

WRITTEN QUESTION

Ms Purick, Member for Goyder, to Minister for Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources

MINE SITE REGULATORY REGIME

In regard to compliance requirements provided for under the *Mine Management Act* for mineral exploration sites, mining projects and extractive permits and extractive lease sites:

For the 2008 and 2009 years -

1. How many site visits were conducted for each year and which sites were visited and how many times per year?
2. How many annual audits were undertaken in each year for all operating projects for all lease type to check the companies' compliance with their submitted mine management plan?
3. Which projects for all lease types were visited for annual audits for the 2008 and 2009 years?
4. Which projects for all lease types did not receive an annual audit visit and if not why not?
5. Is an annual audit was not conducted with aforementioned projects, what other action was undertaken to ensure compliance with the project's mine management plan?
6. Following an annual audit visit, how many projects' mine management plans were found not to be compliant and in what areas of the operations?
7. How many warnings were issued and for what projects?
8. For both years, how many reported incidents and accidents were received by the government for all lease types?
9. What was the Lost Time Injury Frequency Rate for industry for both years?
10. How does this rate compare to the two previous years?
11. How does the rates compare with other industries in the Northern Territory?
12. With a new mine management plan, what is the average time for assessment from lodgement to granting an authorisation?
13. What has been the upper time to assess a new mine management plan and if it is in excess of 60 days, what have been the reasons?

ANSWER

1. A total of 221 site visits were conducted in 2008. This included 208 field inspections, 12 close-out visits and one audit.

The sites and number of visits for 2008 is outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Sites and Number of Visits during 2008

Mount Todd	21
Ranger Mine	15
All Earth Combined Area	9
Berno Howard River Sand	7
Cosmo Project - Historical	6
Jabiluka Project	6
Pine Creek Gold Mine - Historical	6
Brocks Creek Mine - Historical	5
Ostojic - Combined Areas Project	5
Boral - Mount Bunday and Batchelor Project	4
Goodall Gold (Mine) Project	4
Howard Peninsula Project	4
Page - Sunday Creek Project	4
Union Reefs Gold Mine - Historical	4
Alcan Gove Mine	3
Burnside - Fountain Head Project - Historical	3
CPH Mine	3
Elrundie Project	3
Martin - Scrubby Creek Project - Historical	3
North Point and Princess Louise Project - Historical	3
Redcliffe Road Project	3
Sandy Flat Mine	3
Tennant Creek Extractive Projects	3
Terra Gold - Moline Exploration Project - Historical	3
Woodcutters Mine	3
Boral - Howard Springs and Scrubby Creek Project	2
Hanson - Batchelor Operation	2
Holt - Maud Creek Project	2
Howard West Project	2
Innocente - Combined Project Areas	2
Kerr - Arnhem Project Area	2
Kerr - Channel Island Project Area	2
McArthur River Mine	2
Mottrams and Chinese South Extension Mine - Historical	2
Territory Iron - Frances Creek Mine Project - Historical	2
One site visit each for 68 sites	68
Total	221

A total of 296 site visits were conducted in 2009. This included 288 field inspections, seven close-out visits and one audit.

The sites and number of visits for 2009 is outlined in Table 2.

Table 2 : Sites and Number of Visits during 2009

Mount Todd Mine	25
All Earth Combined Areas	20
Berno Howard River Sand	16
Dale Page Sunday Creek	14
Ceccon Combined	11
Ranger Mine	10
AN47 Combined Project	6
Goodall Mine	6
Innocente Combined Project Areas	6
Kerr Arnhem Project	6
Burnside - Fountain Head Project - Historical	5
Cosmo Project - Historical	5
Ostojic - Combined Areas Project	5
Boral - Howard Springs and Scrubby Creek Project	4
Boral - Mount Bundy and Batchelor Project	4
Brocks Creek Mine - Historical	4
Browns Oxide Project	4
HB Quarry	4
Pine Creek Gold Mine - Historical	4
Red Hill Alluvials Project	4
Woodcutters Mine	4
Yarrowonga Quarry and Girraween Road Sand Pit	4
Alcan Gove Mine	3
Frances Creek Mine Project	3
Gemco Mine	3
Martin - Scrubby Creek Project - Historical	3
North Point and Princess Louise Project - Historical	3
Redcliffe Road Project	3
Rum Jungle Mine - Historical	3
Angela Project	2
Berno - Howard North Gravel Project	2
Bonanni - Roe Creek Project	2
Hawk - Koolpinyah and Sunday Creek Projects	2
Holt - Maud Creek Project	2
Jabiluka Project	2
Kerr - Channel Island Project Area	2
Koolpinyah Porcellanite Quarry	2
Manbulloo Pits Project	2
Mataranka Lime Plant and Quarry	2
McArthur River Mine	2
Mount Bundy Granite Quarry	2
North Caledonian Mining Project	2
Pine Creek Gravel Project	2
Readyrnix - Tindal Quarry	2
Rowlands - Katherine Project	2
SK Enterprise - Combined Project	2
Spring Hill Project	2
Terra Gold - Moline Exploration Project - Historical	2
Western Project Area	2
White Range Dump Leach Trial Project	2
One site visit each for 62 sites	62
Total	296

2. Mine sites are monitored for compliance via field visits and inspections, and assessment of Mining Management Plans (MMPs) and supporting documents (such as consultants' reports). Audits are undertaken where a more detailed consideration than would be achieved through a site inspection, is considered necessary.

One audit was undertaken in 2008 to monitor if the company was operating in accordance with its MMP.

One audit was undertaken in 2009 to monitor if the company was operating in accordance with its submitted MMP.

3. The audit in 2008 was at the Ranger Mine operated by Energy Resources of Australia Ltd (ERA) (Authorisation 0108-12).

The audit in 2009 was undertaken on Arnhem Project (exploration) operated by Cameco Australia Pty Ltd (Authorisation 0309-02).

4. Territory sites are monitored for compliance via field visits and inspections, and assessment of Mining Management Plans (MMPs) and supporting documents (such as consultants' reports). Details on audits are provided above.

5. Field inspections are used to monitor compliance with the project's MMP. As detailed in the response to Question 1, a total of 222 site visits and 296 site visits were conducted in 2008 and 2009 respectively.

6. The audit completed in 2008 at the Ranger Mine operated by ERA found the following:

- Zero Category 1 non conformances were identified.
- One Category 2 non conformance relating to the management of land applications was identified; and
- Three Conditional issues relating to training and awareness of the Radiation Management Plan, training and awareness of the Ranger Authorisation and monitoring of Pit 1 were identified.

The audit completed in 2009 at Arnhem Project operated by Cameco Australia Pty Ltd found the following:

- Zero Category 1 non conformances were identified.
- Zero Category 2 non conformances were identified.
- One Conditional issue relating to statutory requirements was identified.
- One Conditional issue relating to Cameco's Weed Management Plan was carried over from 2008; and
- Four Observational issues relating to Environmental Management System (SHEQ Policy Statement), Environmental Audits and Inspections, Flora/Fauna and Fire Management and Exploration Rehabilitation were identified.

7. The *Mining Management Act* does not provide for the issuing of warnings to Operators.

In accordance with Section 62 (e) of the *Mining Management Act*, Mining Officers have the power to 'issue written instructions to the operator'.

Two written instructions were issued in 2008 for unauthorised mining activity in accordance with Section 62 of the *Mining Management Act*. The written instructions were issued for the following projects:

- Howard River Lot 1 Sand Project operated by Berno Bros Pty Ltd (Authorisation 0167-02)
- Cosmo Project formerly operated by Burnside Operations Pty Ltd (Authorisation 0045-03).

One written instruction was issued in 2009 for unauthorised activity in accordance with Section 62 of the *Mining Management Act*. The written instruction was issued to the following project:

- Sunday Creek Project operated by Dale Nevette Page (Authorisation 0171-03)

8. A total 37 environmental incidents were reported to government in 2008 in accordance with Section 29 of the *Mining Management Act*.

A total 29 environmental incidents were reported to government in 2009 in accordance with Section 29 of the *Mining Management Act*.

9. Workplace health and safety is regulated by NT WorkSafe in the Department of Justice.

10. See response to Question 9.

11. See response to Question 9.

12. During 2009 the average time for granting an Authorisation was 70 days. The median was 59 days. The average is affected by several longer periods where operators have requested additional time to submit information or security.

The Department of Resources' initial document review period allows 28 days for review by Mining Officers with appropriate experience. This may be shorter for small exploration or extractive operations. Requests for additional information give the operator a timeframe of 30 days to submit. This information is assessed within 2-14 days depending on the complexity of the issues and the size of the site. Requests to submit security give the operator an additional 30 days to submit.

13. The maximum time to assess a new MMP and grant an Authorisation was 151 days in 2009.

The main reasons for long timeframes are requests for additional information not being submitted by operators within the specified timeframe (30 days), requests from operators for extensions of time to submit additional information, securities not being submitted by operators in the requested timeframes (30 days), and requests from operators for additional time to submit securities. Another common hold-up is operators not submitting correct, original signed forms in a timely manner when requested.

