements, their corresponding approval conditions, closure outcomes for the mining operation and the review date for the MCP.

Where can I find an Approvals Statement?

All Approvals Statements issued by the department are publicly available through [Resources Online – public search](#).

Will existing mining operations have an Approvals Statement?

Mine operators do not need to submit an MDCP to seek approval for existing, approved activities and will continue to operate under their existing approvals.

The department will be implementing a transition program to transition existing mining operations to an Approvals Statement, with the goal that all sites will eventually operate under Approvals Statement format. The aim will be to have most existing operating sites transitioned within a two-to-three-year period to ensure the efficiency and consistency benefits of the new framework are realised.

All Approvals Statements issued through the transition program will be made available through [Resources Online](#) public search.

Do mining operations still submit an MCP?

As closure planning is an iterative process, it is still a requirement that MCPs are submitted to the department in order for mining operators to demonstrate that the mining operation is planning and progressing towards successful closure.

An MCP will not be required with an MDCP as closure planning is incorporated within the MDCP, but the due date for submission of the next stand-alone MCP will be specified on the Approvals Statement.

MCPs received by the department will continue to be made publicly available through [Resources Online – public search](#).

What about small mining operations?

The department has developed a '[Small Mining Operations policy](#)' and a dedicated '[MDCP Small Operations form](#)' to support operators whose activities meet the department's small mining operations criteria.

Where can I find more information?

This factsheet provides a snapshot of the department's 'Mining Development and Closure Proposals and Approvals Statements framework'.

For more information:

- **Visit:** [Mining Development and Closure Proposals](#) or scan the QR code →



- **Refer** to the document links within the factsheet.

- **Contact** the Department of Mines, Petroleum and Exploration [Resource and Environmental Compliance Division](#).