



Mr Brent Murdoch
Director, General Manager Australia
Vista Gold Australia Pty Ltd
GPO Box 3449
Darwin NT 0801

Dear Mr Murdoch

**Decision on approval
Mt Todd Gold Mine Project, NT**

I am writing to you in relation to a proposal to reopen and operate the existing Mt Todd Gold Mine located 55km north-west of Katherine, Northern Territory (NT).

I have considered the proposal in accordance with Part 9 of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and have decided to grant an approval to Vista Gold Australia Pty Ltd. The details of my decision are attached. The proposal must be undertaken in accordance with the conditions specified in the approval.

I would appreciate your assistance by informing me when you provide the information specified in the conditions and who will be the contact person responsible for the administration of the approval decision.

Please note, any plans and strategies required as conditions of approval will be regarded as public documents unless you provide sufficient justification to warrant commercial-in-confidence status.

You should also note that this EPBC Act approval does not affect obligations to comply with any other laws of the Commonwealth, state or territory that are applicable to the action. Neither does this approval confer any right, title or interest that may be required to access land or waters to take the action.

The Department has an active audit program for proposals that have been referred or approved under the EPBC Act. The audit program aims to ensure that proposals are implemented as planned and that there is a high degree of compliance with any associated conditions. Please note that your project may be selected for audit by the Department at any time and all related records and documents may be subject to scrutiny. Information about the Department's compliance monitoring and auditing program is enclosed.

I have also written to the following parties to advise them of this decision:

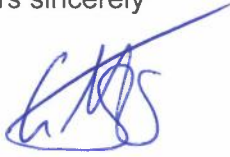
Territory authorities

Dr Paul Vogel
Chair
NT Environment Protection Authority

Mr Armando Padovan
Executive Director Mines Division
NT Department of Primary Industries and
Resources

If you have any questions about this decision, please contact the project manager, Matt Whitting, by email to matt.whitting@environment.gov.au, or telephone 02 6274 1869 and quote the EPBC reference number shown at the beginning of this letter.

Yours sincerely



Gregory Manning
Assistant Secretary
Assessments (WA, SA, NT) and Post Approvals Branch

19 January 2018



COMPLIANCE MONITORING AND AUDITING

This fact sheet provides an overview of the compliance monitoring and auditing program in place for projects referred under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and permits granted under the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981* (the Sea Dumping Act).

What is the EPBC Act?

The EPBC Act is Australia's key national environment law. Under the EPBC Act, proposals which are likely to have a significant impact on matters of national environmental significance must be referred, assessed, and a decision made by the Minister or his delegate on whether to approve the proposal.

What is the Sea Dumping Act?

The Sea Dumping Act regulates the loading and dumping of waste at sea. The Sea Dumping Act fulfils Australia's international obligations under the London Protocol to prevent marine pollution by dumping of wastes and other matter. Permits are required from the Department for all ocean disposal activities.

What is compliance monitoring and auditing for?

The Department has implemented a program to monitor and audit projects that have been referred under the EPBC Act and the Sea Dumping Act to ensure they are complying with their approval/permit conditions or particular manner requirements and the legislation.

Compliance monitoring activities, including inspections and audits, aim to ensure projects with the potential to impact on nationally protected matters are implemented as planned. Monitoring and audits help the Australian Government to understand how well conditions or requirements are being understood and applied, and contribute to improving the effectiveness of the Department's operations.

All compliance monitoring activities, and any subsequent enforcement activities, are conducted in accordance with the Department's Compliance and Enforcement Policy.

What is a monitoring inspection?

Approved projects are subject to monitoring inspections to ensure and verify compliance with the conditions or requirements of the approval or permit. Projects are selected for a monitoring inspection based on a risk-based process informed through a number of factors, including sector, location, compliance history and the potential impact on listed matters (such as threatened species and ecological communities).

What is a compliance audit?

A compliance audit is an objective assessment of a project's compliance against selected criteria. Projects are audited against conditions or requirements. A compliance audit usually takes the form of a desktop document review and may include a site inspection, if necessary. In some cases, the document review provides the Department with enough information to verify that a project is compliant.

Projects can be chosen for audit based on a random selection process or a risk-focused selection process. If your project is selected for an audit, you will be contacted by a Departmental officer who will explain the process. All audit report summaries are posted on the Department's website. The results of audits may also be publicised through the general media.

Further information

For further information on the compliance monitoring and auditing program, please visit the Department's website at www.environment.gov.au or contact:

The Director, Monitoring and Assurance Section
Department of the Environment and Energy
GPO Box 787 CANBERRA ACT 2601
Telephone: (02) 6274 1111
Email: EPBCmonitoring@environment.gov.au



