



**BC JOBS  
PLAN**



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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Energy and Mines  
and Responsible for Core Review  
Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations

### **Exploration permit streamlining goes online**

VICTORIA – Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Core Review, and Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations, announced that effective Sept. 1, 2013, the permitting process for some low-impact exploration activities has become more efficient.

The following activities are authorized on projects where a Mines Act permit already has been granted:

- Induced polarization (charging the ground with an electrical current and measuring the response).
- Exploration drill programs on operating mine sites.
- Extending the timing of proposed exploration work by up to two years.

Under the new rules, companies must provide 30 days advance notice and information on each activity to a mines inspector. During the 30-day notification period, the Province will refer the information to First Nations.

The new process is available online through FrontCounter BC, which provides exploration companies quick and easy access to the information and assistance they require.

In fall 2012, the provincial government consulted with industry, First Nations and the public on the permitting of low-impact exploration activities, resulting in these changes.

This regulation delivers on the commitment made in British Columbia's Mineral Exploration and Mining Strategy to develop regulations to exempt low-risk exploration and mining activities from requiring Mines Act permits while maintaining health, safety and environmental standards.

## Quotes:

### **Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines and Minister Responsible for Core Review –**

“B.C. is delivering on its promise to make the permitting process more efficient for the mining industry while ensuring that our health, safety and environmental standards are maintained. It is important that we are responsive to industry needs as regulatory burden can stall economic growth and development.”

### **Steve Thomson, Minister of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations –**

“As B.C.’s ‘one land manager’, my ministry is committed to getting to natural resource development decisions faster. Low-risk mining activities, such as timeline extensions for previously approved exploration drilling, do not require in-depth review. We’re removing bureaucratic processes that will enable companies to create local jobs quicker.”

## Quick Facts:

- Mineral exploration has grown exponentially since 2001. In 2001, exploration spending was \$29.1 million and in 2012, it was \$680 million.
- The Province reached the reduced backlog target in 2012 and now is focused on reducing the average turnaround time.
- The average turnaround time for all Notices of Work is 65 days as of June 1, 2013.
- In 2012, more than 30,000 people were employed in mining, mineral exploration and related sectors. This indicates significant growth since 2001, when only 14,700 people were employed in mining.
- B.C. already is more than halfway toward achieving the BC Jobs Plan goals of opening eight new mines and expanding nine existing mines by 2015.

## Learn More:

For information about the regulation changes, visit:

<http://www.empr.gov.bc.ca/Mining/Permitting-Reclamation/Pages/DeemedAuthorizationsGuidance.aspx>

To learn more about the BC Jobs Plan, visit: [www.bcjobsplan.ca/](http://www.bcjobsplan.ca/)

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