



Programme of Work – prospecting policy

Version 2.3 August 2021

Summary

This document tells you how the Department of Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DMIRS) assesses Programme of Work (PoW) applications for prospecting activities. This process replaces our old application form for 'Low Impact Mining Operations' (LIMO). Our policy outlines the PoW categories and limits of production for prospecting activities.

Definition of prospecting activities for a Programme of Work

To define prospecting, consideration should be given to Section 48(b) of the *Mining Act 1978* (the Act), which states that prospecting activities include the: digging of pits, trenches and holes, and sinking of bores and tunnels in, on or under the land. In addition, Section 48(c) of the Act further describes prospecting as excavating, extracting or removing land, earth, soil, rock, stone, fluid or mineral bearing substances not greater than a prescribed limit.

For this policy, we consider the following activities as prospecting:

- Scraping and detecting/shallow pushing
- Costeaming/trenching
- Dryblowing
- Small wet alluvial plants
- Some small-scale operations with a small footprint (e.g. less than 5 hectares)
- Small bulk sampling projects (e.g. less than 10,000 tonnes)
- Small ornamental rock operations

For us to view prospecting activities as exploration rather than mining (and therefore an acceptable activity on exploration licences, prospecting licences and special prospecting licences) the activities must satisfy the following criteria:

- The DMIRS Environmental Officer must consider them to be low impact (e.g. minimal ground disturbance).
- No permanent infrastructure required (e.g. plant and camp are mobile).
- No permanent waste or ore stockpiles required.
- Rehabilitation should be progressive, low cost and easily achievable.
- Areas can be rehabilitated to pre-mining ground conditions.
- Tonnage must be appropriate for the type of activity and tenure.

If the application meets the above criteria, then the PoW may be used.

If the proponent is undertaking a productive mining activity and it falls outside our classification of prospecting as listed above, the activities must be on a Mining or General Purpose Lease and submitted via a Mining Proposal following our [guidelines](#).

A PoW cannot be used to apply for a Mining Lease, only a "Mining Proposal", "a Statement and Mineralisation Report" or a "Resource Report" may be used to support an application for a Mining Lease (see our Mining Proposal guidelines).

Please consult an [Environmental Officer](#) at DMIRS if you need help to prepare a Mining Proposal.

Application process

Applications for a PoW-P can be lodged with DMIRS using the prescribed [application form](#). A covering letter should be included if there is insufficient room to describe the activities you wish to undertake on the tenement.

All tenement holders and operators must sign the application. The application must also include a detailed map showing the location and extent of the proposed prospecting activities.

Applications for a PoW-S can be lodged [online](#). For further information about a PoW-S application, please contact PoWspatial@dmirs.wa.gov.au.

DMIRS assessment process

The assessment process for a PoW is outlined below:

- Applicant submits Programme of Work – Prospecting application to DMIRS by mail or over the counter at any DMIRS office, or online through PoW-S.
- DMIRS registers the PoW.
- An Environmental Officer (EO) assesses the application.
- If the PoW is approved, a prescribed official (EO) or a delegated officer (Team Leader or Executive Director) (depending on wording in tenement conditions) will sign an approval letter and send it to the proponent by email.

Reporting requirements

A rehabilitation report should be submitted once rehabilitation work is complete. The rehabilitation report template is available on our [website](#). We may schedule a site inspection to see whether the tenement conditions and commitments in the PoW application have been met.

Version History

Version	Date	Changes
1.0	November 2010	Initial Publication
2.0	June 2015	Updated
2.1	October 2016	Links updated
2.2	August 2018	Updated links and departmental name
2.3	August 2021	Clear guidance language updates

Government of Western Australia

**Department of Mines, Industry Regulation
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8.30am – 4.30pm

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