

Code of Environmental Practice for Mineral Exploration in Western Australia



Full Version - October 2010



Association of Mining and
Exploration Companies



The Chamber of Minerals and
Energy of Western Australia

Foreword

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) has facilitated the preparation of this Code of Environmental Practice for Mineral Exploration in WA, the purpose of which is to assist mineral explorers to identify and meet their environmental obligations; and to maintain a high standard of environmental performance and responsibility.

The Code has been developed with wide stakeholder consultation and input; specific guidance provided by Aquaterra (Environmental Consultants); and has also been independently peer reviewed by Coffey Environments. The Code has also been developed in conjunction with the support and expert input from the Chamber of Minerals and Energy of Western Australia (CME) and the Department of Mines and Petroleum.

The Code aims to:

- Propose desirable environmental management practices,
- Promote a high standard of environmental performance, and
- Foster good relationships between explorers and stakeholders.

The Code is not intended to replace or be inconsistent with relevant State or Federal legislative or regulatory requirements. It is intended to be complementary with any such requirements; and with individual environment management plans and strategies.

A more user friendly “Pocket Version” of the Code is also available for use in the ‘field’ by employees, contractors, sub contractors and landowners involved in mineral exploration; and should be read in conjunction with the full and comprehensive version.

Adoption of the best practice principles promoted by the Code is crucial in ensuring the continued strong reputation that the mining and minerals exploration sector possesses in undertaking business related activities in harmony with the environment and in an environmentally responsible manner.

All mineral exploration stakeholders are encouraged to read, understand and implement the contents of this Code.

For further information and electronic copies of the full Code and the Pocket Version:

Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC)

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Disclaimer: This Code of Environmental Practice provides guidance on environmental practice in minerals exploration in WA. The Code does not replace, or intended to be inconsistent with relevant State or Federal legislation or regulatory requirements, and has no legal force or effect. Compliance with the Code will not necessarily mean compliance with any legal obligations. AMEC or CME do not accept any responsibility or liability for any person’s use of, or reliance on, this Code, or for any consequence of such use or reliance. As legal obligations and environmental standards change from time to time, AMEC or CME do not represent that the Code is up to date.

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Purpose of the Code

The Association of Mining and Exploration Companies (AMEC) has facilitated the preparation of this Code of Environmental Practice for Mineral Exploration in Western Australia (the Code).

This edition of the Code supercedes all previous versions. It does not replace or supercede the Code of Conduct for Mineral Exploration on Pastoral Leases.

The purpose of the Code is to provide practical guidance to assist mineral explorers to identify and meet their environmental obligations and to maintain a high standard of environmental performance. Adoption of the Code's provisions will assist explorers to comply with their tenement conditions and the various guidelines applying to exploration activities. It will also assist explorers in gaining landowner/land-holder agreement for their activities. The Code does not replace existing statutory and guiding mechanisms (e.g., tenement conditions and the guidelines referred to in Section 5.2).

Accordingly, the Code aims to:

- Propose desirable environmental management practices applying to exploration activities;
- Promote a high standard of environmental performance by explorers operating in Western Australia; and
- Foster good relationships between explorers and stakeholders who have a direct interest in the area being explored.

The following land tenures are relevant when referring to the Western Australian *Mining Act 1978* (Mining Act):

- Crown land (e.g., vacant Crown land, pastoral leases and grazing leases);
- Reserved land (e.g., national parks, nature reserves, conservation parks, state forests and townsites); and
- Private land (e.g., pre-1899 'Minerals-to-Owner' land and private land (freehold and various leasehold)).

Where the proposed exploration activities are within reserved land or other environmentally sensitive lands (e.g., proposed conservation park and Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) managed pastoral lease) then the explorer should contact DEC prior to commencing site exploration.

Under section 29 of the Mining Act, mineral exploration activity can only occur on private land with agreement from the landowner.

1.2 Background

The application of high standards of environmental management practices in exploration is essential to enable exploration activities to be properly controlled and allow protection of environmentally sensitive areas and community concerns to be effectively addressed.

The Code is relevant to all stages of exploration and may prove useful in project development and operation. The Code is also relevant for contractors and suppliers who work with explorers.

The Code recognises that mineral exploration is a temporary activity; therefore an important goal is to maintain land availability for multiple land users, both present and future.

Exploration can co-exist with other land uses and land users without undue interference, provided that the needs of all parties are recognised, understood and respected. It should be noted that the law of trespass is applicable to Crown land and pastoral leases, and it is important that explorers and contractors understand the legal requirements and their obligations relating to accessing such areas.

1.3 Status of Code of Environmental Practice

This Code is a working document and is subject to ongoing review.

2. OBJECTIVES

This Code aims to promote responsible land use practices while gathering geological information during exploration. Minimising environmental impacts and maintaining future land use options are important objectives of the Code.

This Code is designed to complement legal processes that regulate mineral exploration in Western Australia and conditions attached to Mining Act tenements. The Code is not intended to replace the current statutory requirements.

3. DEFINITIONS

In this Code:

EXPLORER includes Mining Act tenement holders and mineral exploration company employees, contractors, subcontractors and consultants, as well as fossickers and prospectors.

EXPLORATION activities include:

- Research and review of previous licence holders' results;
- Local-scale geophysical surveys and geochemical and hand sampling;
- Geological mapping;
- Broad-scale geophysical surveys;
- Construction of access tracks and other infrastructure;
- Reconnaissance drilling and auger sampling;
- Rapid trench sampling (such as "ditch-witching");
- Close-spaced drilling of target sites;
- Waste characterization drilling;
- Costeaming and bulk sampling; and
- Underground exploration.

LAND includes all land in Western Australia that is currently or may become available for mineral exploration.

LANDOWNER/LAND-HOLDER means owner, land-holder, lessee, and their managers and agents, as well as trustee, traditional owner, custodian or any other legal occupier.

REGULATOR and REGULATORS mean those local, State and Commonwealth government agencies that have a role in regulating any aspect of an exploration activity.



4. GENERAL PRINCIPLES

The explorer should:

- Ensure that every party involved in the exploration of a mining tenement, including employees of the tenement holder, landowner/land-holder, occupier or manager, contractors and subcontractors, is familiar with or given a copy of this Code;
- Where an explorer undertakes mineral exploration activities on behalf of the tenement holder, occupier or manager, the tenement holder should use their best endeavors to ensure that the explorer complies with the conditions specified in this Code;
- Ensure that all relevant approvals and agreements are obtained prior to commencement;
- Avoid unauthorised damage to pastoral improvements, native vegetation and community facilities;
- Ensure that any unauthorised damage caused by the explorer is reported to the landowner/land-holder, occupier or manager, or tenement holder at the earliest opportunity and arrangements made for restitution or repair;
- The means of resolving any disputes between the explorer and the tenement holder, landowner/holder, occupier or manager should be discussed prior to the commencement of exploration activities;
- Ensure that there are open discussions with any Aboriginal person whose lifestyle and culture may be affected by exploration work and that, as a minimum, these discussions are conducted in accordance with the requirements of any relevant legislation; and
- Ensure that persons in contact with Aboriginal people have an understanding of the Aboriginal people's concerns and culture, particularly their desire to maintain the integrity of cultural areas.

5. LEGISLATION, STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS AND GUIDELINES

5.1 Legislation and Statutory Requirements for Mineral Exploration

5.1.1 Introduction

It is essential that explorers and those working on their behalf operate in accordance with the Mining Act and other statutory requirements, all tenement conditions and their approved Programme of Work (PoW).

Before exploration is commenced, it is essential that explorers and others working on their behalf familiarise themselves with the legislation that relates to their proposed exploration activities.

Mineral exploration and mining in Western Australia is administered under the Mining Act and it is through the provisions of this act that explorers can gain the approvals necessary to access mineral resources. The Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) administers this act, and the mining tenements available under the act include; prospecting licences, special prospecting licences (for gold), exploration licences, retention licences, mining leases, general purpose leases and miscellaneous licences.

Disturbances exceeding 500 tonnes on a prospecting licence (section 48c of the Mining Act) or 1,000 tonnes on an exploration licence (section 66c of the Mining Act) requires Ministerial approval or delegated approval by the Director, Environment (DMP).

5.1.2 Mining Act 1978

If mineral exploration includes surface disturbance using mechanical equipment, lodgement of a Programme of Work with DMP is required, which replaces the previous system of ground disturbing approval applications. Approval will also be required for establishment of exploration camps.

In order to prospect in Western Australia you will be required to possess a Miner's Right, which can be obtained from any Mining Registrar's Office. Possession of a Miner's Right does not authorise these activities on private land or reserved land (except where the purpose is a common, mining or public utility).

The Act also specifies the ability to apply environmental bonds on mining tenements to ensure provision is made for rehabilitation of the site.

5.1.3 Environmental Protection Act 1986

A Memorandum of Understanding between the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) and DMP, with the involvement of DEC, clarifies the arrangements for referral of mineral exploration proposals to the EPA for assessment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). Under Part IV of the EP Act, a proposal for exploration (e.g., a Programme of Work), that appears likely, if implemented, to have a significant effect on the environment, will be referred to the EPA for assessment.

Any clearing of native vegetation requires approval under Part V of the EP Act. Mineral exploration activities are exempt from requiring a clearing permit under Regulation 5, Item 20 (in accordance with Schedule 1) and Item 25, of the *Environmental Protection (Clearing of Native Vegetation) Regulations 2004*, if the activity is approved under the Mining Act (via an authorised PoW) and does not include clearing an environmentally sensitive area. Contact DMP's Native Vegetation Assessment Branch to determine whether the proposed exploration activities will require a clearing permit.

5.1.4 Other State Legislation

Mineral exploration activities may also be subject to provisions under other state legislation. The common activities undertaken during mineral exploration that require consideration under other state legislation is provided below:

Activity/ Potential Impact	Legislation	Contact
Disturbance to Aboriginal Sites	<i>Aboriginal Heritage Act 1972</i>	Department of Indigenous Affairs
Disturbance to Declared Rare Flora	<i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>	Department of Environment and Conservation
Disturbance to Threatened Ecological Communities	<i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>	Department of Environment and Conservation
Seed Collection	<i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>	Department of Environment and Conservation (even when a licence is held, all pickers must obtain the permission of the land manager)
Disturbance to Protected Fauna or Protected Fauna habitat	<i>Wildlife Conservation Act 1950</i>	Department of Environment and Conservation
Pollution (contamination of soil or water)	<i>Contaminated Sites Act 2003</i>	Department of Environment and Conservation
Road Transport	<i>Road Traffic Act 1974</i>	Main Roads Western Australia
Disturbance to Groundwater (abstraction for drilling) and Surface Water (culverts, bed and banks etc.)	<i>Rights in Water and Irrigation Act 1914</i>	Department of Water
Fire Management	<i>Bush Fires Act 1954</i>	Local Shire (Bushfire Control Officer)
Transport and Storage of Dangerous Goods	<i>Dangerous Goods Safety Act 2004</i>	Department of Mines and Petroleum

Note: This table is not exhaustive regarding potential obligations under state legislation.

5.1.5 Commonwealth Legislation

Commonwealth legislation applies only where Commonwealth decisions are required, for example, matters of national environmental significance, native title, world heritage, foreign investment and uranium mines. Relevant Commonwealth legislation includes:

- *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*;
- *Native Title Act 1993*;
- *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Heritage Protection Act 1984*; and
- *Australian Heritage Council Act 1993*.

To determine whether the proposed action is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of national environmental significance refer to the Australian Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) website (www.environment.gov.au), or contact the Department direct.

5.2 Guidelines

The explorer should operate in accordance with relevant guidelines issued by DMP. A number of guidelines are available on the Department's website (www.dmp.wa.gov.au) dealing with developing, exploring, operating and producing activities. Extensive information is also available on the website on safety, dangerous goods, environmental and land access issues.

6. BEFORE EXPLORATION

Sections 6.1 to 6.3 detail environmental management methods that the explorer should consider prior to undertaking exploration activities. The explorer must be fully conversant with the approvals required under the Mining Act and Regulations prior to commencing work.

6.1 Communication

As detailed in Section 1.1, the explorer should contact the landowner/land-holder well in advance of each field session. Where possible, the explorer should visit the landowner/land-holder on the relevant property prior to commencing site exploration. The explorer is required to give 24 hours notice to the owner/occupier of any pastoral lease prior to entering the lease. Details of the proposed work programme should be discussed with the owner/occupier before commencing work on the property, incorporating:

- Where applicable, an exploration environmental management plan (or equivalent, see Section 6.3).
- The layout of the proposed activities, including the position of all surface disturbances (e.g., drill lines, excavation areas, drill pads, access route, camp site location, and borrow pits), and detailing any environmental features, including topography, land tenure, surface water features, culturally significant sites, Declared Rare and Priority Flora (see Section 6.2);
- Details of vehicles and equipment to be used;
- Numbers of personnel involved;
- The proposed timing of the exploration activity;
- The rights and processes available to the landowner/land-holder in relation to any concerns; and
- The extent of the rehabilitation works proposed.

The explorer should request (or clarify) the following from the landowner/land-holder:

- Access arrangements;
- Suitable camp site location;
- Any activities of the owner/occupier that may be impacted by the exploration programme;
- Any updates to the explorer's maps (e.g., new roads, gates, fences and bores);
- Permission for the use of water, including the source from which water can be drawn;
- Details of any onsite problem areas (e.g., infestations of weeds or noxious plants and any hazardous locations);
- Details of any local management programmes being implemented by the landowner/land-holder and requirements with which the explorer will need to comply; and
- Requirements relating to minimising disturbance to any livestock, including access to water.

Communication can be in many forms; however, it is recommended that initial communication should be in writing followed by personal contact. Written confirmation of agreed arrangements is important.

6.2 Potential Environmental Impacts

Exploration activities have the potential to adversely impact on the environment if they are not managed appropriately. Aspects that require management are specific to the environment in which the exploration activities are proposed; however, they typically include:

- Disturbance of native vegetation and flora (including Declared Rare and Priority Flora);
- Fauna disturbance (e.g., vehicle strike, habitat disturbance and noise);
- Soil disturbance, erosion and compaction;
- Disturbance to surface water drainage patterns and surface water bodies;
- Introduction and/or spreading of weeds and pathogens;
- Noise, light and dust emissions;
- Disturbance to culturally significant sites;
- Disruption to other land users, such as farmers and the local community;
- Fire; and
- Contamination of soil and water, including fuel and chemical storage and sewage, greywater and waste management.

The objective of environmental management for exploration activities is to identify, address and minimise potential adverse impacts at all stages of the exploration process. The development of an exploration environmental management plan (see Section 6.3) allows exploration activities to be undertaken in an effective and efficient manner.

Appropriate care should also be taken where exploration activity is involved with, or encounters evidence of radiation or asbestos.

6.3 Exploration Environmental Management Plan

Undertaking exploration activities in accordance with an exploration environmental management plan or system that may be applicable to both the proposed activities and the existing environment (see Section 6.2) is regarded as best practice for larger exploration programmes. The conditions on a tenement together with the environmental programmes specified in POW approvals are generally sufficient for most small to medium sized exploration programmes. The objective of environmental management for exploration activities is to identify, address and minimize potential adverse impacts at all stages of the exploration process. The development of an exploration environmental management plan allows exploration activities to be undertaken in an effective and efficient manner.

The development and level of detail contained within an exploration environmental management plan / system should reflect the nature of the exploration activities proposed and the significance of the potential impacts to the environment. Consultation with DMP prior to lodging a Programme of Work will help to determine whether an exploration environmental management plan / system is required.

An exploration environmental management plan should aim to:

- Include maps delineating the layout of the proposed activities, including the position of all proposed surface disturbances (e.g., drill lines, excavation areas, drill pads, access route, camp site location and borrow pits) and detailing any environmental features, including topography, cadastral, land tenure, surface water features, culturally significant sites, and Declared Rare and Priority Flora;
- Plan exploration activities to minimise potential disturbances to the landowner/land-holder's activities and the environment;
- Wherever possible, select drilling and other excavation sites that will minimise environmental damage and ensure that the size of any excavation is kept to the minimum required for the activity being undertaken;
- Avoid impacts to flora and fauna species of conservation significance;
- Avoid impacts to known Aboriginal Heritage sites;
- Avoid alterations to existing surface water drainage patterns;
- Minimise disturbance by utilising existing areas of disturbance where possible. Ensure that, unless otherwise approved, existing roads and tracks are used for exploration access. New access roads or tracks should only be constructed if unavoidable. If new access is required, the landowner/land-holder must be advised prior to commencement of construction and any new route should follow contours and avoid environmentally sensitive areas or soil types to minimise impact and disturbances;
- Minimise the extent of clearing, and if possible, opt for scrub rolling rather than total clearing. Where clearing is necessary, equipment blades are to be set above ground level so as to minimise disturbance to topsoil and rootstock and to reduce soil erosion. Cleared vegetative matter should be retained for use in site rehabilitation. Any residual vegetative matter should be left in a manner acceptable to the landowner/land-holder and the regulators;
- Avoid indiscriminate vegetation clearing: line of sight can often be obtained by cutting branches only;
- Ensure that topsoils and subsoils are stripped and stockpiled separately (in the vicinity of the clearance area) for rehabilitation purposes and that areas requiring rehabilitation are rehabilitated progressively;
- Rehabilitate disturbed areas, returning topsoils and subsoils in the order they were stripped (subsoils followed by topsoils and vegetation). Apply seed or plant seedlings as necessary to re-establish local provenance native vegetation cover. Where soil compaction or erosion has occurred, restore soil structure by scarifying or ripping;
- Prevent the introduction and spread of weeds and pathogens: on departure from an operational site and prior to entry onto a new operational site, inspect all vehicles and earthmoving and drilling equipment and remove all soil or vegetation matter, which may spread weeds or pathogens;

- Ensure that camp sites are not located over stock pads leading to watering points and are located at least 500 m from surface water features unless prior permission has been obtained from the landowner/land-holder and regulators;
- Ensure that seismic surveys are planned in consultation with the landowner/land-holder and the regulators due to their scale and the need for access road building;
- Ensure that waste is contained and removed from the site for disposal at an approved waste disposal site;
- Ensure that chemicals, hydrocarbons and their containers are stored where they or their contents can not enter or contaminate surface water or groundwater systems, interfere with native flora or fauna, or come into contact with livestock. On completion of exploration activities, all chemicals and hydrocarbons (including their containers) must be removed from the site for disposal at an approved waste disposal site;
- Hydrocarbon spill management: prior to entry onto a new operational site, inspect all vehicles and earthmoving and drilling equipment to check that they do not leak oil, fuel or other fluids, rectifying any leaks found;
- Ensure that no dry or wet chemicals or hydrocarbons can enter water sources. Spills must be cleaned up, and contaminated material must be disposed of at an approved waste disposal site. Proper management of all wastes is essential to minimise the potential impact on the environment (i.e., soils, water, flora and fauna);
- Ensure rehabilitation criteria are determined in consultation with the landowner/land-holder and regulators for rehabilitation activities;
- Contractor compliance: ensure that all contractors and subcontractors are engaged on the basis of compliance with this Code; and
- Fire hazard: minimise the risk of bush fires by ensuring that all vehicles and machines being operated are fitted with well-maintained exhaust systems that will prevent the accumulation of combustible material against heat sources (such as engine exhaust pipes and mufflers) and that injectors on diesel vehicles are in good working order.



7. DURING EXPLORATION

Sections 7.1 to 7.9 detail operation environmental management measures that the explorer should adopt during exploration activities.

7.1 Communication

It is essential that good relationships between explorers and landowners/land-holders are maintained for the duration of the exploration work and life of the tenement. Prior to undertaking the exploration activities, those matters detailed in Section 6.1 should be clarified with the landowners/land-holders. Develop a communication process that accords with the particular circumstances, the individuals involved and their respective wishes.

7.2 Bush Fires and Fire Control

The explorer should:

- Comply with all relevant fire control legislation, guidelines and instructions;
- Ensure that an applicable fire prevention and control plan is in place and that exploration team personnel are aware of their role in implementing this plan;
- Minimise fire risk by containing combustible material within cleared areas;
- Ensure that all exploration vehicles carry an appropriate, serviced fire extinguisher;
- In high-risk areas, ensure that all field vehicles are also equipped with a full knapsack spray unit and that a mobile fire-fighting unit is available for immediate deployment in the event of fire;
- In the event of a bush fire, render all possible assistance to the owner/occupier;
- If a total fire ban is declared or a harvest and vehicle movement ban has been put in place by a Local Government authority, all exploration must cease.

7.3 Survey Work

The explorer should avoid disturbing, damaging or tampering with tenement boundary survey pegs in any way or manner as a result of exploration activities. To ensure that survey pegs are not inadvertently disturbed or damaged, a minimum buffer of 10m around the pegs should be maintained. Any disturbance or damage to survey pegs must be reported to the landowner/land-holder, tenement holder and the regulators at the earliest opportunity.

7.4 Fauna

The explorer should:

- Not intentionally trap or harm fauna;
- Ensure that drill holes are capped immediately after drilling to avoid fauna becoming trapped or harmed (refer 8.2);
- Not bring pets into the field without the permission of both the landowner/land-holder and the exploration team manager; and
- Ensure that sumps and costeans incorporate egress ramps to prevent fauna from becoming trapped.

7.5 Sacred, Heritage and Archaeological Sites

In accordance with statutory requirements, the explorer must ensure that:

- Identified sacred, heritage and archaeological sites are protected from exploration activities; and
- A management plan for the protection of aboriginal heritage sites is implemented.

7.6 Fences and Gates

The explorer must leave all fences and gates in the position and condition in which they are found.

7.7 Use of Property Areas and Facilities

The explorer should:

- Avoid the use of aircraft or helicopters without first checking with the landowner/land-holder. This is especially important where mustering is planned or in progress;
- Obtain permission before using the landowner/land-holder's airstrip; and
- Where possible, give the landowner/land-holder the opportunity of quoting for contract work available and endeavour to employ local residents for casual or seasonal work.

7.8 Crops, Pastures and Livestock

The explorer should:

- Ensure that disturbance to crops, pastures and livestock is avoided or, if unavoidable, is minimised in accordance with prior agreement with the landowner/land-holder;
- If at all possible, avoid areas seeded to crop or developed to pasture. If entry to such areas is essential, consult the landowner/land-holder prior to entry to plan the fieldwork so as to minimise damage to the crop or pasture and to agree on action to rectify the damage; and
- Ascertain if any regional disease or weed control campaign is current and follow directives from the regulators and the landowner/land-holder.

7.9 Waste Management

The explorer should:

- Ensure that spill kits are available for hydrocarbon and chemical spillages;
- Ensure that domestic wastes are managed to deter the attraction of fauna and stored within receptacles that are fauna proof; and
- Ensure that sewage and greywaters are managed in accordance with the requirements of the landowner/land-holder and the regulators.



8. AFTER EXPLORATION

Sections 8.1 to 8.6 detail closure and rehabilitation measures the explorer should undertake following the completion of exploration activities.

8.1 General Principles

Upon completion of the exploration activities, an appropriate representative of the explorer should ensure that all matters relating to this Code and any undertakings agreed between the explorer and landowner/land-holder are finalised. The tenement conditions and the conditions of the Programme of Work must be met at the completion of the exploration activities.

8.2 Exploration Sample Points

The explorer should:

- Ensure that areas excavated during exploration are backfilled as soon as practicable, with the aim of minimising the duration of disturbance and encouraging vegetation regrowth; and
- Ensure that drill holes are capped or plugged immediately after drilling. Once they are no longer required PVC or steel drill collars are to be removed or cut off at approximately 40 cm below the surface and rehabilitated in accordance with DMP requirements.

8.3 Waste and Storage Areas

The explorer should:

- Rehabilitate redundant fuel and lubricant storage areas by removing the liner from the bunded area for recycling or appropriate disposal, leveling the bund walls and completing any other requirements of the approved Programme of Work; and
- Remove all waste and redundant equipment, such as electrical cables, foils, sample bags, probes and any other materials from the exploration area.

8.4 Infrastructure

The explorer should:

- Close off any of the exploration tracks and roads created by the exploration activity to deter third-party access;
- Ensure that any pre-existing infrastructure damaged as a result of exploration activities, which is to be retained on site after completion of the exploration works, is repaired to the satisfaction of the landowner/land-holder; and
- Where exploration-related infrastructure is to remain, such as exploration tracks or roads, obtain written confirmation from the landowner/land-holder that they will assume ongoing responsibility for the infrastructure. Any infrastructure tracks left to a pastoralist must be approved by DMP and the Pastoral Lands Board (website <http://lands.rdl.wa.gov.au>)

8.5 Progressive Rehabilitation

Areas disturbed as a result of exploration activities should be progressively rehabilitated to minimise the total extent of disturbance at any one time, with rehabilitation being completed in accordance with the tenement conditions and the Programme of Work.

In this regard, the explorer should:

- Ensure that rehabilitation is timed appropriately, based on local climatic conditions, and complies with tenement conditions;
- Ensure that any native vegetation offset incorporated in the approved Programme of Work or licence condition, is completed in accordance with the stipulated requirement;
- Ask the landowner/land-holder to inspect the work area prior to finalisation of exploration activities so that reparation of any damage and restoration of any disturbance can be discussed and agreed upon; and
- Undertake rehabilitation work as agreed between the explorer and the landowner/land-holder within the timeframe agreed between the explorer and the landowner/land-holder and the regulators (see Sections 4, 6.1 and 7.1).

8.6 Revegetation

The explorer should:

- Ensure that, unless otherwise specified in the Programme of Work, all areas disturbed as a result of exploration activities are revegetated and rehabilitated, ultimately providing a stable landform similar to surrounding undisturbed areas that supports suitable local native flora and vegetation species;
- Understand that, to ensure the adequacy of site rehabilitation, additional planting may be required following initial vegetation establishment and that revegetated areas may require protection (e.g., through temporary fencing) until the vegetation is successfully developed;
- Wherever possible, ensure that seed for revegetation work is sourced from the surrounding area, as close as practical to the disturbed area, in consultation with the landowner/land-holder and the regulators;
- At the completion of exploration, ensure that all grid pegs, tags, sample bags and flagging tape are removed;
- Ensure the soil at drill sites and backfilled trench sites is in a condition to encourage re-growth (e.g., topsoils and subsoils to be re-spread or replaced in the correct sequence);
- Make a final inspection of all operational areas to ensure they are free of all wastes and in a condition that will promote regrowth of vegetation; and
- Make a courtesy call on the landowner/land-holder before departing the area at the end of a field season and when finally decommissioning the area.



9. AUDIT AND COMPLIANCE

The explorer should implement and maintain a system of internal management processes and controls to ensure compliance with this Code.

10. KEY CONTACT POINTS

Association of Mining and Exploration Companies

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WA Department of Environment and Conservation

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www.dec.wa.gov.au

WA Office of the Environmental Protection Authority

T: 08 6467 5600

www.epa.wa.gov.au

WA Pastoral Lands Board

T: 08 9347 5126

<http://lands.rdl.wa.gov.au>

Australian Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts

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