

Mineral and petroleum permitting review begins

27 August 2010 - Energy and Resources Minister Gerry Brownlee today invited feedback on proposals to update, streamline and future-proof the Crown Minerals Act, which provides the framework for management and allocation of rights to Crown-owned minerals.

"To help ensure that New Zealand is a highly attractive destination for petroleum and mineral exploration and production investment we need to ensure that our legislative regime is fit for purpose and aligned with the government's economic growth agenda," Mr Brownlee said.

The review of the Crown Minerals Act is a key component of the government's Petroleum Action Plan, which aims to maximise the gains from New Zealand's petroleum resources for the benefit of all New Zealanders.

"The proposed amendments to the Act are not extensive and do not represent any significant changes in the way the Crown manages and allocates rights to the country's petroleum, gold and silver resources, or minerals on or under land owned by the Crown," Mr Brownlee said.

"For example, the government is not proposing to nationalise any new minerals.

"Independent analysis of the regime shows that it is basically sound. However, the petroleum and minerals industries have changed a lot in the 20 years since the Act was written.

"Improvements can be made to ensure the regime does what it was designed to do, and so that it is better able to deal with future developments and new technologies.

"The review will also bring added clarity and efficiencies to the permitting system, which will remove unnecessary costs to the government and permit holders."

Applying for a prospecting, exploration or mining permit is only one of a series of steps required to access Crown-owned minerals.

"There is no intention to change the current situation where minerals permits, Resource Management Act consents, health and safety approvals, and land access consents are required separately before exploration or mining activity can commence," Mr Brownlee said.

"Of late there has been a great deal of public interest in the way in which the government manages the petroleum and minerals estates. This consultation round provides interested parties with an opportunity to have their input into the future direction of legislation that governs permitting activity."

A backgrounder on the Crown Minerals Act and a series of detailed questions and answers, as well as the discussion paper and further information on the consultation process, is available on the Ministry of Economic Development's website at www.med.govt.nz/CMAReview.

Feedback on the paper is sought by 5.00pm Friday 8 October 2010.

Media contact: Nick Bryant on 04 817 8273 or 021 245 8272

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[Crown Minerals Act Review discussion paper](#)

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