

<b>Ministerial Council of Mineral and Petroleum Resources</b>	<b>2003 CONFERENCE OF CHIEF INSPECTORS OF MINES — a Subcommittee of MCMPR</b>  <b>Perth, WA</b> <span style="float: right;"><b>8-10 October 2003</b></span>
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## COMMUNIQUE

The 45<sup>th</sup> annual Conference of Chief Inspectors of Mines (CCIM) was held in Perth, Western Australia, during the week commencing 6 October 2003. The conference was hosted by the Department of Industry and Resources and chaired by Roger Billingham, Deputy Chief Inspector of Mines (Metalliferous), Queensland, with representation from all States (except Tasmania), Northern Territory, Commonwealth and observers from New Zealand and Papua New Guinea.

### **Pre-conference**

Prior to the conference, the Chief Inspectors visited Sons of Gwalia's Greenbushes tantalum-lithium-tin mine and Griffin Coal's operations in the southwest of Western Australia.

The Greenbushes pegmatite deposit makes Sons of Gwalia one of the world's largest suppliers of tantalum concentrates and lithium minerals. The close proximity of the open cut and processing operations to the Greenbushes township presents operational challenges to minimise any impact on the local community. Visits to plant and mine facilities were combined with discussions about training, health, safety and environmental management systems.

Griffin Coal has significant resources of coal in the Collie Basin. The Chief Inspectors toured the Muja and Ewington open cut operations, loading and transport facilities and mine water treatment areas. In discussions with management, they gained an appreciation of the mine's planned development over the next five years and treatment trials designed to address long-term storage of mine water.

The Chief Inspectors appreciated the time made available and the opportunity to have open and frank discussions with senior management, planning and operating staff at both sites. Thanks in particular are extended to Graeme Kininmonth, David Billington, Roger Pover (Sons of Gwalia), Allan King, Ian Pigott, Brad Burrows, Rob Banks (Griffin Coal) and to Tim Shanahan and Nicole Roocke (Chamber of Minerals and Energy, WA) for providing the opportunity meet with other mining representatives in Bunbury and Perth.

### **National Mine Safety Framework (NMSF)**

The CCIM completed a detailed review of a preliminary draft of the NMSF Implementation Plan and agreed on work to be completed by all jurisdictions in preparing a timetable and resource implications analysis for the Plan. The Conference is working towards submitting the Plan to the MCMPR's Standing Committee of Officials in the first half of 2004.

In the week preceding the Conference, the Standing Committee of Officials of the Ministerial Council on Mineral and Petroleum Resources approved release of the CCIM's Discussion Paper dealing with issues impacting on implementation of the NMSF. This followed consultations around Australia, at individual jurisdictional and national levels, based on a draft of the paper. The Chief Inspectors are now seeking wider input from the community and stakeholders on the Discussion Paper, which is available on the website of the CCIM — <http://www.ga.gov.au/ccim>.

The CCIM's work on the Framework's Implementation Plan is proceeding concurrently with consultation on the Discussion Paper. This involves, inter alia, examining actions and recommendations contained in the Plan that may impact on industry and the community. Under principles and guidelines set down by the Council of Australian Governments (CoAG) in regard to national standard setting and regulatory action by ministerial councils and standard-setting bodies, it is likely that the NMSF will be captured at several stages in the course of its implementation. The CoAG requirements and that of individual jurisdictions are therefore being examined to determine the most effective way to address the development and submission of regulation impact statements.

### **Other matters**

Other matters addressed at the Conference included the following.

- The need to clarify apparent anomalies that have arisen in relation to the application of mutual recognition legislation as it relates to "registered" occupations in the mining industry, where registration in terms of the mutual recognition legislation has occurred in some but not all jurisdictions. This matter will be examined as part of the 'Competency Strategy' to be addressed in implementing the NMSF.
- A review of actions being taken by jurisdictions (where necessary) in relation to the Workplace Relations Ministers' Council decision in 2002 to prohibit the use (and importation) of chrysotile and all other forms of asbestos from 31 December 2003.
- An update of executive management, legislation and operation arrangements for all jurisdictions to be posted on the CCIM's website.



CCIM representatives, October 2003

Standing (L to R): Firoz Patwa (PNG), Greg Marshall (SA), Tim Gosling (NT), Brian Lyne (Qld), Bill Loizides (SA), Graeme McLaughlan (Vic), Howard Lole (PNG), Kee Hah (NT), Roger Billingham (Qld). Sitting (L to R): Rob Regan (NSW), Martin Knee (WA), John Mitas (Vic), George Munro (NZ), Bill McKay (Com)

*Bill McKay* for  
Roger Billingham  
Chair, CCIM 2003  
Deputy Chief Inspector of Mines (Metalliferous)  
Department of Natural Resources and Mines  
Queensland  
October 2003