

WA's resource sector to benefit from new online systems



Two significant milestones have been achieved in the Department of Mines and Petroleum's drive to improve its approvals processes.

Proponents can now track their applications for environmental assessment through the new online Environmental Assessment and Regulatory System (EARS), and their petroleum and geothermal tenures through the upgraded Petroleum and Geothermal Register (PGR).

Mines and Petroleum Minister Norman Moore said the online systems were another important step towards improving Western Australia's reputation in the resources sector.

Improving the efficiency and transparency of the approvals processes across all agencies has been one of this Government's highest priorities since coming to office, Mr Moore said.

The new EARS and upgraded PGR allows proponents to track their application online and identify at what stage it is in the approvals process. This is the first such online system in Australia.

These changes address issues identified by the Auditor General as problems with tracking applications across the various government agencies involved in the approvals process. They will give applicants further certainty and provide the system with greater transparency.

I have made it clear since the creation of the new Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) that WA must improve its approvals processes and restore its reputation as the best resource investment destination in the world.

Online systems such as EARS and PGR are major steps towards achieving this.

Minister Moore said a pilot group, which included WA's major resource companies, had tested EARS in early June and provided very positive feedback.

EARS is accessed online through the DMP website by a proponent using a secure login, unlike the PGR which has full public access and only requires a secure login for on-line payments.

The systems show whether an application is under assessment by the DMP or another agency, if it is on hold, and whether it has been approved, rejected or withdrawn from the process. Proponents can print reports on their applications in PDF or Excel format.

