

Dear sir/madam

An important consideration in the repeal process is the need to implement the Strategic Framework for Managing abandoned mines in the Minerals Industry (MCMPR/MCA 2010). <http://www.ret.gov.au/resources/Documents/mcmpr/MCMPR%20Strategic%20Framework%20for%20Managing%20Abandoned%20Mines%20vWeb%20Jan25.pdf>

over the 5 years it took to write this framework, 15 leading practice booklets were produced – as I regularly present to overseas delegations (in my part time University of QLD role at the Centre for Mined Land Rehab) from developing countries it is becoming increasingly embarrassing that we in Australia can be so effusive with our ability to describe our leading practices and so keen to hide our bad practices. When Mongolian's, Peruvian's, African's and Vietnamese ask how we are going with the implementation of our strategic framework I have to tell them, there has been no progress as there is no national leadership on this.

The current tax is/was a failure however an improved and effective funding model should be considered and connected, in terms of use to addressing both mining legacies and the values from mining which can be promoted in such a way that regional employment is boosted. The attached paper outlines how inconsistently data are gathered on abandoned mines leading to the conclusion that they aren't being managed appropriately – in line with practices to be expected of a developed country such as Australia.

While abandoned mines are largely the responsibility of states and the NT to address their own mining legacies the Commonwealth has individual site responsibilities (eg. former uranium mines in the NT) as well as a role in leading the implementation of the Strategic Framework under COAG – it was developed by RET /MCMPR now SCER and then the framework itself was abandoned.

There is no process to implement the Strategic framework – once it was written the the former govt said 'it is up to the states to implement it' (I have correspondence from K Rudd if you want it) and the working group was disbanded.

Through the Univeristy of QLD, CMLR I have prepared a Value Proposition for a national hub to address research in this area about which there is a significant 'research black hole' in Australia. see the link above for more info. Newsletters are here – this valuable work is currently unfunded and there is significant demand for support from across Australia from a practioner level – national leadership on this is needed to trigger a response from higher up. most states lack abandoned mine policies and programs. Some are starting to address the problem eg. NT and WA. Tas and NSW have had a program for some time addressing small projects here and there. QLD is spending several million but with no program plan or policy and ambiguity between departments of mines and environment.

<http://www.cmlr.uq.edu.au/MML/ManagingMiningLegaciesForum/MMLNewsletter.aspx>

Refer to MML webpage

<http://www.cmlr.uq.edu.au/MML/ManagingMiningLegaciesForum.aspx>

Separately the Australian government (formerly SEWPAC) is in the process of ensuring management arrangements are in place for the listing of Broken Hill community and mines/former and existing on the National Heritage Register. An iconic Australian mining area.

How can the C'wealth engage fully in these processes (be funded) and participating to fund strategic projects which could have such strategic regional benefit for development and employment in regional Australia? A grant (incentive) scheme for the states/NT could be initiated with some retained funding from a form of mining industry levy to lead Australia forward on the implementation of the Strategic framework ie. quantifying liabilities, verifying and checking the 50,000 abandoned mines in Australia, conserving and adapting to new land uses, the existing significant mining heritage values

My Churchill Fellowship report can be found here. Happy to provide more info, if anyone is interested. You can download it from here

<http://churchilltrust.com.au/fellows/detail/3411/>

Also you may /may not be aware of the role of the Auditor-General in ensuring liabilities are quantified and appropriate service delivery programs implemented. (see second bottom audit on this list) and while you could argue that this is the responsibility of all jurisdictions, it appears that only a few have considered this.

<http://www.gao.qld.gov.au/audits-in-progress>

QLD is currently auditing liabilities from the generation of wastes from mining and other sources. The NSW A-G has identified derelict mines as the largest single source of contamination liability for the state of NSW. (search for derelict mines)

http://www.audit.nsw.gov.au/ArticleDocuments/255/01_Volume_Six_2012_Full_Reportv3.pdf.aspx?Embed=Y

This is an issue of growing concern which Treasury needs to be fully familiar with particularly in the context of a growing mining industry in Australia.

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