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## **Submission to Draft Declared Mine Regulations 2022**

Thankyou for the opportunity to submit on this issue. Mining rehabilitation is an area where the VFF believes there could be improvements through better recognition of the thoughts of the landholder in the process.

We are aware that these regulations and the RIS primarily address 3 large coal mines in the La Trobe Valley, on land that was once the property of the State Electricity Commission of Victoria. The regulations to envisage the future application of these regulations to other sites, and most mine sites in Victoria are located on private land used for farming, which then triggers the Human Rights considerations around property.

The VFF is pleased that the draft regulations do allow for the consideration of landholder views in the consultation process for rehabilitation plans (regulation 64G). However, we believe it is critical that the landholder have at least equal if not greater standing in relation to approval processes as Council. Regulations 64H, 64K, 64L and 64M are examples where specific reference to the consideration of landholder views should be included in decision making.

Entry to Farm issues is a key element of our 2022 Victorian State Election Platform. Traditionally the key land access issues have related to mining processes and VFF has used its Mining and Petroleum Policy Statement to see a program of continuous improvement to the Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act (MR(SD)A) and its regulations.

Our advocacy acknowledges that many other statutes could learn from the MR(SD)A in relation to having minimum standards across the life of the process including land access, compensation and rehabilitation. As these provisions could be improved, I attach our Managing Entry to Farm Policy as an indication of the regulatory considerations that would ensure access to farm has social license and does not disadvantage the landholder.

The VFF would welcome the opportunity to discuss how to create a regulatory system where farmers are willing to participate in and where their property and livelihoods are given fair consideration. Please contact Lisa Gervasoni at [lgervasoni@vff.org.au](mailto:lgervasoni@vff.org.au) to arrange a discussion.

**Gerald Leach**

**Chair – VFF Planning, Environment and Climate Change Committee**