

FWP0001117

REWARD GOLD MINE FORWARD PROGRAM

Tuesday 15 February 2022 to Friday 14 February 2025





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Summary

DETAIL	
Mine	Reward Gold Mine
Reference	FWP0001117
Forward program commencement date	Tuesday 15 February 2022
Forward program end date	Friday 14 February 2025
Forward program revision (if applicable)	
Contact	Yung Ju
Mining leases	GL 5846 (1906), ML 315 (1973), ML 317 (1973), ML 914 (1973), ML 316 (1973), ML 915 (1973), ML 1541 (1992), ML 913 (1973), ML 1116 (1973), ML 50 (1973), ML 49 (1973)
Project location	Vertex Minerals Limited
Date of submission	Tuesday 24 January 2023

Important

The department may make the information in your program and any supporting information available for inspection by members of the public, including by publication on its website or by displaying the information at any of its offices. If you consider any part of your program to be confidential, please communicate this to the department via the message function on this submission within the NSW Resources Regulator Portal.



Three-year forecast – surface disturbance activities

Project description

The Reward Gold Mine is located immediately adjacent to and surrounding the town of Hill End in the eastern Lachlan Fold Belt. Hill End is approximately 40 km north of Bathurst and 50 km south of Mudgee in central western New South Wales at an elevation of approximately 850 m above sea level (m ASL).

The Reward Gold Mine is an underground mining project, the primary objectives for which are to:

- Rehabilitate old mine workings on Hawkins Hill to recover gold remaining in the old stopes; and
- Develop new drives in a northerly direction to exploit potential high grade gold bearing veins indicated in the exploration drilling program.

The project is now on care & maintenance and the current operations at the Reward Gold Mine reflect this, consisting primarily of rehabilitation, erosion control, monitoring and other maintenance works.

Description of surface disturbance activities

Exploration activities

Within the next three years, Vertex Minerals Limited ("Vertex") proposes to undertake the following within the Reward Gold Mine, for which an application to undertake assessable prospecting operations has been sought.

COSTEANING:

Vertex proposes to construct one costean within ML 1541.

The costean will run east-west for about 200m and will cut into the rock up to 2m deep. Vertex plans to use a large excavator (45t) with a 600mm bucket to have the break out force to dig through the quartz veins.

No vegetation clearing will be required for the constructions of the costeans.

DRILLING:

Vertex Proposes to construct 7 reverse-circulation drill holes within ML 1541. RC holes are proposed to be drilled at an angle to a maximum of 125m each.

Access to sites is available from existing roads. Minimal clearing of vegetation for access tracks is required.

Minimal clearing of vegetation will be required for establishing each drill site, but may include the leveling of sites, removal of re-growth scrub or small trees or branches.

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Pending the results from the above activities, Vertex may undertake a follow-up exploration program.

Construction activities

No construction activities are proposed in the next three years beyond fencing.

Mining schedule

Mining development method and sequencing and general mine features.

The Reward Gold Mine is currently on care and maintenance.

Closure criteria should be quantifiable if possible. For the Reward mine site, the following closure criteria are proposed:

- Rehabilitation must be stable and permanent enough for subsequent land use according to the RMP & former MOPs, being grazing and timber growth;
- Have no adverse environmental effects outside the disturbed area in comparison to baseline studies;
- State of land is compatible with surrounding land and land use requirements as per agreed land use;
- Landforms, soils, hydrology and flora require no greater maintenance than that in the surrounding land;
- Re-established vegetation must be appropriate to the area and at an acceptable density. Native vegetation must be local indigenous species, unless otherwise directed;
- The acceptable density is 70% groundcover for pasture lands;
- The acceptable density for native scrubs or trees is 100/ha planted, or 400/ha planted on slopes exceeding 18 degrees. Rehabilitation is achieved when plants are self-sustaining and secure from serious grazing threat;
- Land does not pose a threat to public safety.

As increasingly detailed information becomes available the Closure Plans will become more detailed and definitive to address all closure scenarios.

Areas identified for emplacements, the sequencing of emplacements, construction, and management.

The stabilisation measures recommended by Douglas Partners (March 2020) will be reviewed, planned and commenced, as follows:

1. Divert the water outflow from the portal to the drainage located beyond the toe of the slide. The aim here is to eliminate the apparent ineffectiveness of the concrete drainage pipe and reduce the likelihood of water saturating the colluvium, in particular the toe of the

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slide. If left unrectified, continued water exposure from the water outflow could lead to continued movement of the debris in the direction of the existing slide.

Possible options include piping the water along the surface of the pad or digging a shallow ditch and burying a diversion pipe along the pad to the drainage.

- 2. Batter back the scarp and slopes of waste rock emplacement pile.
- 3. If accessible, construct a surface water drainage ditch along the upper trail located above the slide area. Water during heavy, prolonged rain events should be diverted away from, and around, the colluvium and waste rock emplacement pile.
- 4. Engage a sediment control expert to provide remediation measures for the colluvium scarp areas.
- 5. Carry out routine monitoring of the area including surveys and visual inspections. The frequency of the inspections should be increased during times of above average precipitation and following heavy rainfall events.

Processing infrastructure activities and the location of tailings facilities and schedule for emplacement.

Notwithstanding no extractive production is proposed for the Reward Gold Mine, the following information is provided.

The TSF site is located within the southern part of the Reward Mine and is situated on a ridgeline . Hill End Creek is located to the west and downslope of the TSF, within a gully. The TSF is situated on Mining Lease ML1541. It is located on the southern face of Hawkins Hill and covers an area of approximately 3.5 ha. The TSF is approximately 1.3 km down gradient from the Amalgamated Pad Area.

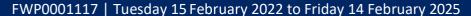
Previously, Peak Minerals engaged Douglas Partners to prepare a report on the slope stability assessment of the TSF, and Landloch Pty Ltd to prepare a report on the rehabilitation of the TSF and also the PESCMP for the TSF. These reports were done in response the Directions Letter (NTCE0003143, NSW Resources Regulator) Items 2 and 3.

The TSF area will continue to be used as a storage site by Vertex for the fine waste from previous mining operations. The fine waste storage area had earthworks completed during November 2018 on the bund below the tailings stockpile, to return it to the required capacity. These works were successful in creating a stable slope and dry storage facility and Vertex will continue to monitor the bund integrity during the RMP period to ensure it is maintained.

Waste disposal and materials handling operations.

Hydrocarbon Contamination:

Limited quantities of hazardous substances will be utilized during the proposed exploration drilling. These substances include oil, petrol and diesel fuels. All fuels will be contained. Activities will be subject to contractor's and/or Vertex's Safety Management Plan. Material





Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) will be available for all chemicals and hazardous material used. All drilling fluids will be bio-degradable.

Diesel fuel will be stored in a secured bunded facility surrounded by a diversion drain in a spill proof tank to prevent hydrocarbon contamination of drainage.

Contaminated Polluted land and soils:

The unexpected escape of fuels or oils is considered to have the potential to cause land contamination. Any such escape would be quickly contained and subsequently recovered and removed. A spill management procedure is in place and an environmental spill kit will be available at all times.

The soils in the area have been significantly degraded by past mining operations with most timber within economic hauling distance from the mining areas having been cleared with mostly secondary regrowth evident. The consequent thin forest soils were exposed and subsequently eroded in some areas.

Should excavation works be required then topsoil will be pushed up in a small stockpile. On completion of drilling, the topsoil will then be reintroduced across the "footprint" and sown with a groundcover species to deter erosion and weed infestation.

Key production milestones

MATERIAL	UNIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
Stripped topsoil (if applicable)	(m³)	0	0	0
Rock/overburden	(m³)	0	0	0
Ore	(Mt)	0	0	0
Reject material ¹	(Mt)	0	0	0
Product	(Mt)	0	0	0

¹ This includes coarse rejects, tailings and any other wastes resulting from beneficiation.



Three-year rehabilitation forecast

Rehabilitation planning schedule

Rehabilitation planning schedule

Formal research trials are currently not proposed at the time of this RMP. Rather, attention will be focused on the progress of the establishment of revegetation works planned for the TSF and Amalgamated Pad to gather learnings relevant to future rehabilitation campaigns. Revegetation progress will be recorded during the erosion and sediment control monitoring inspections that are scheduled:

- Monthly; and
- Within 72 hours of the cessation of a rainfall event of greater than 50 mm.

At these inspections, details of vegetation progress will also be recorded. This will include, but not be limited to:

- Locality;
- Green ground cover, vexation type, and height;
- Leaf litter ground cover; and
- Stone and gravel groundcover.

Stakeholder consultation

Vertex will continue to hold and attend quarterly meetings with the following stakeholders over the next three year period to discuss Vertex's proposed operations at the Reward Gold Mine:

- NSW National Parks and Wildlife Services;
- Bathurst Regional Council; and
- Hill End Community.

Further Vertex will continue to sponsor and assist with the Hill End and Hargraves baiting program.

Rehabilitation studies, risk assessments and/or design work

The Reward Gold Mine is currently in care and maintenance.

Formal research trials are currently not proposed at the time of this RMP. Rather, attention will be focused on the progress of the establishment of revegetation works planned for the TSF and Amalgamated Pad to gather learnings relevant to future rehabilitation campaigns. Revegetation

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- Monthly; and
- Within 72 hours of the cessation of a rainfall event of greater than 50 mm.

At these inspections, details of vegetation progress will also be recorded. This will include, but not be limited to:

- Locality;
- Green ground cover, vexation type, and height;
- Leaf litter ground cover; and
- Stone and gravel groundcover.

In addition, Vertex will continue to undertake quarterly water quality testing at a number of locations at water courses on, as well as above and below our operations; these locations include; Upper Turon, Oakey Creek (two sites), Fosters, Lower Turon, the Tailings Storage Facility, Cornelian Dam and Tambaroora Dam.

Weather and seasonal considerations will also be had during the ecosystem and land use establishment phase. Using a Davis Vantage Pro2 weather station, Vertex continues to collect and record rainfall, temperature and wind data.

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Rehabilitation research and trials

RRT	PROJECT/TRIAL NAME	OBJECTIVE OF TRIAL/PROJECT	METHODOLOGY	EXPECTED DATE	STATUS
NUMBER	R			OF COMPLETION	

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Rehabilitation maintenance and corrective actions

It is Vertex's view there are all outstanding hazards or threats have been carefully reviewed and/or addressed by the implementation of specific mitigation measures.

Notwithstanding this, it is noted that threats generally include:

- Erosion of rehabilitation areas
- Water quality
- Weed infestation
- Damage to rehabilitation from pest animals or other livestock
- Final landform instability
- Rehabilitation not completed in accordance with rehabilitation strategy
- Extreme weather events

Inspections will be undertaken by suitably qualified staff who have been trained on the content and requirements of the Reward Gold Mine ROCC, subject to any future amendments or revisions.

All site monitoring data including site inspection records, rainfall records, dates of water quality testing, and testing results will be documented on site. The currency of the documentation will be maintained for the duration of the approved works and be available on site for inspection by regulators, upon request.

Where any geotechnical or geochemical assessment is required, a suitably qualified professional will be engaged by Vertex to undertake said assessment.

Rehabilitation schedule

The following key activities are proposed to implement the mining and rehabilitation schedule for the next three years:

- TSF Monitoring: Ongoing, regular monitoring of water flow management and erosion control measures. Application of Pollution Incident Management Procedure EPL12008.
- Access Track Maintenance: Ongoing regular inspections. Waterflow management and erosion control measures continually assessed and actions taken as required. Rock, trees, branches and/or other organic track obstacles removed as required.
- Whole site: Weed control measures Stakeholder liaison activities with neighboring landholders. Contract weed spraying appropriate times of year and weather conditions.



- Whole site: Pest animal control Stakeholder liaison activities with neighboring landholders. Set and collect target baiting programs on site, consult all neighbors, record and measure outcomes.
- Amalgamated WRE: Routine monitoring of the Amalgamated WRE slope, waterflow and erosion controls and water quality.
- Amalgamated Pad water redistribution.
- Exhibition Flat: Remove surface infrastructure and lop trees for use in other rehabilitation activities.
- Fencing Front gate to Split Rock: Liaise fencing contractor, obtain quote, mark out fenceline, complete fencing, install signage.
- Fencing Exhibition Flat to NPWS Sewage Works: Liaise NPWS obtain quote, mark out fenceline, complete fencing, install signage.

Subsidence remediation for underground operations

Regular inspections of the underground area have not been required as no access is needed or permitted while the mine is under care and maintenance. Inspections and any necessary remediation work will be conducted prior to recommencing access. The Leaky Feeder Radio Communication System is tested regularly to ensure it is available for use when required.



Progressive mining and rehabilitation statistics

Three-yearly forecast cumulative disturbance and rehabilitation progression

FORECAST	UNIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
A Total surface disturbance footprint	(ha)	5.71	5.71	5.71
B Total active disturbance	(ha)	0.78	-1.68	-4.15
C Land prepared for rehabilitation	(ha)	2.46	4.93	7.39
D Ecosystem and land use establishment	(ha)	0	0	0

Rehabilitation key performance indicators (KPIs)

	FORECAST	UNIT	YEAR 1	YEAR 2	YEAR 3
0	Total new active disturbance area	(ha)			
P	Area proposed for active rehabilitation	(ha)	2.46	2.46	2.46

Q Annual rehabilitation to disturbance ratio



Attachment 1 – Reporting Definitions

REPO	ORTING CATEGORY	DEFINITION
Α	Total disturbance footprint – surface disturbance	All areas within a mining lease that either have at some point in time or continue to pose a rehabilitation liability due to surface disturbance activities.
		The total disturbance footprint is the sum of the total active disturbance, decommissioning, landform establishment, growth medium development, ecosystem and land use establishment, ecosystem and land use development and rehabilitation completion (see definitions below).
		Underground mining operations should not include the footprint of underground mining areas/subsidence management areas in the total disturbance footprint.
В	Total active disturbance	Includes on-lease exploration areas, stripped areas ahead of mining, infrastructure areas, water management infrastructure, sewage treatment facilities, topsoil stockpile areas, access tracks and haul roads, active mining areas, waste rock emplacements (active/unshaped/in or out-of-pit), tailings dams (active/unshaped/uncapped) and temporary stabilised areas (e.g. areas sown with temporary cover crops for dust mitigation and temporary rehabilitation).
С	Rehabilitation – land preparation	Includes the sum of all disturbed land within a mining lease that have commenced any, or all, of the following phases of rehabilitation—decommissioning, landform establishment and growth medium development.
		Refer to the glossary of terms in this document for the definition of these phases of rehabilitation.
D	Ecosystem and land use establishment	Includes the area which has been seeded/planted with the target vegetation species for the intended final land use. However, vegetation has not matured to a stage where it can be demonstrated that it will be sustainable for the long term and or require only a maintenance regime consistent with target reference/analogue sites.
		Typically, rehabilitation areas would be in this phase for at least two years (and usually more) before rehabilitation can be classified as being in the ecosystem and land use development phase. This phase does not apply to infrastructure areas that are being retained as part of final land use for the site.



REPORTING CATEGORY	DEFINITION
0	The area of any new active disturbance that will be created during the next three years, as defined under definition A1 (definition A1 Table 5).
P	The sum of any new rehabilitation to be commenced in the next three years. These areas may be in the phases "Rehabilitation - Land Preparation" or the "Ecosystem & Land Use Establishment" (definitions C & D in Table 5).
Q	The rehabilitation to disturbance ratio (S / R) indicates how many hectares of new rehabilitation are undertaken for each hectare of land disturbed during the three years. A ratio of 1/1 indicates that the area of new rehabilitation and disturbance in that period are the same.



Attachment 2 – Definitions

WORD	DEFINITION
Active	In the context of rehabilitation, land associated with mining domains is considered 'active' for the period following disturbance until the commencement of rehabilitation.
Active mining phase of rehabilitation	In the context of rehabilitation, the active mining phase of rehabilitation constitutes the rehabilitation activities undertaken during mining operations such assalvaging and managing soil resources, salvaging habitat resources, and native seed collection. This phase also includes management actions taken during operations to manage risks to rehabilitation and enhance rehabilitation outcomes such as selective handling of waste rock and management of tailings emplacements.
Analogue site	In the context of rehabilitation, an analogue site is a 'reference site' that represents an example of the defining characteristics (such as vegetation composition and structure or agricultural productivity) of the final land use. Characteristics of analogue sites can be assessed to develop the rehabilitation objectives and completion criteria for final land use domains.
Annual rehabilitation report and forward program	As described in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Annual reporting period	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Closure	A whole-of-mine-life process, which typically culminates in the relinquishment of the mining lease. It includes decommissioning and rehabilitation to achieve the approved final land use(s).
Decommissioning	The process of removing mining infrastructure and removing contaminants and hazardous materials.
Decommissioning Phase of Rehabilitation	Activities associated with the removal of mining infrastructure and removal and/or remediation of contaminants and hazardous materials. In the context of the rehabilitation management plan this phase of rehabilitation may also include studies and assessments associated with decommissioning and demolition of infrastructure or works carried out to make safe or 'fit for purpose' built infrastructure to be retained for future use(s) following lease relinquishment.



WORD	DEFINITION
Department	The Department of Regional NSW.
Disturbance	See Surface Disturbance.
Disturbance area	An area that has been disturbed and that requires rehabilitation. This may include areas such as on-licence exploration areas, stripped areas ahead of mining, infrastructure areas, water management infrastructure, sewage treatment facilities, topsoil stockpile areas, access tracks and haul roads, active mining areas, waste emplacements (active/unshaped/in or out-of-pit), tailings dams (active/unshaped/uncapped), and areas requiring rehabilitation that are temporarily stabilised (i.e. managed to minimise dust generation and/or erosion).
Domain	An area (or areas) of the land that has been disturbed by mining and has a specific operational use (mining domain) or specific final land use (final land use domain). Land within a domain typically has similar geochemical and/or geophysical characteristics and therefore requires specific rehabilitation activities to achieve the associated final land use.
Ecosystem and Land Use Development	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the activities to manage maturing rehabilitation areas on a trajectory to achieving the approved rehabilitation objectives and completion criteria. For vegetated land uses this phase may include processes to develop characteristics of functional self-sustaining ecosystems, such as nutrient recycling, vegetation flowering and reproduction, and increasing habitat complexity, and development of a productive, self-sustaining soil profile. This phase of rehabilitation may include specific vegetation management strategies and maintenance such as tree thinning, supplementary plantings and weed management.
Ecosystem and Land Use Establishment	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the processes to establish the approved final land use following construction of the final landform. For vegetated land uses this rehabilitation phase includes establishing the desired vegetation community and implementing land management activities such as weed control. This phase of rehabilitation may also include habitat augmentation such as installation of nest boxes.
Exploration	Has the same meaning as that term under the State Environmental Planning Policy (Mining, Petroleum Production and Extractive Industries) 2007.



WORD	DEFINITION
Final landform and rehabilitation plan	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Final land use	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Form and way	Means the form and way approved by the Secretary. Approved form and way documents are available on the Department's website.
Growth Medium Development	This phase of rehabilitation consists of activities required to establish the physical, chemical and biological components of the substrate required to establish the desired vegetation community (including short lived pioneer species.
	This phase may include spreading the prepared landform with topsoil and/or subsoil and/or soil substitutes, applying soil ameliorants to enhance the physical, chemical and biological characteristics of the growth media, and actions to minimise loss of growth media due to erosion.
Habitat	Has the same meaning as that term under the <i>Biodiversity Conservation Act 2016</i> and the <i>Fisheries Management Act 1994</i> (as relevant).
Indicator	An attribute of the biophysical environment (e.g. pH, topsoil depth, biomass) that can be used to approximate the progression of a biophysical process. It can be measured and audited to demonstrate (and track) the progress of an aspect of rehabilitation towards a desired completion criterion (i.e. defined end point). It may be aligned to an established protocol and used to evaluate changes in a system.
Land	As defined in the <i>Mining Act 1992</i> .
Landform Establishment	This phase of rehabilitation consists of the processes and activities required to construct the final landform. In addition to profiling the surface of rehabilitation areas to the approved final landform profile this phase may include works to construct surface water drainage features, encapsulate problematic materials such as tailings, and prepare a substrate with the desired physical and chemical characteristics (e.g. rock raking or ameliorating sodic materials).
Large mine	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Lease holder	The holder of a mining lease.



WORD	DEFINITION		
Life of mine	The timeframe of how long a mine is approved to mine, from commencement to closure.		
Mine rehabilitation portal	Means the NSW Resources Regulator's online portal that lease holders must use (via a registered account) to: upload rehabilitation geographical information system (GIS) spatial data develop rehabilitation GIS spatial data (using online tracing functions) generate rehabilitation plans and rehabilitation statistics using the map viewer and Rehabilitation Key Performance Indicator functionalities. Data submitted to the mine rehabilitation portal is collated in a centralised geodatabase for use by the NSW Resources Regulator to regulate rehabilitation performance of lease holders.		
Mining area	As defined in the <i>Mining Act 1992</i> .		
Mining domain	A land management unit with a discrete operational function (e.g. overburden emplacement), and therefore similar geophysical characteristics, that will require specific rehabilitation treatments to achieve the final land use(s).		
Mining land	As defined in the <i>Mining Act 1992</i> .		
Native vegetation	Has the same meaning as that term under section 60B of the <i>Local Land Services Act</i> 2013.		
Overburden	Material overlying coal or a mineral deposit.		
Performance indicator	An attribute of the biophysical environment (for example pH, slope, topsoil depth, biomass) that can be used to demonstrate achievement of a rehabilitation objective. It can be measured and audited to demonstrate (and track) the progress of an aspect of rehabilitation towards a desired completion criterion, that is, a defined end point. It may be aligned to an established protocol and used to evaluate changes in a system.		



WORD	DEFINITION
Phases of rehabilitation	The stages and sequences of actions required to rehabilitate disturbed land to achieve the final land use. The phases of rehabilitation are: active mining decommissioning landform Establishment growth medium development ecosystem and land use establishment ecosystem and land use development.
Progressive rehabilitation	The progress of rehabilitation towards achieving the approved rehabilitation completion criteria. This may be described in terms of domains, phases, performance indicators and rehabilitation completion criteria.
Rehabilitation Completion	The final phase of rehabilitation when a rehabilitation area has achieved the approved rehabilitation objectives and rehabilitation completion criteria for the final land use. Rehabilitation areas may be classified as complete when the NSW Resources Regulator has determined in writing that the relevant rehabilitation obligations have been fulfilled following submission of Form ESF2 Rehabilitation completion and/or review of rehabilitation cost estimate application by the lease holder.
Rehabilitation Completion criteria	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Rehabilitation cost estimate	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Rehabilitation management plan	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Rehabilitation objectives	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Rehabilitation risk assessment	As defined in the Mining Regulation 2016.
Rehabilitation schedule	The defined timeframes for progressive rehabilitation set out in the forward program.



WORD	DEFINITION
Relevant stakeholders	Means any persons or bodies who may be affected by the mining operations, including rehabilitation, carried out on the lease land, and includes: the relevant development consent authority the local council the relevant landholder(s) community consultative committee (if required under the development consent) or equivalent consultative group affected land holder(s) government agencies relevant to the final land use affected infrastructure authorities (electricity, telecommunications, water, pipeline, road, rail authorities) local Aboriginal communities, and any other person or body determined by the Minister to be a relevant stakeholder in relation to a mining lease.
Risk	The effect of uncertainty on objectives. It is measured in terms of consequences and likelihood (AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009).
Secretary	The Secretary of the Department.
Security deposit	An amount that a mining lease holder is required to provide and maintain under a mining lease condition, to secure funding for the fulfilment of obligations under the lease (including obligations that may arise in the future).
Surface disturbance	Includes activities that disturb the surface of the mining area, including mining operations, ancillary mining activities and exploration.
Tailings	A combination of the fine-grained solid material remaining after the recoverable metals and minerals have been extracted from the mined ore, and any process water ² .
Waste	Has the same meaning as that term under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i> .

² Commonwealth of Australia (DITR), 2007. *Tailings Management*.

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Attachment 3 - Plans

Plan 2A Mining and Rehabilitation - Year 1.pdf

Plan 2B Mining and Rehabilitation - Year 2.pdf

Plan 2C Mining and Rehabilitation - Year 3.pdf

Forward Program (LARGE MINE) v2.1