

Annual Statement 2024-25

Mining Remediation Fund



Rex Mine

Purpose

This Annual Statement outlines the activities and achievements of the Legacy Mines Unit (LMU) and expenditure from the Mining Remediation Fund (the Fund) for the 2024-25 financial year, as well as outlining proposed forward works. Releasing this Statement supports the Government's commitment to strong governance by providing a transparent overview of expenditure and activity under the Fund and addresses a key deliverable from the Legacy Mines Unit Strategic Plan 2021-2025.

The Department of Mining and Energy reports on the Fund in its Annual Report, which is available online at <https://dme.nt.gov.au>. This Annual Statement is an expanded summary showcasing the activities undertaken this financial year through the Fund and legacy mines program.

The Rum Jungle Project is not managed, nor financed through the Fund.

About us

The LMU is a specialist operational unit within the Department of Mining and Energy. It is responsible for the identification, assessment and, if required, the remediation of legacy mines and legacy mine features across the Northern Territory. The LMU uses revenue generated through an industry levy to undertake this work on behalf of the Minister for Mining and Energy and in line with the *Legacy Mines Remediation Act 2023*, stakeholder input and leading best practice in legacy mines remediation.

Vision

Territory legacy mine features are managed to minimise safety risks and environmental impacts

Mission

Mining Remediation Fund sustainably used to address legacy mine risks and secures environmental outcomes that minimise mining legacies

Objectives

The Legacy Mines Unit will be guided by the following principles:

- Risk and cost-benefit based approach to prioritise works to reduce or eliminate risk from legacy mine features
- Consistent and transparent processes for assessing legacy mine impacts, and prioritising and implementing works
- Public confidence in safety and environmental performance of mining industry and associated regulations

Mining Remediation Fund

Mining operators authorised under the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (or its predecessor the now repealed *Mining Management Act 2001*) must provide a security to the Northern Territory Government in case the Government needs to take action to prevent, minimise or rectify environmental harm caused by mining activities or complete remediation work. The security can be refunded when the site is remediation by the operator.

Under the *Legacy Mines Remediation Act 2023* (LMRA) mining operators also must pay a non-refundable annual levy equivalent to 1% of the total amount of the security held on 1 July each year. The levy is used to support the Fund and the administration of the LMRA.

The NT Government manages the Fund, which is regulated under the LMRA and is an 'Accountable Officer Trust Account' in accordance with Section 7 of the *Financial Management Act 1995 (NT)*.

The purpose of the Fund is to hold money in trust to be used in connection with:

- (a) minimising or remediating environmental harm caused by mining activities carried out on legacy mine sites or by legacy mine features; and
- (b) conducting investigations and research related to environmental harm caused by mining activities carried out on legacy mine sites or by legacy mine features.



Image: Hanrahan's Creek downstream of Sandy Flat

2024-25 Snapshot

During the 2024-25 financial year, the LMU facilitated remediation projects across the Territory, with \$5.44 million (excluding GST) expended from the Fund. This represents a steady upward trajectory in expenditure which is forecast to increase significantly as projects progress. Contracts totalling \$1.78 million (including GST) were awarded during this financial year. Expenditure against contracts often occur over multiple years.

**Fund balance at
30 June 2025**



\$99.8 m

\$5.44 m



**Expenditure from the
Fund during 2024-25
(excluding GST)**

**Contracts awarded from
the Fund during 2024-25
(including GST)**



\$1.78 m

8



**Number of
projects underway**

2024-25 Achievements

- **Sandy Flat Mine (former Redbank Mine)**
 - ✓ Field visits to conduct surface and groundwater monitoring and creek health surveys.
 - ✓ Finalised a multi-criteria analysis to identify a preferred remediation approach.
 - ✓ Engagement with environmental regulators to identify a pragmatic, collaborative approach.
 - ✓ Engaged with traditional owners including an on-country meeting with over 40 Native Title Holders in September 2024.
 - ✓ Released an expression of interest for water treatment to gauge industry capacity and options.
 - ✓ On site test pitting and sampling to refine mine waste characterisation and borrow material investigations.
 - ✓ Installation of camera technology to gauge creek flow over the wet season.
- **Small Mines Safety Program**
 - ✓ Completion of the remediation works around Tennant Creek addressing over 260 legacy mine features including backfilling voids, installing shaft and adit covers and installing fencing and signage.
 - ✓ Award of a contract for a Superintendent's Representative to support future remediation works near Alice Springs and progress preparation of the scope of works.
 - ✓ On-going stakeholder engagement, including multiple on-country presentations with the traditional Aboriginal owners and the Northern Land Council in the Katherine region to facilitate land access for site inspections to inform the small mines safety program.
 - ✓ Undertake site inspections of small mines in the Huckitta / Illogwa and Darwin rural regions.
 - ✓ Commence procurement for a consultant to provide advice regarding managing potential impacts to threatened species from the small mines safety works, with a focus on the Pine Creek region.
- **Other sites**
 - ✓ Complete preliminary site investigations within the Grove Hill area including the Goodall, Woolwonga and Mount Bonnie mine sites and progress a second phase of work to identify a future work program.



Image: Johannsens Mine

2025-26 Priorities

- **Sandy Flat Mine (former Redbank Mine)**
 - Award a contract for active water management and commence treatment and active discharge.
 - Continue studies to support remediation planning including creek health surveys and flora and fauna assessment.
 - Establish a camp near the site to enable remediation works.
 - Refine the waste characterisation to inform the pit backfilling strategy.
 - Continue to work with stakeholders including Native Title Holders.
- **Small Mines Safety Program**
 - Progress the small mines safety works near Alice Springs.
 - Commence fauna studies to facilitate remediation works at Pine Creek.
 - Finalise the audits in Katherine and the Darwin Rural region.
 - Complete the audit reporting and risk assessments for Huckitta / Illawong.
 - Progress the audits in the Bonney Well and Mount Evelyn areas.
- **Other sites**
 - Prioritise baseline assessment investigations for Goodall, Woolwonga and Mount Bonnie to understand the potential environmental impacts from the sites.



Image: Safety works near Tennant Creek

Legacy Mines – Project Updates

Sandy Flat Mine (former Redbank Mine)

Project	Contracts awarded to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ¹	Expenditure from the Fund to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ²
Sandy Flat Mine	\$0.98 million ³	\$1.63 million

¹ Total contract value awarded during the financial year, the work may be undertaken over multiple financial years.

² Expenditure for the financial year includes contracts awarded during previous financial years.

³ An Expression of Interest was released for water treatment, this is anticipated to be a Tier 5 procurement.

Remediation planning is progressing at Sandy Flat to deliver a long term solution to address the environmental impacts at the site. The site is located approximately 30 km west of the Queensland / NT border and 70 km inland from the Gulf of Carpentaria. Planning for this site is complicated by its remote location and it is cut off during the wet season.

Environmental impacts at the site are primarily caused by acid and metalliferous drainage (AMD), resulting in pollution of Hanrahan’s Creek. Remediation of the site is complex and it is essential that the appropriate planning be undertaken to ensure the remediation will deliver long term benefits and value for the Territory.

This financial year has focused on refining the remediation multi-criteria assessment and progressing the tender for water treatment. Significant engagement was also undertaken with NT Government agencies to ensure a pragmatic, risk-based approach is adopted for the project.

The team continue to work with the Native Title Holders, including through engaging cultural managers for intrusive works onsite. This financial year, two meetings were held with the Native Title Holders, including an on-country meeting with over 40 Native Title Holders.

Key achievements for the year include:

- Release of an Expression of Interest (EOI) for water treatment. An EOI process was

adopted to allow industry to advise of potential water treatment options while considering the site constraints. The EOI also provided local companies an opportunity to tender on a portion of the works to maximise local content and regional benefits. Laboratory based testing was undertaken by LMU to inform the water treatment strategy and ensure the best outcome for the Territory through optimising neutralising requirements.

- Installation of creek gauging equipment including 2 telemetry rain gauges to understand the responsiveness of the waterways and inform a water management plan including proposed discharge of treated water.



Image: Sandy Flat pit

Legacy Mines Unit

- Engagement of experts to provide geochemical and hydrogeological advice to support the remediation planning.
- Additional waste sampling for geochemical testing to inform the waste management and assessment of potential borrow material sources.
- Field sampling and ecotoxicology to develop site-specific trigger values.
- Evaluation of options for accommodating requirements to support the remediation program, along with other infrastructure requirements due to the remote location of the site.

Further information on this site can be found on this [NT Government website page](#).



Image: Tailings at Sandy Flat

Legacy Mines – Project Updates

Small Mines Safety Program

Project Area	Contracts awarded to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ¹	Expenditure from the Fund to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ²
Tennant Creek region	-	\$3.41 million
Territory wide	\$0.29 million	\$0.40 million
Total	\$0.29 million	\$3.81 million

¹ Total contract value awarded during the financial year, the work may be undertaken over multiple financial years.

² Expenditure for the financial year includes contracts awarded during previous financial years.

Historic mining activities have left a substantial inventory of legacy mine features across the Territory that present a potential risk to public safety. Typically the public safety risks associated with legacy mine features include injury or death from falls into open mine voids such as shafts (vertical diggings) and open stopes or glory holes (larger voids resembling open pits). Other high risk features include adits (horizontal diggings) and degraded infrastructure.

The Small Mines Safety Program aims to address risks to public safety through the installation of shaft covers, grates, fences, signage, backfilling of open voids.

Mining and exploration activity has occurred in the Tennant Creek area since the 1930s. The Tennant Creek region was a priority for small mines remediation work due to the proximity and density of mines near the town.

During this financial year, a significant contract was completed including to remediating over 260 legacy features using a combination of controls including backfilling mine voids (shafts, costeans, glory holes, open stopes), installing perimeter fencing, installation of covers on shafts and grates on adits and signage. Note this contract was awarded and commenced during the 2023-24 financial year.

The Small Mines Safety Program is also progressing in other areas throughout the Territory. This includes undertaking audits assessing legacy mine features in the field and completing risk assessments. The outcome of the audit informs planning to identify the most appropriate type of remediation, if necessary, such as backfilling or installing grates or covers to prevent public access.



Image: Grate installed at Queen of Sheeba

A scope of works is being developed to address small mines features near Alice Springs, where mica, gold and copper were mined as far back as the 1890s. A Superintendent's Representative has been engaged to support these works and development of a scope for the remediation works has commenced.

Significant stakeholder engagement has been undertaken with the Northern Land Council and relevant land owners, to facilitate land access around Katherine to enable audits of the small mine features. This included 5 days of on-country meetings with stakeholders to outline the small mines safety program and the benefits of this work.

Audits undertaken in 2023-24 around Pine Creek identified a significant number of small mines features. Due to the potential for bats, including threatened Ghost Bats, a scope has been prepared to engage a consultant to inform remediation planning balancing public safety and fauna.

Site audits for the small mines safety program were also progressed in the Huckitta / Illogwa and Darwin regions. The risk assessments and reports for these areas are being developed and will inform future remediation works.



Image: Down hole camera set up



Image: Rex Mine near Alice Springs

Legacy Mines – Project Updates

Other sites

Project	Contracts awarded to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ¹	Expenditure from the Fund to 30 June 2025 (ex GST) ²
Water sampling, monitoring and laboratory analysis	\$0.51 million	\$560.98

¹ Total contract value awarded during the financial year, the work may be undertaken over multiple financial years.

² Expenditure for the financial year includes contracts awarded during previous financial years.

Preliminary Site Investigation (PSI) were completed for Goodall, Woolwonga and Mount Bonnie during the 2023-24 financial year. The PSI's were desk based and one of the recommendations was to undertake site inspections to further understand the potential impacts from legacy mines features.

Site inspections were undertaken at Woolwonga and Mount Bonnie in May 2025. Due to access limitations, it was not possible to inspect the entire sites. Access to Goodall had to be rescheduled due rainfall and the water levels in the creeks.

The results of the site inspections will be consolidated into a risk assessment and used to prioritise future works to inform the potential risks from legacy features. This will form the foundation of future works.



Image: Mount Bonnie pit

Legacy Mines Strategic Updates

Legislation update

The *Legacy Mines Remediation Act 2023* commenced on 1 July 2024 after the regulation of mining was transferred to the *Environment Protection Act 2019* (EP Act) and the *Mining Management Act 2001* (MMA) was repealed. The legislation continues the requirement of the mining remediation levy, the Mining Remediation Fund and the regulatory framework for the remediation of legacy mines in the Northern Territory.

The mining remediation levy is paid by mining operators authorised, or licenced, under the EP Act (and its predecessor the MMA) and will continue to be a non-refundable annual 1% levy calculated on the mining security held by the Government on 1 July of the financial year.

In April 2025, the Minister Gazetted a minimum levy amount that is payable for the mining remediation levy of \$200. That is, if the mining remediation levy amount payable is less than \$200, a levy invoice is not raised. The minimum levy amount was set to reduce the administrative requirements for mining operators undertaking comparatively low disturbance activities.

The LMU has also worked extensively with the Department of Lands, Planning and Environment, Mining Division, to ensure consistency in the management of legacy mines following the repeal of the MMA.

The legislation, including the *Legacy Mines Remediation Act 2023* and the Legacy Mines Remediation Regulations 2024 can be found at <https://legislation.nt.gov.au/>



Image: Degraded infrastructure at Sandy Flat

Stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement and ensuring information is available to the public about the legacy mines program is a key commitment under the Strategic Plan. The following key engagement activities occurred during the reporting period:

- Participated in partner meetings with Cooperative Research Centre for Transformations in Mining Economies and exploring the development of a project that will provide tangible outcomes for the Territory.
- Meetings with the Land Councils regarding the Small Mines Safety Program, Sandy Flat and legacy mines more broadly.
- Attending the NT Resources Week.
- Attending the 2025 ALGA Conference.
- Attending the Mine Closure 2024 conference, including connecting with other jurisdictions undertaking similar works.
- The remediation of legacy mines in the Tennant Creek region under the Small Mines Safety Program was highlighted in a number of media outlets including the NT News, Sunday Territorian, National Indigenous Times, Mining Magazine, Katherine Times, Centralian Today and Mirage News.



Image: Golden Goose Mine down hole camera inspection