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Budget supports regulatory uplift but still waiting on clarity for critical minerals

Today's 2023-24 Victorian budget includes new initiatives to support regulation for the minerals industry but according to AMEC Chief Executive Officer, Warren Pearce, more needs to be delivered to support critical minerals in Victoria.

"Royalty income is forecast at \$574M through to 2026-27 reflecting a strengthening minerals industry," said Mr Pearce.

"The Budget has allocated \$23.3M in new funding for the Victorian resources industry to uplift regulator capability and approvals processes along with delivering its planned regulatory reform.

The allocated budget funds will be directed toward establishing a coordinating body – drawing precedent from a similar initiative used successfully for the extractives industry – to facilitate project approvals and streamline the regulatory landscape across departmental jurisdictions, reducing overlap and improve timeframes and outcomes.

"AMEC has long advocated for a more efficient approvals process in Victoria, alongside critical legislative reform, and is looking forward to working with government to deliver these important initiatives," said Mr Pearce

The 2022 budget included an investment of \$7.4M over three years to support the development of a critical minerals prospectus and grants program.

"One year on and we have not seen a prospectus or a grants program. It's time Victoria put pen to paper and developed a Critical Minerals Strategy for the state as other leading jurisdictions have done. A clear path forward would support both industry and Federal Government investment in this new frontier for the mining industry," said Mr Pearce.

"While Australia has remained the most attractive region in the world for mining investment, Victoria has continued to rank among the lowest Australian jurisdictions for the three key parameters of investment attraction, policy perception and best practices mineral potential in the internationally respected annual Fraser Institute Survey, released earlier this month."

"Industry needs clear government support to continue exploration success, the identification of new mineral deposits and the ability to progress discoveries into productive operating mines that will lead to growth, jobs and investment."

"Victoria must compete as an exploration and mining destination of choice and needs to work harder to secure the future of the industry and its important role in underpinning the Government's key emissions objectives," said Mr Pearce.

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