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Press release - Mining Act Assented

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PRESS RELEASE FROM THE PREMIER, MR. DUNSTAN.MINING ACT ASSENTED.

9/12/71.

The Mining Act, assented by Executive Council today, was a major step forward in mining legislation in Australia and the forerunner of new legislation in several other States, the Premier and Mines Minister, Mr. Dunstan, said today.

Although given the formal assent today the Act does not become law until proclaimed.

Mr. Dunstan said that Regulations setting out operational details under the Act were well advanced and that it should be possible to arrange for the proclamation of the Act early in the new year.

The major breakthrough which the Act achieved was the resumption of mineral rights to the Crown in many areas of the State in which such rights were previously privately owned.

Mr. Dunstan said that private ownership of minerals applied to land grants made prior to 1889 and was an historical anachronism.

However, the Act continued to recognise the interests of former owners of mineral rights by providing that the royalty on any minerals won from such land would be paid to the former owners.

The resumption of minerals by the Crown greatly simplified procedures for the granting of mineral exploration and mining rights and will be an encouragement to mineral development in this State.

"The Act also provides proper and adequate powers to ensure that exploration and mining are conducted with proper regard to the environment and the public interest including consideration of surface damage and restoration", the Premier said.

The Act's provision for a rehabilitation fund to cover restoration of quarry sites and sand pits was a unique development.

The fund would be built up from a royalty which will be payable on brick clays, sand and aggregate.

Operators would be eligible to apply for reimbursement from the fund to meet rehabilitation costs incurred in carrying out approved programmes outside the normal requirements of good quarry practice.