

October 25, 2019

Nathaniel Amann-Blake  
Assistant Deputy Minister  
Mines Health, Safety and Enforcement Division  
BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources

via email: [MinesActProposal@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MinesActProposal@gov.bc.ca); [Nathaniel.Amann-Blake@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Nathaniel.Amann-Blake@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Mr. Amann-Blake,

**Re: AME Comments on Regulatory Excellence and Continuous Improvement in the Mining Sector Intentions Paper**

The Association for Mineral Exploration (AME), on behalf of our members, is pleased to provide our comments on the Intentions Paper: Regulatory Excellence and Continuous Improvement in the Mining Sector.

AME is the lead association for the mineral exploration and development industry based in British Columbia. Established in 1912, AME represents, advocates and promotes the interests of almost 5,000 members who are engaged in mineral exploration and development in BC and globally. AME supports regulatory certainty as well as a safe working environment for our members, and in this context offers our comments.

AME is in support of proposed regulatory changes under the Mines Act that separate the functions of the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources. Specifically, we expect that the establishment of a new statutory decision-maker for permitting will provide further clarity in distinguishing between the permitting and compliance functions of the Ministry and support improvements in the efficiency of the permitting process.

We are also in support of aligning the Mines Act's compliance and enforcement provisions with other regulators. We hope that such alignment will help with transparency regarding the Ministry's activities. We appreciate the Ministry's intent to enhance compliance and enforcement by providing inspectors and auditors with the authority to bring equipment or people required to conduct their work on to mine sites. However, greater clarity is required regarding the inclusion of individuals with specialized technical expertise or representatives from Indigenous communities on mine sites. We recommend that specific policy guidance is developed that defines the roles and responsibilities of these individuals in relation to their compliance and enforcement function, and that any third parties are properly trained in their function and in safe conduct in and around exploration and mine sites.

We thank the government for creating an audit unit within the Mines Health, Safety and Enforcement Division, and we are encouraged that the mandate includes recommendations for improving regulatory effectiveness. An effective and streamlined regulatory framework supports a healthy and sustainable industry that benefits all British Columbians, as well as government and industry. As such, we recommend that audits of regulatory effectiveness, such as Notice of Work permitting, include aspects such as timeliness of authorizations, consistency of decisions, and functionality between government ministries and agencies, and we recommend that this is an early priority for the new audit unit.

Finally, there is also an opportunity to clarify aspects of the Act, particularly definitions of terms such as “manager”, “abandoned mine” and “closed mine” and to distinguish between activities related to mineral exploration from those related to mining.

AME encourages your questions and discussion on our comments, and we look forward to being kept up-to-date on the proposed amendments. Please feel free to contact me at 604.630.3920 or by email at [kjohnston@amebc.ca](mailto:kjohnston@amebc.ca).

Sincerely,



Kendra Johnston, PGeo, MBA  
President and CEO  
Association for Mineral Exploration

cc: Hon. Michelle Mungall, Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources  
Dave Nikolejsin, Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources  
Peter Robb, Assistant Deputy Minister, BC Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources  
Michael Goehring, President and CEO, MABC  
Regional Exploration Groups  
Environment, Health and Safety Committee, AME  
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