

# Guidelines for Mineral Industry Reports under the NT *Mining Act*

## Minerals Reporting Requirements

These guidelines have been produced to assist mineral exploration and mining tenement holders in the NT with the preparation and submission of statutory reports under the Northern Territory [Mining Act](#) as distinct from the [Mining Management Act](#). The latter requires separate reporting. The *Mining Act* requires the holders of all exploration and mining tenements, other than for extractive minerals, to submit regular reports to the Department. These reports cover the exploration and other technical work undertaken on the title. The report must include all geological, geophysical and geochemical data obtained. The [Mining Act](#) provides for periods of confidentiality for some reports and has penalties for failure to comply with reporting requirements.

Reports must be in the English language and use SI units (eg g and kg rather than ounces and pounds). Locations must be given using the GDA94 datum. Local mine grid co-ordinates are not acceptable.

Digital contact details for the person(s) responsible for the expenditure statement and technical content of the report must be supplied. The report must have either a corporate or personal author or both.

Reports are normally required on a [regular basis relative to the date of grant of title](#) and when partial relinquishment is required (normally half the area of an EL is expected to be relinquished every year starting at the end of year two). A comprehensive final report is required at the expiration of any title.

Reports are to be submitted digitally in a [prescribed format](#). Hardcopy reports are no longer required and will only be accepted in lieu of digital with prior permission. Electronic facsimile reports are not acceptable. Company prospectuses, technical reports to a stock exchange, or annual financial reports are useful to the Department, but they are not acceptable as reports under the [Mining Act](#).

A statement of admissible expenditure is required on the [prescribed form](#) on the anniversary of the date of grant of each title.

If data from the title(s) being reported has already been submitted to the Department this needs to be stated (eg a geophysical survey that mostly covered an adjoining lease and was previously reported as such).

As the ground on which it occurs becomes vacant, all drill core must be offered to the Department's [core facilities](#), located in Alice Springs and Darwin.

### **All industry exploration reports and expenditures must be lodged with:**

Geoscience Information  
Northern Territory Geological Survey  
Department of Regional Development, Primary Industry, Fisheries and Resources  
GPO Box 3000  
3rd Floor Paspalis Centrepoint Building  
48-50 Smith Street Mall  
DARWIN NT 0801

Reports and expenditures can be emailed to [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au). Geoscience Information will acknowledge receipt within three working days. Emails should not exceed 10 MB. Do not send expenditures other than for variations of Covenant or any reports to Titles. Do not email or address reports, data or expenditure forms to individuals within the Department.

As required under the Act, annual reports are held as confidential for the life of the title, but reports on areas dropped are available to the public. Such open-file mineral reports constitute an historical database that assists future exploration in the Northern Territory. An index of reports can be accessed via [Mineral Exploration Reports \(MEX\)](#) (formerly Mineral Industry reports Management System (IRMS)).

Further information is available in the following documents and web pages:

- [Mineral Titles and Permits](#)
- [Current mineral title information \(spatial\) on the Titles Information System](#)
- [Royalties and Eligible Exploration Expenditure at Territory Revenue](#)

## Reporting Timeframes

### Exploration Licence (EL), Substitution Exploration Licence (SEL) or Exploration Retention Licence (ERL)

**Annual** reports are required within one month of the start of each year that the title is held. **Final surrender** reports are mandatory within three months of surrender. Final reports where there is no continuing tenure must summarise the whole history of the operator's tenure and **must include all analytical and geophysical data even if it was previously submitted in annual reports**. Note that a single report could be more than one type, for example both the last annual and the final. If so, this needs to be stated. **Partial relinquishment** reports are required within three months of partial relinquishment, which is normally required each year beginning at the end of Year 2 of tenure. Normally, **all analytical and geophysical data pertinent to the relinquished area must be included even if it has been previously submitted in annual reports**. However, there are [provisions to obviate the need to "cookie-cut" remote-sensed or geophysical data if the data](#) subset is not meaningful or useful. Contact [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au) prior to the reporting deadline for further information.

**Renewal** reports that accompany the renewal forms for any form of EL should be sent to [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au). Such reports are not a formal requirement under the [Mining Act](#) but they greatly assist the Department in evaluating the renewal. They also provide a useful summary of the previous period of tenure and so are important additions to the company reports collection. The report must be in the same digital format as other reports as described herein. If the renewal report contains details not included on the application form, a separate copy needs to be sent to Titles Maintenance [tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au](mailto:tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au). Renewal reports do not normally have any accompanying digital data and remain confidential for the life of the title.

If an EL, SEL or ERL is renewed for less than the full area, a partial relinquishment report is required within three months. If one or more SELs or ERLs are granted, such that they only partially overlap the daughter EL(s), the [Mining Act](#) requires that **two** "final" reports be submitted. One, that deals with those areas of the EL that are not to be included in continuing tenure, will become open-file immediately. The second report deals with those ELs or parts

thereof that will be subsumed by a higher form of title. This will remain confidential for the life of the higher title. Both final reports are due within three months of the grant of the SEL.

### **Mineral (Mining) Tenement (ML)**

Other than for extractive minerals, a report is required within three months of the start of each year that an ML is held. All exploration conducted on an ML must be reported as per an EL. Grade control drilling need only be reported in a general way, and only representative digital data need to be supplied. Mining activities need to be reported as tonnes and grades in SI units or other appropriate units of measure. Where more than one mine is operating on a single title, production and resources need to be reported separately for each mine/orebody. For listed companies holding an ML, the report to the Department must contain at least as much detail as is supplied to the relevant stock exchange. All resources and reserves must be reported in accordance with the [JORC Code and Guidelines](#) or their equivalent in other jurisdictions. Reserves and resources should be reported annually even if they have not changed from the previous year. Annual reports are still required on titles held for ancillary purposes (eg ML to cover infrastructure). A [group technical report](#) may be relevant.

A final report is required within three months after an ML is surrendered. The final report details the whole period over which the tenement was held and includes all relevant data, even if it has been previously submitted.

### **Mineral Claim (MC)**

For all MCs other than those held to explore for extractives, an annual report is required within three months after each anniversary of the initial grant. This report must detail all mining, technical work and exploration undertaken during the reporting period. Annual reports are still required on MCs held for ancillary purposes (eg to cover infrastructure).

A final report detailing all work since the claim was granted is also required within three months of the cessation of the claim. This report must contain all relevant data, even if it has been previously submitted.

### **Authorities**

Authorities granted under Section 178 and Authorised Holdings are less common forms of title (not to be confused with an authorisation as part of a Mining Management Plan or an Authority to Occupy). These types of tenure are granted with conditions identical to either an EL or ML. Reporting requirements for Authorities are the same as if they were the other form of title and are specified in the grant documents.

### **Report of a Significant Discovery**

Section S24 (d) of the NT [Mining Act](#) requires that the Director of the Geological Survey must be informed in writing within 28 days of confirmation of all minerals discovered on the EL that may amount to economic or scientific interest. This would include, but not be limited to, any discovery reported to a Stock Exchange. Such reporting is particularly relevant where the discovery is other than the originally stated target commodity (eg discovery of coal while drilling for uranium). The discovery is to be reported to the Department with substantiating data using the normal guidelines detailed below. Confidentiality of all or part of material submitted under Section S24 (d) which is not already publicly available is at the discretion of the Department.

### **Reports relating to material from the Department's Core Facilities**

The Department requires reports describing any chemical, physical, geophysical, biostratigraphic or other studies done on material at, or removed from, its Core Facilities. The results of any non-destructive assaying (eg handheld XRF, spot chemical tests) undertaken on

the premises must also be reported. **Please ensure that the results can be matched back to the sampled material using original hole numbers and depths.** The report must be a text PDF and must include a title page with the mandatory electronic contact details. It must clearly state the rationale behind the sampling and include a summary presenting the results and interpretations. Numerical data (assays etc) must follow the same digital data formats described herein. The report is due within six months of the sampling being undertaken. If a leaseholder is sampling material from what is now their current tenure, this must be stated and the title number given. Unless this is the case, or specifically negotiated otherwise, it should be assumed that the report submitted will be immediately available for public release. Submit reports digitally, either on disc to the GPO box given on page one, or by email to [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au). All unused sample residues plus all items derived from the material sampled (eg thin and polished sections) must be returned to the core facility from which they came within six months. All such material must be clearly labelled to match the material in the core facility. Failure to submit reports or return materials may jeopardise further requests for sampling.

### **Extensions of time to submit a report or expenditure**

[Requests for extensions](#) of time to submit a report or expenditure under the [Mining Act](#) must be sent to [tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au](mailto:tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au) and are assessed on a case-by-case basis. Extensions are not relevant for reports of a significant discovery and are granted for core sampling reports only in exceptional circumstances.

## **Group Technical Reporting**

Under certain circumstances, mineral titles may be grouped for technical reporting purposes. This allows titleholders to report exploration activities on a project basis and facilitates regional geophysical or geochemical surveys across adjacent titles. It is also a convenient way to group actual mining titles along with neighbouring titles held for ancillary purposes. Group technical reporting requires prior approval through [tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au](mailto:tmt.drdpifr@nt.gov.au).

To be eligible for group reporting, the titles must be:

- the same type of title (eg, all variants of ELs can be grouped, MCs and MLs can be grouped, but ELs and MLs can't), and
- substantially contiguous (ideally with a side or corner in common), and
- held in at least one name in common, and
- relate to a single geological entity, and preferably
- worked simultaneously for a common target commodity.

All applications for group technical reporting must include a scaled map showing the titles involved and must address all the criteria above.

**Note that a separate expenditure statement for each title is still required at the anniversary of the date of its grant even if group reporting has been granted.**

If a title is removed from a reporting group or is the last remaining title of a group, its reporting date reverts to the anniversary of the date of grant.

## Report Title Page

All reports (including reports of no activity) under the NT [Mining Act](#) must contain a title page with certain mandatory data, specifically:

- titleholder
- project operator under the [Mining Act](#) (if different from above)
- report title including the report type (using the specific terms group, annual, final surrender, partial relinquishment, etc) and the titles/tenements involved
- dates of reporting periods for annual reports as a from and to date or as the year ending on a specific date (avoid saying the x<sup>th</sup> annual report or the report for 2007)
- either a corporate, or personal author, or both, **plus digital contact details (email or phone) MUST be supplied**. This should be the person(s), be it the titleholder, contractor, operator or the agent, to whom technical enquiries, requests for further information, data or clarification will be directed; **if necessary, separate contacts should be given for those responsible for the expenditure form**
- a date of compilation and/or submission
- the names of the standard NT [1:100 000](#)- and [1:250 000](#)-scale mapsheets
- confirmation of the GDA 94 datum and either zone 52 or 53 as relevant.

[Examples of suitable title pages](#). These can be used as a guide.

## Report Content

The report must contain a brief text-only **Executive Summary or Abstract**. This will be transferred verbatim into the Department's database. The summary should include discussion of the tenure history; refer to any named prospects (historical or otherwise), exploration rationale, commodity sought, geology, exploration conducted and the main results and conclusions. A report on grouped titles must specify which titles were worked and which were not, with reasons. No tables or figures are to be included in, or referenced from, the summary. The summary must not contain headings, references, hyperlinks, paragraph breaks, bullet points or other special characters such as @, ® or ±. Expenditure is discussed at the author's discretion; it is not mandatory in the summary. However, **it is essential to clearly quantify the work undertaken**, eg, the wording "RAB drilling was undertaken" should instead be "Drilling consisted of 25 RAB holes for 804 m and 1200 samples". Aerial geophysical surveys should be described with the total line kilometres and percentage in each title. Line spacing and flight height should be specified.

Reports must not include any information, language, names or images that may be culturally sensitive, offensive or in confidence to Traditional Owners (eg no AAPA reports, locations or images of sacred sites, no photos or names of persons recently deceased and so on).

## Reports of No Activity

If there was no work on a title and obviously no data collected (a "nil report"), it is permissible for a title page as above, a summary and, if relevant, the expenditure form to constitute the entire report or group technical report. A nil report must be a standalone document with sufficient detail to become part of the Departmental records. The report must detail the target commodities, exploration rationale and indicate why no work was completed and when work is expected to recommence. Be particularly wary of the first annual report, it is easy to say that no work was undertaken because of Native Title issues etc, but forget to explain the exploration rationale and target commodities. The document must be submitted as a text .pdf (see below). Hardcopy, image .pdf or email text is not acceptable. It cannot be combined with

a Variation of Covenant as a single document. Note that this is the minimum requirement; single page letters, lacking the details above, are not acceptable.

## Data Unavailable as of Reporting Deadline

Delays in analytical laboratories or the length of time taken to process geophysical data may mean that such data cannot be presented as part of the statutory report. **It is not acceptable to delay submission of data until the next annual report.** In the case of assay data, the sample locations must be supplied in the prescribed digital format to accompany the normal report. The full data set of locations and assays must be submitted once it is available. For geophysical surveys, the acquisition details and a digital location map must be provided in the relevant report and the data forwarded as soon as possible thereafter. The Department will not deem any report satisfactory until all outstanding data have been received. If only a short delay of no more than a few months is expected, please [apply for an extension](#) as described above.

## Digital Formats

Digital reporting is now mandatory, unless prior consent has been granted. This means that hard-copy reports are normally no longer required. The required formats follow Federally-endorsed guidelines. [These guidelines are available from Geoscience Australia](#) to enable more consistent and complete reporting of activities by companies that operate in a number of Australian jurisdictions. Failure to comply with the required formats for media or files may result in a Notice of Outstanding Matters under the [Mining Act](#).

The Department will accept the following media:

- Email
- Over-the-counter delivery using portable storage devices
- 650 MB or 700 MB CD-R
- 4.2 GB, 4.7 GB or 8.5 GB DVD-R

Other forms of media will no longer be accepted. Discs must be read-only full-sized disks, compatible with the Windows operating system, and must be supplied in a hard protective cover. All media should be individually labelled with the company name, title number and numbered discs (eg 1/5). A full index of all files should be included in the report. The operator should keep an exact duplicate back-up copy for at least a year after submission to cover the possibility of physical damage, data loss or corruption during transit or within the Department.

In the case of large reports, the text may be emailed and the data sent on one or more discs. Note however, that **the Department will not have deemed to have received the report until the total information is received.** For this reason and to avoid multiple handling by the Department it is preferable to send **all** material for large reports (including the expenditure form if relevant) on disc(s) rather than email part. Conversely, if a complete report including all data has been submitted by email, it is not necessary to send a disc.

Use of third-party or Government file transfer sites will only be accepted with prior permission from [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au).

In accordance with national guidelines, text documents should be a text (not image) [PDF](#) (portable document format) with thumbnails. This type of file can be created using [Adobe Acrobat](#) or similar software (freeware is available on the internet). Do not embed any files as attachments within the text .pdf. All associated files must be separate. Hotlinks are acceptable, but unnecessary, as they may not work if the Department separates files onto different servers. Security must be set to allow copying from, but not editing of, the document. Individual PDF files should not exceed 10 MB. Recent versions of the PDF format can easily handle plans up to and exceeding A0 in size (841 mm x 1189 mm). Any particularly high-quality graphics or geo-referenced maps should be submitted as individual stand-alone image files (see below).

All reports should contain a scaled location map showing sample points or surveys in relation to title boundaries and eastings and northings. The use of outcrop and core photographs in reports is encouraged. Stand-alone images can be in PDF, GEOTIFF, TIFF, JPEG (Q≥95), GIF, PNG or EPS formats. Images should be reproducible at the original size with a minimum of 300 dpi. A geo-locatable image must be accompanied by the datum and projection.

Compression software should be used only if absolutely necessary and either be self-extracting or accompanied by the appropriate decompression software if it is not industry standard.

The same standards (below) apply to legacy data captured by the titleholder as well as new data acquired.

Numerical and tabular data must be submitted in ASCII format with a suffix of .txt. They should be tab, not comma, delimited. All units should follow the SI system or an accepted industry standard if SI is not applicable. Mixed units such as ounces or pounds per metric tonne are not acceptable. Ensure that any ASCII analytical data has headers that include the units of measure for each column.

All location data must use the Geocentric Datum of Australia 1994. This and the relevant zone should be clearly stated in the header to the actual data.

If the geology is described using codes, these must be supplied with each report.

## **Drillhole data**

Minimum acceptable digital (ASCII) drillhole data must include:

- the type(s) of drilling (eg percussion/diamond coring) and depth ranges
- collar location and total drilled depth
- hole orientation data for non-vertical holes.

Ensure that sample numbers for downhole analytical data can be related to the corresponding drillhole and interval in the same spreadsheet.

## **Geochemical data**

Geochemical analyses must be accompanied by a written statement of the sample preparation and analytical techniques (in addition to the proprietary codes from the laboratory), the limits of detection, and the standards and blanks used. Location and analytical data must be provided together in the same file. Assay results below the limit of detection should be reported as the negative of that limit or otherwise clearly identifiable. Job numbers provided by the analytical laboratory are to be supplied. If there has been any renumbering of the samples, this needs to be clarified. Multiple assays of the same element using different techniques need to be in

separate data files, but replicates or repeats of the same element with the same technique can be in the same file and the element suffixed \_1 etc.

## Geophysical data

Petrophysical and geophysical log data, such as wireline and MWD data, should be in DLIS, LIS, LAS or ASCII formats. PIMA data or similar maybe submitted in propriety file formats (eg FOS) only if accompanied by equivalent generic ASCII.

Airborne and ground geophysical data must be located and levelled, and in standard ASCII code. A digital location plan is required which shows the boundaries of the data acquired in relation to the GDA 94 datum and title boundaries. This can be a georeferenced TIFF or MapInfo files. The data must be presented in [GDF](#) format which includes a DES file explaining the data. Gridded data is required in either ASEG-GXF or ER Mapper gridded format. A [mandatory standard for hyperspectral data](#) will also be enforced. In the case of EM data, the processed data, from which pseudo-sections etc are produced, is required in GDF. Raw EM data is not required.

Seismic data should be in SEG Y or SEG D format; navigation data in UKOOA P1/90 or SPS, and processed sections in CGM with metadata. File names must include the line number.

## GIS data

GIS can be submitted in MapInfo or ArcView format. Ensure that MapInfo data is submitted as standalone individual layers not just workspaces.

The preferred vector format is MicroStation or DXF. Raster layers can be in ASEG-GXF format, to which ER Mapper .ERS files comply.

## Expenditure Reporting Form

Admissible expenditure is always reported in Australian dollars relative to the date of grant of title using the [standard form](#). The form, or the report itself, should discuss any issues dealing with expenditure, particularly where the covenant has not been met (eg statements such as “the planned drilling program of 50 holes was aborted after only 3 due to mechanical failure of the drill rig, consequently the covenant was not met” or “exploration concentrated on the neighbouring EL during this reporting period” or what non-admissible expenditure is relevant). Expenditures are not required for partial surrender reports. Note that in the case of continuing tenure as an SEL or ERL, or in the case of final surrender of an EL, the final year expenditure on the EL(s) must not be overlooked.

If expenditure is claimed for capture of legacy data, the Department expects evidence of that work. This can be either as a summation within the report or preferably as a GIS-style presentation with ASCII data in the same formats as described above.

The expenditure form should be saved as a .pdf file for submission. Hardcopy forms are no longer acceptable. Expenditure forms are to be sent to [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au).

## FAQs

- [What should be on a title page for reporting under the Mining Act?](#)
- [Where do I send statutory reports, Mine Management Plans, requests for Variations of Covenant, Waivers of Reduction etc?](#)
- [Can I request an extension of time for reports under the Mining Act?](#)

- [What is PDF?](#)
- [What is GDF?](#)
- [What format is required for hyperspectral data?](#)
- [Do I have to “cookie-cut” large data sets for partial relinquishment or final surrender reports?](#)
- [Can I use the data submission templates from other Australian jurisdictions?](#)

## **What’s coming?**

There will continue to be changes as part of an ongoing transition to submission of data using downloadable templates and / or online submission of data and reports. This will require mandatory formats for filenames. The proposed replacement of the [Mining Act](#) will necessitate other changes, so please check these guidelines regularly.

## **Enquiries and Feedback**

Suggestions, questions or feedback regarding any of the above issues is welcome and should be directed to: [geoscience.info@nt.gov.au](mailto:geoscience.info@nt.gov.au).

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