

# **BC MINING**

## **COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT**

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

**Ministry of Energy and Mines  
Ministry of Environment  
Environmental Assessment Office**



## I. INTRODUCTION

This Mining Compliance & Enforcement Strategic Plan outlines government’s vision for mining oversight in the province of British Columbia as follows:

*“Achieving enhanced protection of the environment, human health and public safety through an integrated risk-based approach to mining oversight.”*

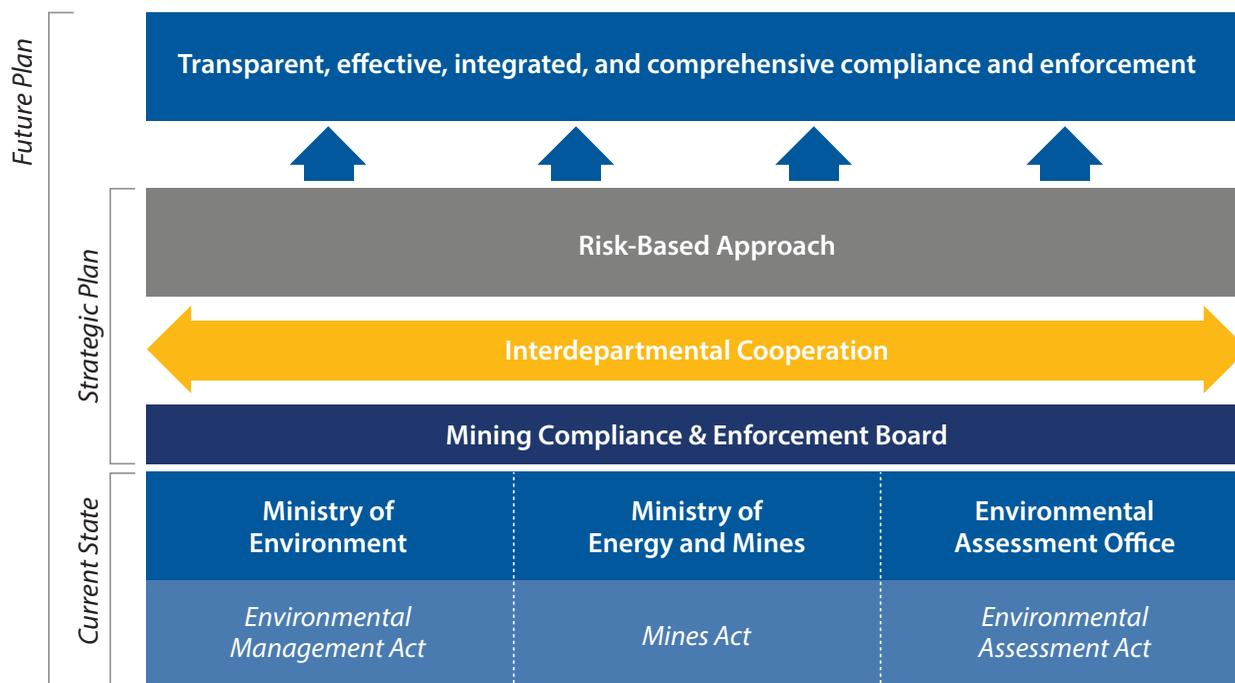
In spring 2016, government established the Deputy Minister Mining Compliance and Enforcement Board (the Board) to help achieve this vision by strengthening the effectiveness of mining oversight across government. The Board comprises the Deputy Minister of Energy and Mines (MEM), the Deputy Minister of Environment (MOE) and the Associate Deputy Minister of the Environmental Assessment Office (EAO).

This plan is informed by the recommendations following investigations into the Mount Polley tailings facility breach and the Office of the Auditor General report on mining compliance and enforcement, and formalizes the integration and coordination of the three agencies’ mining compliance and enforcement efforts under the direction of the Board. It also sets out five strategic objectives based on principles of comprehensive compliance and enforcement (C&E), transparency, and engagement with First Nations, communities and industry.

### STRATEGIC PLAN OBJECTIVES

- 1** *Integrate a risk-based approach and coordinate resources across the sector*
- 2** *Increase public confidence in how government manages mining across the province*
- 3** *Strengthen linkages between mining C&E and Aboriginal groups*
- 4** *Promote compliance with regulatory requirements*
- 5** *Enhance policy, tools and training to support a comprehensive C&E program*

## PROGRESSION TOWARDS MINING COMPLIANCE AND ENFORCEMENT INTEGRATION

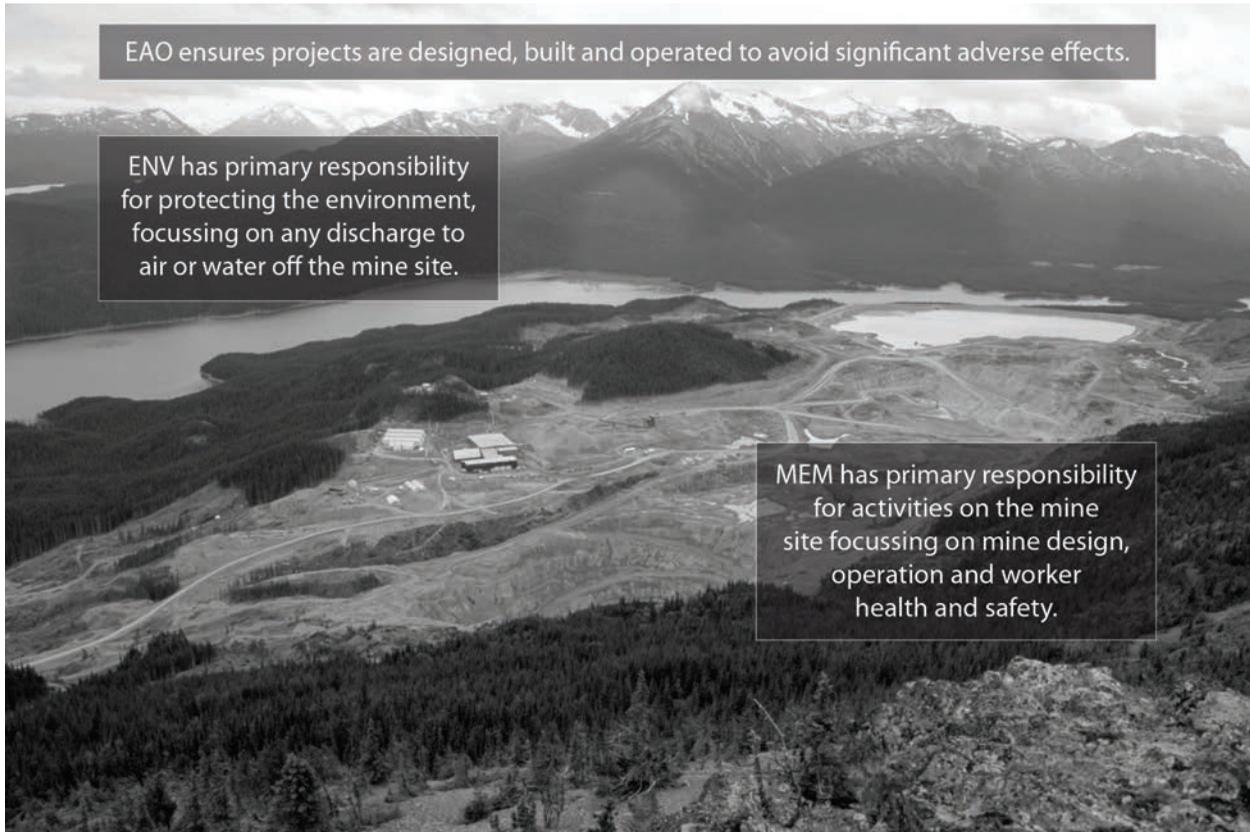


## II. REGULATORY OVERSIGHT

It is important to consider B.C.'s regulatory environment when developing a strategic plan for mining oversight, since there are a number of agencies involved. B.C.'s mining sector is governed by a regulatory framework that covers the time from which a mining project is proposed to well into mine closure, including ongoing management of the mine and protection of the surrounding environment. The Environmental Assessment Office, the Ministry of the Environment, and the Ministry of Energy and Mines work together through all stages to ensure mine projects meet all requirements of this regulatory framework.

Additionally, a variety of regulatory partners, including the Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resource Operations as well as First Nations, federal and local governments have input into aspects of oversight of mines.

This starts at the authorization stage as proposed projects undergo thorough review to ensure they meet B.C.'s high regulatory standards and potential adverse effects are avoided or mitigated before a project is developed. The ministries and agencies then work together to ensure approved project designs and authorization conditions are adhered to throughout the life of the mine.



### III. 2017-2019 STRATEGIES AND KEY ACTIONS

#### VISION

Enhanced protection of the environment, human health and public safety through an integrated risk-based approach to mining oversight.

#### PRINCIPLES

- Ensure open, transparent and timely access to mine information
- Engage First Nations, communities and industry in relation to mining compliance and enforcement activities
- Effective and robust C&E program

## STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

### 1 *Integrate a risk-based approach and coordinate resources across the sector*

#### STRATEGIES:

- Guide all mining C&E strategic and operational activities based on common risk management framework
- Effectively coordinate on-the-ground activities for major mines
- Optimize human and financial resources to most effectively protect the environment, human health and public safety

#### KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop and implement a risk framework and risk registers
- Establish and implement a C&E Coordination Committee for Major Mines
- Produce an annual work plan highlighting operational objectives, targets and key milestones

### 2 *Increase confidence in how government manages mining across the province*

#### STRATEGIES:

- Ensure mining C&E activities are transparent and open to the public
- Formalize risk management approach to potential mine reclamation liabilities
- Explore use of a dedicated investigative unit

#### KEY ACTIONS:

- Develop a website where the public can easily access information on major mines in British Columbia
- Update reclamation assurance policy considering best practices in BC and other jurisdictions
- Report out annually on progress in implementing the mining C&E strategic plan through the annual planning and reporting cycle

### **3** *Strengthen linkages between mining C&E and First Nations*

#### **STRATEGIES:**

- Increase opportunities for First Nations to engage during mining authorizations
- Increase opportunities for First Nations to participate in compliance oversight of mines in B.C.

#### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- Expand use of collaboration plans with First Nations during environmental assessments and permitting processes
- Develop and offer opportunities for First Nations to participate in compliance oversight of mines

### **4** *Promote compliance with regulatory requirements*

#### **STRATEGIES:**

- Ensure conditions of authorizations are clear, enforceable and complementary
- Work with industry to determine needs for targeted compliance education and encourage best practices
- Increase compliance through education and awareness

#### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- Establish common principles for drafting enforceable conditions
- Conduct outreach to determine focus for mining guidance and education needs
- Develop and implement a proponent early education program

### **5** *Enhance policy, tools and training to support a comprehensive C&E program*

#### **STRATEGIES:**

- Provide inspectors with additional C&E tools to address non-compliance
- Explore opportunities where new technologies may be used to strengthen industry compliance
- Strengthen training for mining inspectors

#### **KEY ACTIONS:**

- Develop and implement Administrative Monetary Penalties under the Mines Act as an additional enforcement tool for responding to non-compliance
- Develop and pilot use of new information management technology for proponent compliance reporting
- Formalize and implement a cross-agency mining inspector training program

## VI. IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation of the strategic plan is laid out in the table below, highlighting key periods of focus over the next three years. Progress will be reported annually, and the plan adjusted as required.

OBJECTIVE	STRATEGY	YEAR 1 - 2017	YEAR 2 - 2018	YEAR 3 - 2019
<b><i>Integrate a risk-based approach and coordinate resources across the sector</i></b>	Risk management guides all mining C&E strategic and operational activities			
	Effective coordination of on-the-ground activities for major mines			
	Optimize human and financial resources to most effectively protect the environment, human health and public safety			
<b><i>Increase confidence in how government manages mining across the province</i></b>	Mining C&E activities are transparent and open to the public			
	Formalize risk management approach to potential mine reclamation liabilities			
	Explore use of independent investigative services			

<b>Strengthen linkages between mining C&amp;E and First Nations</b>	Increase opportunities for First Nations to engage during mining authorizations			
	Increase opportunities for First Nations to participate in compliance oversight of mines in B.C.			
<b>Promote compliance with regulatory requirements</b>	Increase compliance through education and awareness			
	Ensure permits are clear and enforceable			
	Work with industry to determine needs for targeted compliance education			
<b>Enhance policy, tools, and training to support a comprehensive C&amp;E program</b>	Expand the C&E toolkit to address a diversity of non-compliances			
	Explore opportunities to strengthen organizational infrastructure through new innovative tools			
	Equip inspectors with cross-agency knowledge and awareness			