

## Woodsreef Taskforce

Charter administered by NSW Trade & Investment, Division of Resources & Energy.

**Derelict Woodsreef Mine**



DERELICT MINES PROGRAM

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#### Acknowledgements

#### Disclaimer

The information contained in this publication is based on knowledge and understanding at the time of writing (October 2012). However, because of advances in knowledge, users are reminded of the need to ensure that information on which they rely is up to date and to check the currency of the information with the appropriate officer of NSW Trade & Investment, or the user's independent advisor.

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## Foreword

The derelict Woodsreef Mine was a site at which chrysotile ore was mined and processed through a mill on the mine site. Significant areas of exposed chrysotile asbestos bearing rock and tailings remain on site, which can be liberated through weathering into the atmosphere.

There are also areas of processed friable asbestos material stockpiled throughout the site, including within derelict buildings and disused mill equipment. Processed friable asbestos stockpiles have also been identified adjacent to Mine Road which winds its way between the former mine and the tailings dump. These stockpiles may be disturbed by vehicular traffic. Unauthorised entry to the derelict Woodsreef Mine exposes individuals to higher levels of asbestos fibres. Users of the Mine Road also risk exposure to higher levels of asbestos fibres.

Asbestos was first mined at Woodsreef from 1919-1923. The Chrysotile Corporation of Australia carried out large scale mining at Woodsreef between 1970 and 1983. Approximately 500 000 tonnes of chrysotile, or white asbestos were produced from 100 million tonnes of mined material.

The former mine extends over an area of approximately 400 hectares. The site comprises a 75 million tonne waste rock dump, a 25 million tonne tailings dump and a number of open pits, some containing considerable quantities of water. There are also a number of derelict buildings within the site, including an eight-storey mill building. The site is substantially un-rehabilitated and uncontained asbestos fibres are found throughout the area.

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## Introduction

The Woodsreef Taskforce was established by the Premier in 2008 to facilitate the long term management of the derelict Woodsreef Mine site. The Taskforce is a multi-agency committee with representatives from key NSW State Government agencies.

## Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Woodsreef Taskforce are as follows:

1. Implement the recommendations of the NSW Ombudsman's report *Responding to the asbestos problem: The need for significant reform in NSW* as it relates to Woodsreef, including:
  - Removal of the derelict mill house, silos and administration buildings;
  - Implementation of a comprehensive air quality monitoring program and health risk assessment; and
  - Closure of Mine Road, Woodsreef
2. Seek Cabinet approval to secure funding for the Woodsreef Mine Major Rehabilitation Project Business Case.
3. Implement the Woodsreef Mine Major Rehabilitation Project:
  - The demolition of the dilapidated eight story mill house, silos and administration building;
  - Installation of a comprehensive air quality monitoring program and health risk assessment;
  - Identification and management of stockpiled hazardous asbestos products around the mine; and
  - Identification of appropriate management options for Mine Road, Woodsreef.
4. The Heads of Asbestos Coordination Authorities (HACA) is the coordination body of the activities of statutory authorities in relation to all aspects of asbestos information, assistance, compliance and enforcement and is responsible for advising the NSW Government on asbestos policy and/or legislation.

## Governance

NSW Trade & Investment will appoint a Project Manager for the Woodsreef Taskforce and the Woodsreef Mine Major Rehabilitation Project. The Project Manager facilitates the coordination, planning and reporting of the activities of the Woodsreef Taskforce. The Woodsreef Taskforce members may contact this person for assistance regarding any matters concerning the Woodsreef Taskforce and the Woodsreef Mine Major Rehabilitation Project.

The Chair may invite advisers to provide expert advice to the Woodsreef Taskforce as the need arises.

The Woodsreef Taskforce will meet as required or at least twice yearly.

No proxy stand-ins are able to attend unless permission from the Chair is received prior to the commencement of a Woodsreef Taskforce meeting.

The Woodsreef Taskforce will seek to reach consensus, but accepts that members may hold a range of perspectives on a particular issue and in such circumstances differing views will be reported in the minutes.

Taskforce members are able to address the Woodsreef Taskforce.

Invited attendees are able to address the Woodsreef Taskforce when invited by the Chair.

No uninvited person is able to attend a Woodsreef Taskforce meeting.

Meeting papers are to be emailed one week in advance of the meeting date.

Agenda and minutes are to be displayed on the Derelict Mines Program webpage.

The Woodsreef Taskforce will be responsible to the Minister for Resources & Energy. The activities of the Woodsreef Taskforce may be reported to the Minister, specific matters arising from the meetings may be advised to the Minister and subsequent decisions by the Minister will be reported to the Woodsreef Taskforce.

The Woodsreef Taskforce will be subject to the NSW Trade & Investment financial & administrative delegation policies and procedures.

Each member's agency/organisation will bear the administrative costs associated with attendance at the Woodsreef Taskforce meetings.

## Membership

The Woodsreef Taskforce is a multi agency NSW Government committee comprising the following membership:

1. The Executive Director Mineral Resources, NSW Trade & Investment, (Chair).
2. The following representatives have full membership:
  - a. The Director Environmental Health, Ministry of Health.
  - b. The Director Hazardous Incidents and Environmental Health, Environment Protection Authority.
  - c. The State Coordinator Asbestos & Demolition, WorkCover NSW.
  - d. The Service Director Health Protection, Hunter New England Health.
  - e. The Environmental Health Manager, Hunter New England Health.
  - f. The Director Infrastructure and Land Management, Department of Primary Industries.
  - g. The Director Environmental Sustainability, NSW Trade & Investment.
3. The following representatives have invitee status:
  - a. The General Council, Tamworth Regional Council.
  - b. The Manager Natural Resource Services, Department of Primary Industries.
  - c. The Senior Lands Officer, Department of Primary Industries.
  - d. The Derelict Mines Program Coordinator, NSW Trade & Investment.
  - e. The Project Manager Woodsreef, NSW Trade & Investment.

## Confidentiality

The Woodsreef Taskforce members may be given access to confidential material. These materials are provided in good faith and Woodsreef Taskforce member will ensure that confidentiality is strictly maintained. However contractual matters pertaining to the content of commercial in confidence agreements will not be shared to members employed outside the NSW Government. Documents that are confidential will be marked accordingly.