



**Inquiry into current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land, air and water quality in New South Wales**

**TERMS OF REFERENCE**

1. That Portfolio Committee No. 2 inquire into and report on current and potential impacts of gold, silver, lead and zinc mining on human health, land, air and water quality in New South Wales, in particular:
  - (a) the impact on the health of local residents and mine workers, including through biomagnification and bioaccumulation
  - (b) the impact on catchments and waterways, affecting both surface and groundwater destined for, local and town water supplies, including rainwater tanks, and on aquatic biodiversity
  - (c) the impact on land and soil, crops and livestock, including through biomagnification and bioaccumulation
  - (d) the adequacy of the response and any compliance action taken by the regulatory authorities in response to complaints and concerns from communities affected by mining activities
  - (e) the effectiveness of the current regulatory framework in terms of monitoring, compliance, risk management and harm reduction from mining activities
  - (f) the effectiveness of current decommissioning and rehabilitation practices in safeguarding human health and the environment,
  - (g) the effectiveness of New South Wales Government agencies to regulate and improve outcomes including:
    - (i) the measurement, reporting and public awareness
    - (ii) the provision of various protective materials
    - (iii) the ability to ensure the health of at-risk groups
    - (iv) the suitability of work health and safety regulations, and
    - (v) the capacity to respond within existing resources
    - (vi) the adequacy of existing work, health and safety standards for workers
  - (h) whether the regulatory framework for heavy metals and critical minerals mining is fit for purpose and able to ensure that the positive and negative impacts of heavy metals and critical minerals mining on local communities, economies (including job creation) and the environment are appropriately balanced
  - (i) any other related matters.

2. The committee reports on its findings by 15 December 2023.<sup>1</sup>

The terms of reference for the inquiry were self-referred by the committee on 25 July 2023.<sup>2</sup>

#### Committee membership

<b>Dr Amanda Cohn MLC</b>	The Greens	<i>Chair</i>
<b>Hon Susan Carter MLC</b>	Liberal Party	<i>Deputy Chair</i>
<b>Hon Mark Buttigieg MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	
<b>Hon Greg Donnelly MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	
<b>Ms Cate Faehrmann MLC</b>	The Greens	
<b>Hon Emily Suvaal MLC</b>	Australian Labor Party	
<b>Hon Bronnie Taylor MLC</b>	The Nationals	

<sup>1</sup> The original reporting date was 21 November 2023 (*Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 1 August 2023, p 295). The reporting date was later extended to 15 December 2023 (*Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 10 October 2023, p 548).

<sup>2</sup> *Minutes*, NSW Legislative Council, 1 August 2023, p 295.