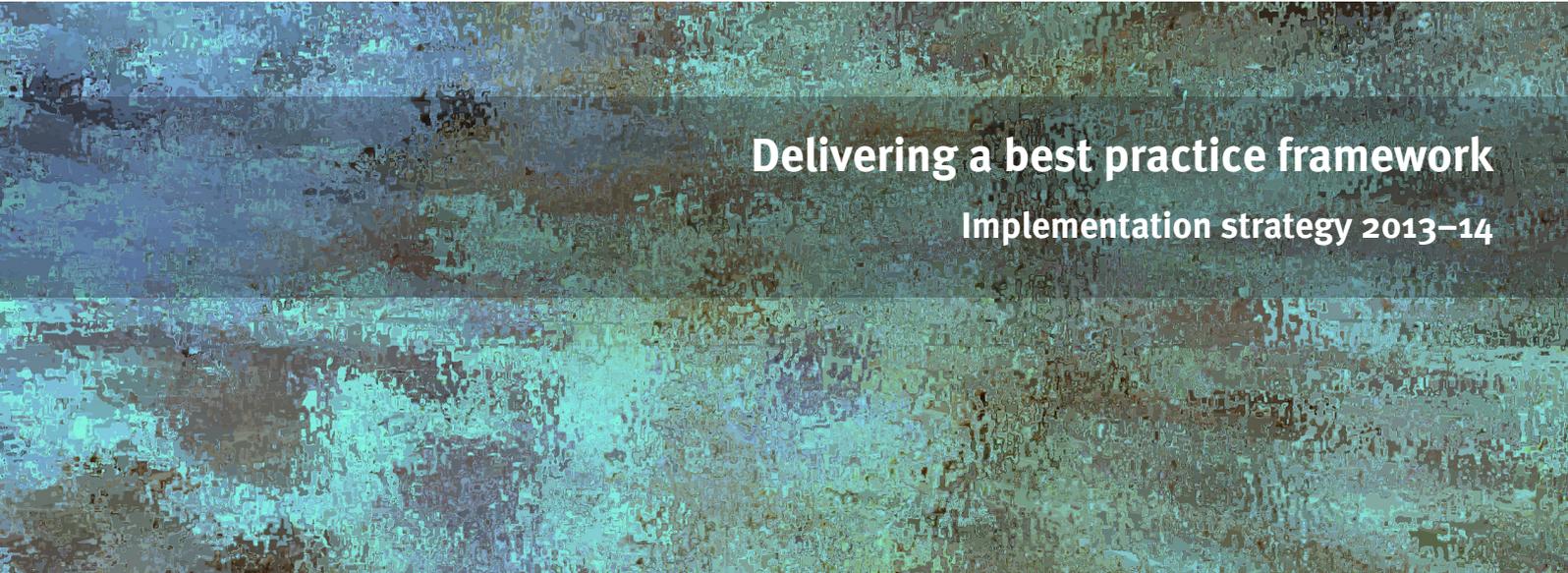




An action plan to recommence uranium mining in Queensland



Delivering a best practice framework
Implementation strategy 2013–14

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Executive summary

This implementation strategy outlines the key actions the Queensland Government will take to introduce a best practice policy framework for the recommencement of uranium mining in Queensland.

The strategy has been developed in response to a detailed report by the independent Uranium Mining Implementation Committee (UMIC) released in March 2013.

The government's response endorses the UMIC report's key finding that the environmental issues arising from uranium mining are similar to other forms of metalliferous mining.

These include surface water impacts from tailings dams; groundwater impacts; land clearing and mine site rehabilitation.

Given these similarities, the existing principles and basis of the State's legislative framework applicable to mining can be suitably applied to uranium activities.

The strategy is designed to deliver a considered framework containing necessary policy guidelines for assessing applications for uranium mining, transport and export. Completion of the uranium specific actions by July 2014 will ensure contemporary knowledge and skills within the state is developed and maintained as the industry develops.

Key elements of the framework

Regulatory efficiency and a robust assessment regime are critical for uranium activities, as approvals are required at both the state and federal level. The best practice regulatory framework will take account of all relevant issues across the uranium mining life cycle such as:

- whole of project assessments (including tenure management)
- safe handling and transport
- mine site safety and health
- environmental management
- native title.

When will uranium mining projects recommence

There are a number of variables that influence the timing of uranium mining operations and it is ultimately a commercial decision for industry proponents.

While the Queensland Government has committed to allowing uranium mining and is developing best practice compliance and approval processes, decisions by companies to then progress mining applications are based on project economics.

These include the price of uranium, market supply and demand for uranium, and mining costs. The government's focus is

ensuring all the necessary guidelines and policies are in place to assess applications from July 2014.

Restrictions on uranium exports

As the Queensland Government does not support nuclear energy production or waste disposal plants in Queensland, uranium extracted for the state must be exported for peaceful purposes only. Exports of uranium are only permitted to countries that have a bilateral safeguard arrangement with Australia. These arrangements set out conditions on the use of all uranium material that has been produced in Australia.

Key uses for uranium

Uranium exports have the potential to generate significant economic returns for Queenslanders over the next two decades, providing jobs and investment in rural and regional communities.

The UMIC report found that;

“uranium has two major peaceful uses: as the fuel in nuclear power reactors to generate electricity, and for the manufacture of radioisotopes for medical and other applications”.

Other uses for uranium include materials testing for numerous industries (eg. automotive, aircraft, construction, mining and oil) and space exploration (fuels). Uranium from Queensland has the potential to help service these important markets in the future.

Implementation structure and action plan

The implementation strategy and action plan addresses the recommendations made in the UMIC report and transitions these into actions based on four key policy areas for government, which include:

- regulatory framework
- project governance and stakeholder engagement
- capability and capacity building
- economic and community development.

The structure adopted highlights the nature of recommendations and actions that align with the four key policy areas and the issues that underpin activities to be undertaken (Figure 1).

The actions adopted provide policy certainty across all aspects of the uranium mining life cycle from exploration, production to rehabilitation. The aim is to have a considered framework in place for uranium mining by July 2014 to deliver contemporary best practice and strict environmental, safety and approval processes.

This approach will establish an operating environment that is clear and attractive for investment, building on Queensland's four pillar economy.

Implementation and delivery timetable

The implementation strategy (Attachment 1) addresses all 40 recommendations made in the UMIC report together with the government’s considered response, the outcomes expected and timing.

The Gantt chart (Figure 2 on page 8) provides timeframes for the completion of each group of actions for each key policy area to provide clarity on the timing and inter-relationship of the deliverables.

Implementation approach and project delivery

The implementation strategy provides a clear structure to guide effective delivery of key actions across the four key policy areas where government has an ongoing role.

For example, the actions associated with the first key policy area regulatory framework, will focus on:

- whole of project assessment (including tenure management)
- transport of uranium
- mine site safety and health
- environmental management
- native title.

The related actions for the other three key policy areas, that support and link to the overarching regulatory framework will focus on:

- project governance and stakeholder engagement
- capability and capacity
- economic and community development (including royalty structures).

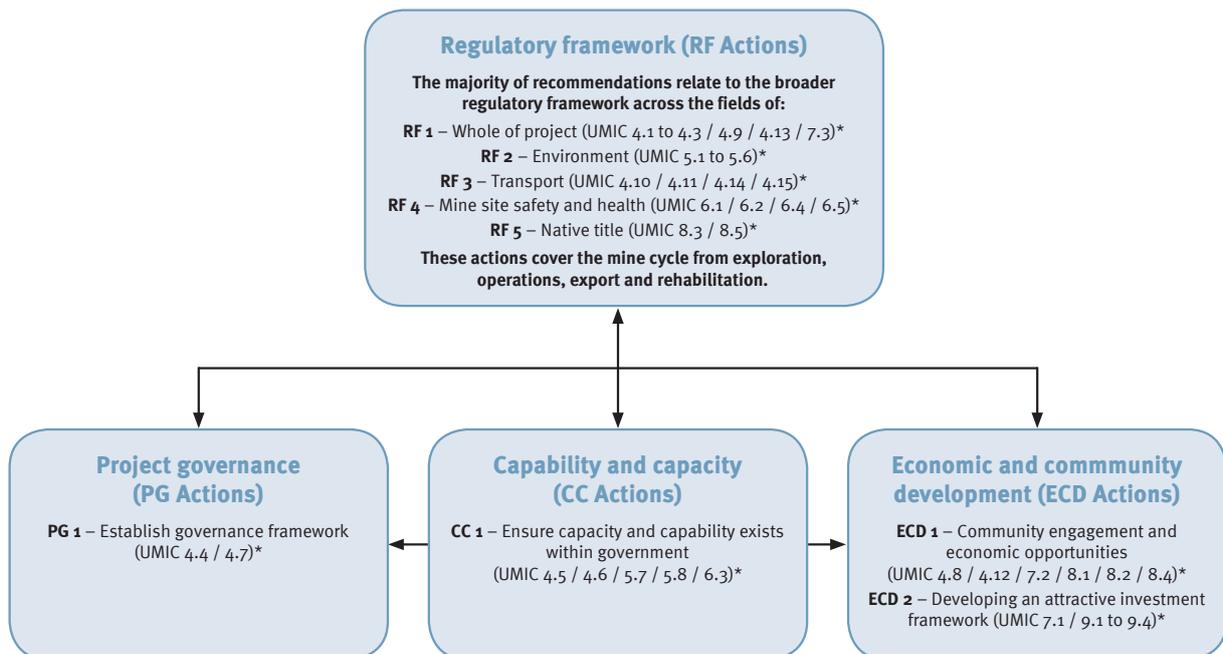
Legislative implications

There are no legislative provisions in Queensland expressly banning uranium activities in the state. The previous ban on uranium mining was policy based and enforced through the public interest provisions under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*. Consistent with the key UMIC finding that uranium mining is similar to other forms of metalliferous mines, it is expected there will be minimal impacts on legislation within Queensland to capture uranium activities in existing approval processes.

Budgetary implications

The required actions will be done within existing budget allocations and will not have significant budget impacts. The program of work to develop a best practice approvals framework does not involve large-scale legislative reform. The actions required focus on developing or updating policies and guidelines to support legislation.

Figure 1: Implementation structure



* Sections within the UMIC report

While the timing of the first uranium mine in Queensland is uncertain and principally driven by external market factors, future operational mines will have positive impacts on the Queensland economy and community. The resources sector has contributed significantly to social infrastructure and regional development and this will continue to be the case for uranium mining. Allowing uranium mining activities will lead to the establishment of a new royalty stream once operations commence.

Implementation oversight

An Uranium Mining Oversight Committee (UMOC) will review and monitor progress against the action plan and take a lead role on technical oversight issues, project governance and delivery timeframes.

Snapshot of key actions and priorities

- ensure uranium activities are managed in accordance with leading practice guidelines and regulations on key issues such as public health and workplace safety, radiation protection and safe handling, transport, potential water impacts, land and mine site management and rehabilitation
- uranium mining applications in Queensland (for at least the first two years) will be assessed via the 'coordinated projects' process under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act (SDPWOA)*
- develop clear policy guidance to define uranium mine proposals under the SDPWOA to clarify the regulatory and assessment requirements for industry
- base the development of the framework on expert technical advice, whether sourced locally or internationally
- review the guiding principles and emergency response practices underpinning effective radiation protection programs to determine whether they are sufficient and applicable to uranium
- allow for the use of external expertise on matters such as environmental management to supplement the in house expertise
- prepare mandatory and advisory materials to inform the updating of mine site safety and health guidelines to encourage world class management practise and risk management systems over the mining life cycle, including closure and rehabilitation
- facilitate the use of existing licensed ports and shipping lanes by industry
- enable transport inspectors to conduct appropriate compliance inspections of uranium transportation
- participate in long term studies and monitoring programs on radiation exposure and work with the Australian National Radiation Dose Register to ensure workers' exposure does not exceed acceptable levels
- complete an in-depth field assessment of the historic Mary Kathleen mine (which closed commercial operations

in 1982) to gain a better understanding of current environmental and safety issues including an assessment of its future uranium and rare earths potential

- ensure laws and policies aimed at encouraging mutually beneficial and respectful co-existence such as land access and strategic cropping land safeguards apply equally to uranium mining as they do currently to other types of resource activity. Apply consistent principles and policy arrangements for uranium activities across tenure, landholder rights, land access and compensation
- finalise the nature and shape of a charitable trust to support mine training and business development initiatives to engage indigenous Queenslanders and facilitate training, employment and business outcomes.

Further context on implementation priorities and actions

Further details about the government's considered response to recommendations made in the UMIC report is available at Attachment 1.

About the Queensland Government's response

Introduction and background

Between 1989 and 2012, a policy ban was applied to uranium mining in Queensland. The policy continued to allow exploration, however mining and production activities were prohibited.

This ban was removed on 22 October 2012, when the Queensland Government announced that it would support the recommencement of uranium mining activities in the state. However, this does not extend to the use of uranium for nuclear energy production and disposal of nuclear waste in Queensland.

Given the significant timeframes since the last uranium mining operation in Queensland, the government announced an independent Uranium Mining Implementation Committee. The role of the UMIC was to provide a report to government recommending a best practice policy framework for the orderly development and operation of a uranium mining and export industry in Queensland.

The UMIC was chaired by Councillor Paul Bell AM of the Central Highlands Regional Council. The five other members were:

- Ms Noeline Ikin, CEO Northern Gulf Resource Management Group
- Ms Frances Hayter, Environment Director, Queensland Resources Council (QRC)
- Dr Geoff Garrett AO, Queensland Government Chief Scientist
- Mr Dan Hunt, Director-General, Department of Natural Resources and Mines (DNRM)

- Mr Warren Mundine, a Director of the Australian Uranium Association, Indigenous leader and a former ALP National President.

UMIC's report to government

The UMIC undertook extensive research, invited submissions and conducted focused consultation as part of its review process to recommend a best practice framework for uranium in Queensland. It considered and consulted on matters relevant to the community, industry and the government across the uranium mining life cycle.

On 18 March 2013, the UMIC delivered its final report to the Queensland Government including a total of 40 recommendations for consideration in the delivery of a best practice policy framework to develop a uranium mining and export industry in Queensland.

Consideration of UMIC's report

Following receipt of the UMIC report, the Queensland Government established a Uranium Mining Inter-Departmental Committee (IDC) to develop the government's response. Led by DNRM, the IDC included representatives from the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP); Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR), Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP), Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA); and Queensland Health (QH).

The Queensland Government has considered UMIC's report and an implementation strategy has been developed to ensure effective delivery of the government's response. The implementation strategy covers outcomes expected on approvals processes; environmental standards; mine site safety and health; economic and community development; Indigenous opportunities and considerations; and resource royalties and charges.

The key finding of the UMIC report is that with certain adaptations, Queensland's existing robust system for regulating mining and radiation safety can accommodate uranium across the mining life cycle.

Summary of key UMIC report recommendations

The focus of each chapter of the UMIC report and recommendations considered in the government's response is summarised in attachments to this implementation strategy to highlight the key issues considered by government. For more information about the timetable for key actions and context for the government's response please refer to Attachment 1.

Each chapter of the UMIC report provides further background and context around the issues examined in the policy review exercise and is available from the DNRM website.

See Attachment 2 for a summary of key issues raised in each chapter of the UMIC report.

Alignment with Queensland Government priorities and commitments

As part of the government's response, the issues examined in the UMIC report and its recommendations have been aligned to a number of existing government priorities and commitments. This evaluation allows proper consideration of the intent of the UMIC report findings in a broader government context. As such, this will assist in achieving efficiencies and broader outcomes and benefits when implementing the recommendations.

Four pillar economy – the resources sector

The government has committed to creating a four pillar economy, which includes the resources sector. The decision to allow uranium mining in Queensland will contribute to strengthening the mining industry by facilitating an economic development activity that has not occurred in the state for over 30 years.

Regulatory reform in Queensland

The government is focused on decreasing the regulatory burden on business and community. A target to achieve a 20% reduction by 2018 has been set with a number of actions already underway to achieve this. This includes two initiatives referenced by the UMIC in its report to achieve an efficient uranium sector. These are:

- greentape reduction – implementing changes to the environmental management framework to introduce approval processes that are proportional to risk
- modernising Queensland's resources acts – reforming the legislative framework for resources to deliver efficiencies to industry, including modernising tenure administration.

Implementation actions and outcomes expected

The framework outlined in Figure 1 provides a clear process and structure to delivery key activities under the implementation plan.

Regulatory framework (RF)

A majority of the recommendations from the UMIC relate to the broader regulatory framework. For uranium mining, the Government has tailored implementation across the fields of whole project assessment (RF 1), environment (RF 2), transport (RF 3), mine site safety and health (RF 4), and native title (RF 5). These actions cover matters over the mine cycle from exploration, operations, export and rehabilitation. The numbers following each action highlights the specific UMIC recommendation to which the action responds to.

RF 1 – Whole of project

Outcome

Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- develop a policy position to define uranium mine proposals for the purposes of assessment under the SDPWOA, including requests to export from Queensland ports. An approvals chart will be developed and published to provide clarity to industry and community in the assessment process (UMIC report 4.1 and 4.13)
- prepare a letter from the Queensland Government to the relevant Australian Government Minister seeking to capture uranium activities in the bilateral assessment agreement. The Queensland Government will also seek discussions with the Australian Government on the bilateral arrangements and potential inclusion of uranium mining activities (UMIC report 4.2)
- improve regulatory efficiency within the office of the Coordinator-General by implementing a DSDIP action plan that will lead to business and process improvements in relation to its assessment processes (UMIC report 4.3)
- continue progressing the reform projects aimed at reducing red-tape (UMIC report 4.3)
- apply the same principles and frameworks for uranium activities across tenure, landholder rights, access and compensation (UMIC report 4.9 and 7.3).

RF 2 – Environment

Outcome

Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines, manage the environmental impacts consistently with contemporary outcomes-based standards as implemented by government on 1 July 2013.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- review outcome focussed mining conditions as part of standard operational practice of biennial reviews (UMIC report 5.1)
- DEHP to consider water quality impacts and adequacy of water management strategies during the assessment of proposed uranium mines as per outcomes-based standards (UMIC report 5.2)
- consider the Australian Government's leading practice guidelines and 'Australia's In Situ Recovery Uranium Mining Best Practice Guide: Groundwaters, Residues and Radiation Protection', during the assessment of proposed uranium mines (UMIC report 5.3)

- develop a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between DEHP and QH that recognises the potential for future uranium mining operations and provides opportunities for QH to provide advice in the assessment of mines (UMIC report 5.4)
- consider the recommencement of a uranium mining industry during the regular review of rehabilitation guidance material (UMIC report 5.5)
- apply the current arrangements for financial assurance for uranium mining. Reviews of these arrangements undertaken as part of standard operations will consider the recommencement of uranium mining (UMIC report 5.6).

RF 3 – Transport

Outcome

Provide a clear framework and promote efficiencies in the transport and export of uranium.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- as a member of the Australian Uranium Council, request consideration on the issue of harmonisation of transport and logistics across jurisdictions. In addition, TMR will investigate other existing committees to address the harmonisation issues (UMIC report 4.10)
- develop and capture the government's preference for uranium export to occur through existing licensed ports as part of a policy position to assess mine proposals under the SDPWOA (UMIC report 4.11)
- develop a MOU between TMR and QH to allow transport inspectors to conduct compliance inspections of uranium transport (UMIC report 4.14)
- review the guiding principles that underpin the radiation protection programs for the transport of radioactive material to determine whether the principles are applicable to uranium (UMIC report 4.15).

RF 4 – Mine site safety and health

Outcome

Ensure a robust framework is in place that supports safe and healthy mine site operations.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- continue to maintain DNRM as the lead agency for managing safety and health matters on mine sites, including uranium activities (UMIC report 6.1)
- revise the existing safety guideline (Queensland Guidance Note 12) for exploration and develop guidelines on mining, milling and processing after consultation with industry. The guidelines to be developed in line with national radiation principles targeted specifically at what managers within

mining organisations should do to protect the OHS of workers (UMIC report 6.2)

- through DNRM and QH, discuss and finalise the draft MOU currently under consideration that has provision for QH to provide expertise on radiation matters (UMIC report 6.4)
- liaise with the Australian Government to ascertain the timeframes for finalising the Australian National Radiation Dose Register (ANRDR) (UMIC report 6.5) to its proposed form.

RF5 – Native Title

Outcome

As with other mining processes, ensure the interests of Indigenous communities and native title rights are captured in assessment processes.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- apply statutory processes for Indigenous interests to uranium proposals as it does other resources (UMIC report 8.3)
- prepare correspondence to the Australian Government seeking to commence discussions on minimising the negotiation demands placed on Traditional Owner groups (UMIC report 8.5).

Project governance (PG)

PG1 – Project governance

Outcomes

Establish an appropriate governance framework that allows oversight of an emerging Queensland industry and provides clear opportunities for consultation and engagement.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- transition the role of the uranium mining IDC to the UMOC (UMIC report 4.4)
- through the UMOC, identify the initial priority areas that require the establishment of the UMSC. The UMOC will assist in the development of a terms of reference and appoint a chair of the UMSC (UMIC report 4.7).

Capability and capacity (CC)

CC1 – Capability and capacity

Outcomes

Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- through the UMOC, write to the Australian Government inviting membership on the Committee given its expertise in managing the environmental performance of uranium mining (UMIC report 4.5 and 4.6)

- prepare a scoping paper which considers the benefits of including the audit or evaluation of uranium mines as a regulatory function for auditors pursuant to section 568 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (UMIC report 5.7)
- through DEHP, continue with normal tendering processes which consider the use of technical expertise and services of the SSD (UMIC report 5.8)
- as part of standard business operations, continue to ensure that the expertise of government mines inspectors remains current through training as radiation safety officers for naturally occurring radioactive material naturally occurring radioactive material (UMIC report 6.3).

Economic and community development (ECD)

ECD1 – Facilitating community engagement and fostering economic opportunities

Outcome

Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- through the UMOC, have an ongoing role in community engagement and develop information material that can be utilised by the UMSC (UMIC report 4.8)
- led by DSDIP, work as a partner with uranium proponents to increase local companies' capability to meet the supply requirements of the uranium industry (UMIC report 4.12)
- continue to apply Royalties for the Regions for councils outside south-east Queensland (UMIC report 7.2)
- through the Department of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and Multicultural Affairs (DATSIMA), finalise the structure and operational framework for the 'mining training and business development initiative' that is to be delivered through a charitable trust (UMIC report 8.1)
- finalise the MOU between DATSIMA and the QRC to boost Indigenous economic participation in the resources sector (UMIC report 8.2)
- release "Toward Better Social Impact Management" Framework and associated social impact assessment guidelines. The new approach will result in tailored approaches for particular locations, including those with Indigenous communities (UMIC report 8.4).

ECD2 – Developing an attractive investment framework

Outcome

Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.

Supporting actions

The Queensland Government will:

- led by DNRM, incorporate uranium opportunities and rehabilitation requirements in the broader assessment of Mary Kathleen. DNRM will retain Restricted Area 232 over Mary Kathleen until rehabilitation requirements are known (UMIC report 7.1)
- led by Queensland Treasury and Trade, commence assessment of the Committee's royalty recommendations with a decision on an appropriate framework to be developed by the 2014-15 State Budget (UMIC report 9.1 to 9.3)
- apply existing cost recovery frameworks (including tenure, environmental application fees) to uranium as it is similar to other forms of metalliferous mines (UMIC report 9.4).

Legislative and budget considerations

Legislative implications

There are no legislative provisions in Queensland expressly banning uranium activities in the state. The previous ban on uranium mining was policy based and enforced through the public interest provisions under the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*. Additionally, Queensland's legislations for the resources industry are generally principle based and can already accommodate uranium within the regulatory systems from the exploration stage through to transport and export of uranium.

Specifically, analysis undertaken by the Queensland Government has determined that the following Queensland legislation provides the broad strategic framework to manage the uranium industry:

- *Aboriginal Land Act 1991*
- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2003*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1994*
- *Mineral Resources Act 1989*
- *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999*
- *Native Title Act 1993*
- *Nuclear Facilities Prohibition Act 2007*
- *Radiation Safety Act 1999*
- *State Development and Public Working Organisation Act 1971*
- *Torres Strait Islander Act 1991*

Consistent with the key UMIC report finding that uranium mining is similar to other forms of metalliferous mines, it is therefore expected that there will be minimal impacts on legislation within Queensland to capture uranium activities within existing approval processes. Assessment and consideration of uranium activities will largely be captured through the development of policies and guidelines that provide contemporary knowledge as opposed to establishing statutory requirements.

However, one area that may be subject to legislative amendment is the development of a royalty regime specific to uranium. Currently, uranium mining activities would fall within the broader category of mineral royalties under the current framework. The royalty rates for coal and all other minerals fall within the Mineral Resources Regulation 2003 (MRR). The outcomes of the government's detailed assessment of the UMIC's report royalty recommendations may require amendment to the MRR to capture any specific uranium royalties.

Budgetary impacts resulting from best practice framework

As highlighted in the previous section, the program of work to develop a best practice approvals framework does not involve large-scale legislative reform. The actions required to achieve this, focus on developing or updating policy materials to support legislation. Therefore, the Queensland Government anticipates that the actions are to be largely undertaken within existing budget allocations and will not have significant budget impacts.

Budgetary impacts from uranium mining operations

While the timing of the first uranium mine in Queensland is uncertain and principally driven by external market factors, future operational mines will have positive impacts on the Queensland economy and community. It is recognised that the resources sector has contributed significantly to social infrastructure and regional development and this will continue to be the case for uranium mining. Allowing uranium mining activities will lead to the establishment of a new royalty stream once operations commence.

Timeframes

The implementation plan charts the timeframes expected to complete each component as part of the overarching policy framework. Actions will be undertaken concurrently in most circumstances and selected action items may be delivered within the identified time. The timing provided relates to establishing a best practice framework for uranium activities and the actions specific to uranium to be undertaken to achieve this. Therefore, this does not include initiatives that are being undertaken as part of broader government business and of applicability beyond uranium policy and regulation. These projects, such as greentape reduction, land access review and regular standard operational reviews of guidelines will continue according to planned project timeframes for those initiatives.

Additionally, the timeframes proposed pertain to the delivery of actions within the direct influence of the Queensland Government. A limited number of actions require engagement with other jurisdictions and timings are dependent on the outcomes of this process.

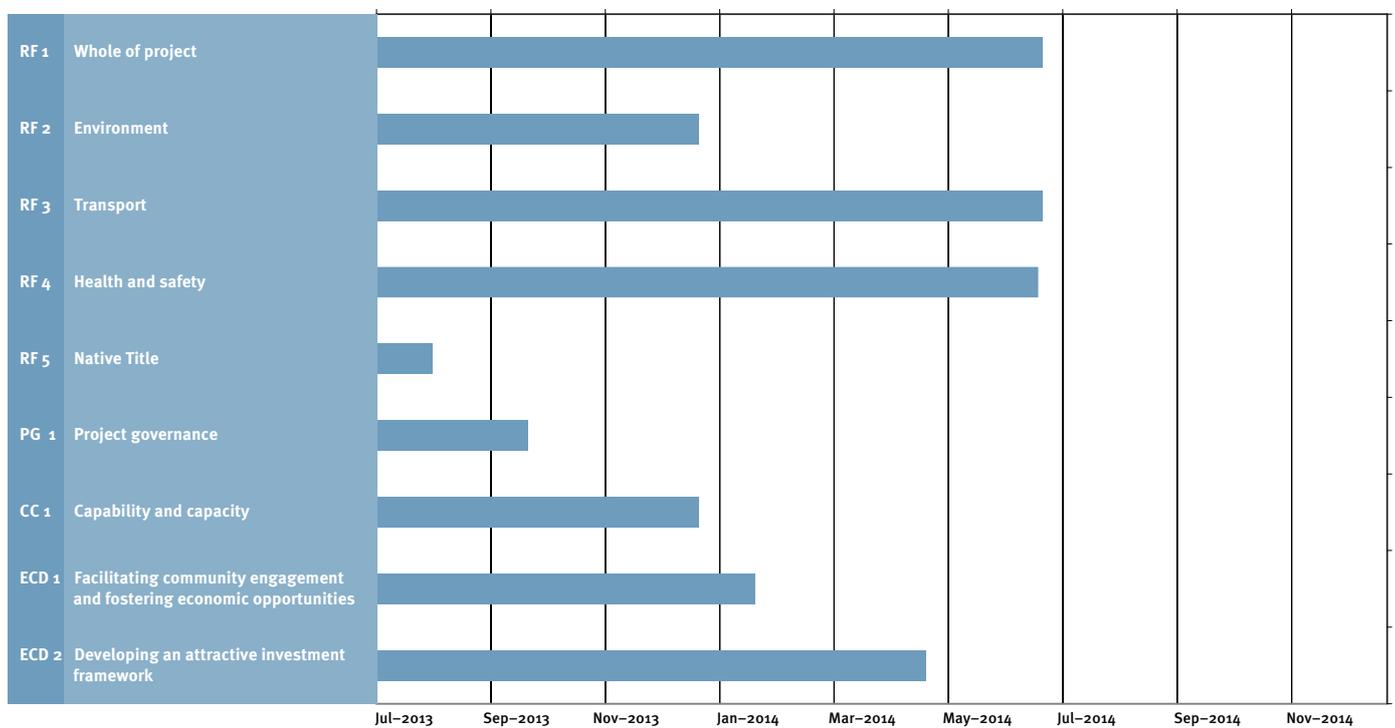
Review and performance

Delivery and ongoing monitoring of the Queensland Government's response will be led by the UMOC. The UMOC will review the progress of implementation on a quarterly basis following its first meeting.

Government response to UMIC recommendations

The detailed tables in Attachment 1 contain the government's response to all recommendations made by the UMIC. Included in the response is information on alignment with existing commitments and whether the outcome can be delivered through these activities.

Figure 2: Implementation timeframes



Attachment 1 – Table of government responses for each UMIC recommendation

Best practice approvals framework

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 4	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
4.1	The Queensland Government should establish a policy for all uranium mine proposals to be assessed by the Coordinator-General as a 'coordinated project' under the <i>State Development, Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i> (SDPWO Act), with the policy subject to review by the Resources Cabinet Committee once the process is established, but not before two years after the first proposal is received. If adopted, the Committee encourages the development of a detailed whole-of-government approvals chart to demonstrate the coordinated projects process to the industry and to demonstrate the rigour of the approvals process to the public.	DSDIP (Coordinator-General)	<p>The Queensland Government is committed to an efficient and robust assessment process. The coordinated project process is recognised as one that can provide certainty to industry and the community through detailed assessment for on and off-site uranium activities.</p> <p>This recommendation is endorsed and the Queensland Government will develop a policy that will require uranium mine proposals to be assessed through the Office of the Coordinator-General as a coordinated project. This will allow consideration and assessment of mining activities on site, through to export using a single process.</p> <p>The Office of the Coordinator-General has a detailed government approvals chart to demonstrate the coordinated projects process.</p>	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action The Queensland Government will develop a policy position to define uranium mine proposals for the purposes of assessment under the SDPWOA.</p> <p>Action An approvals chart will be developed and published to provide clarity to industry and community in the assessment process.</p>
4.2	The assessment of a uranium mine for the purposes of the <i>Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conversation Act 1999</i> (Cwlth) (EPBC Act) should be undertaken according to the bilateral agreement between the Queensland and Australian Governments. The Queensland Government should seek the agreement of the Australian Government to assess all uranium mining proposals in Queensland under this bilateral agreement.	DSDIP (Coordinator-General) and DEHP	<p>Beyond the coordinated projects process, other actions can be undertaken to provide efficiency in assessment. The recommendation to assess uranium mining applications under the Australian Government and Queensland Government bilateral agreement is endorsed.</p> <p>It is recognised that this requires significant consultation and support from the Australian Government. The Queensland Government will prepare correspondence to the relevant Australian Government Minister, to seek to commence discussions on this proposal.</p> <p>In addition, the existing review of the bilateral agreement being undertaken by the Queensland Government has been extended to consider uranium activities.</p>	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action Prepare a letter from the Deputy Premier and Queensland Minister for Environment to the relevant Australian Government Minister seeking to capture uranium activities in the bilateral assessment agreement.</p> <p>Action The Queensland Government will also seek discussions with the Australian Government on the bilateral arrangements and potential inclusion of uranium activities</p>
4.3	The Queensland Government should facilitate and attract investment from industry by providing an approvals process that is efficient and provides certainty regarding the expectations placed on industry. Therefore, along with assessing uranium mining proposals as 'coordinated projects', the Committee strongly supports initiatives such as the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection's (DEHP) Greentape Reduction project and the DNRMs' Streamlining Approvals project to enhance the efficiency of the approvals process while maintaining its rigour.	DSDIP (Coordinator-General) and DEHP	<p>This recommendation is endorsed as it is consistent with the government's commitment to a 20% reduction in red-tape by 2018. A number of initiatives are being undertaken relevant to the resources industry, which aligns with this commitment and ultimately provides more efficient approval processes for the resources industry.</p> <p>DSDIP is currently implementing an action plan that will lead to business and process improvements and efficiency gains in relation to its assessment processes within the Office of the Coordinator-General.</p> <p>DEHP is continuing implementation of the Greentape Reduction project and amendments to the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> with Environmental Protection Regulation 2008 commenced on 31 March 2013.</p> <p>DNRM is undertaking a new flagship legislative reform project to modernise Queensland's resources legislation to develop a contemporary and efficient framework.</p>	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action The Office of the Coordinator-General to implement the action plan that will lead to business and process improvements and efficiency gains in relation to its assessment processes.</p> <p>Action Continue progressing the reform projects that are being undertaken across government aimed at reducing red-tape.</p>

Best practice approvals framework

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 4	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
4.4	<p>A whole-of-government Uranium Mining Oversight Committee (UMOC) should be established to oversee uranium mining implementation, operations and rehabilitation in Queensland. This should include high-level membership from all relevant departments and be chaired by the DNRM training and business development initiative' Mines. The UMOC should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • guide the implementation of the recommendations in this report that are accepted by the Queensland government • provide advice to the Coordinator-General during the assessment process • oversee the compliance and performance of uranium mines during the operation and rehabilitation phases. <p>The Committee has recommended an indicative Terms of Reference for the UMOC in Appendix D.</p>	DNRM	<p>Given the significant timeframes since the last operational uranium mine, the Queensland Government acknowledges the need to have an entity overseeing uranium industry activity. Therefore, the establishment of an UMOC is endorsed.</p> <p>The current inter-departmental committee responsible for leading the government's response to the UMIC's report will transition its role to the UMOC, with DNRM to continue as chair.</p> <p>A Terms of Reference for the UMOC will be developed that considers the content proposed by the UMIC.</p>	PG 1	<p>Outcome Establish an appropriate governance framework that allows oversight of an emerging Queensland industry and provides clear opportunities for consultation and engagement.</p> <p>Timing The governance framework for uranium will be established in three months.</p> <p>Action Transition the role of the uranium mining IDC to the UMOC. A terms of reference identifying the group's role and responsibilities will be finalised following initial meetings of the UMOC.</p>
4.5	The Queensland Government should seek independent specialist advice to the UMOC, with expertise in managing the environmental performance of uranium mining.	DEHP	<p>The last operational uranium mine in Queensland, the Mary Kathleen mine, closed in the early 1980's. As a result, Queensland's regulatory agencies do not have contemporary expertise regulating uranium mining. The Queensland Government could leverage off the regulatory experiences of other jurisdictions, for example, the SSD, in regulating a nascent uranium mining industry in Queensland.</p> <p>The Queensland Government endorses the use of independent specialist advice to the UMOC.</p>	CC 1	<p>Outcome Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State.</p> <p>Timing Capability and capacity actions will be completed in six months.</p> <p>Action(s) The UMOC to write to the Australian Government inviting membership.</p> <p>Letter to be sent at a date relevant to the anticipated establishment of the UMOC (ref recommendation 4.4).</p>
4.6	The Queensland Government should approach the Australian Government on using the Supervising Scientist Division (SSD) for specialist advice.	DEHP	Endorsed as per recommendation 4.5 above.	CC 1	<p>Outcome Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State.</p> <p>Timing Capability and capacity actions will be completed in six months</p> <p>Action As per recommendation 4.5 above.</p>
4.7	The Queensland Government and industry should establish a Uranium Mining Stakeholder Committee (UMSC) that is supported by the UMOC. The UMSC should include representatives from local governments, Indigenous groups, industry, environment and natural resource management groups. The Committee has recommended indicative Terms of Reference for the UMSC in Appendix D (of the Committee report).	DNRM	<p>The proposal for an UMSC is endorsed and will be formed following the establishment of the UMOC. It is considered that the UMSC should be regionally specific with the UMOC appointing the chair for each regional group.</p> <p>The broader role of the UMSC and its interaction with the UMOC will be finalised through a terms of reference led by the UMOC.</p>	PG 1	<p>Outcome Establish an appropriate governance framework that allows oversight of an emerging Queensland industry and provides clear opportunities for consultation and engagement.</p> <p>Timing The governance framework for uranium will be established in three months.</p> <p>Action The UMOC will identify the initial priority areas that require the establishment of the UMSC. The UMOC will assist in the development of a terms of reference and appoint a chair of the UMSC.</p>

Best practice approvals framework

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 4	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
4.8	The UMOC should be responsible for ensuring that appropriate communication and education strategies are developed to inform the community about uranium mining. These strategies need to be developed in conjunction with industry and the Australian Governments expert agencies.	DNRM	This recommendation is endorsed and will be captured in the role and responsibilities of the UMOC in its terms of reference. Delivery of information material can be provided through the UMSC.	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013-14 financial year.</p> <p>Action The UMOC will have an ongoing role and develop information material that can be utilised by the UMSC.</p>
4.9	No changes are required to the current tenure framework as it is sufficiently robust and can capture uranium activities.	DNRM	<p>It is noted that the tenure framework and associated requirements under the <i>Mineral Resources Act 1989</i> can accommodate and are appropriate for uranium. Therefore, this recommendation is endorsed.</p> <p>Any changes to the tenure framework as part of the government's Modernising Queensland's Resources Acts program should deal with uranium in the same manner as other minerals.</p>	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action Apply the same principles and frameworks for uranium activities. No changes to the tenure framework that are specific to uranium will be made.</p>
4.10	The Queensland Government should work with the NT, SA and WA governments to establish an inter-state committee to oversee and harmonise transport and logistics associated with the uranium mining industry, including the mutual recognition of transport licences and the consideration of individual or company licensing of transport operators. The Australian Government should also be invited to attend this committee and it should also cooperate with the Uranium Council.	TMR	<p>This recommendation is endorsed. The Queensland Government led by the TMR will engage with inter-state agencies and proactively seek to address transport and logistic efficiencies for uranium across jurisdictions. All progress on these matters will be conducted in cooperation with the Uranium Council.</p> <p>Until transport efficiencies are addressed, the existing systems and processes will apply and are adequate for the transportation of uranium industry requirements.</p>	RF 3	<p>Outcome Provide a clear framework and promote efficiencies in the transport and export of uranium.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 3 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action TMR will engage with the Uranium Council and inter-state agencies in addressing these matter. The next steps will be dependent on the outcomes of these communications.</p>
4.11	The focus of Queensland's efforts should be on facilitating the use of existing ports and shipping lanes by industry for the export of uranium.	TMR	This recommendation is endorsed and the preference of the Queensland Government to utilise existing ports that are authorised to export uranium will be reflected in the coordinated projects policy position.	RF 3	<p>Outcome Provide a clear framework and promote efficiencies in the transport and export of uranium.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 3 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action As part of action 4.1, the policy position to be developed on assessment for uranium will capture the government's preference for uranium export to occur through existing licensed ports.</p>

Best practice approvals framework

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 4	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
4.12	As the uranium mining industry is unlikely to export uranium through Queensland ports, the Queensland Government should encourage these ports to seek additional business from the activity that uranium mining will present in terms of materials supply for construction and maintenance, and mining related goods.	DSDIP	<p>The Queensland Government supports opportunities for local industry as part of resource projects. Therefore, this recommendation is endorsed.</p> <p>The government has assisted in the development and supports the QRC led Code of Practice for Local Content, which sets the framework for encouraging local industry participation in resource projects. As this document relates to the resources and energy sector, it has direct applicability for uranium proponents.</p> <p>The Queensland Government also encourages local industry participation across the state on the development of major projects, not only for the importation of supply materials.</p>	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013-14 financial year.</p> <p>Action DSDIP will work as a partner with uranium proponents to increase local companies' capability to meet the supply requirements of the uranium industry.</p>
4.13	If the Queensland Government does receive a request to export uranium through a Queensland port, the request should be assessed by the Coordinator-General as a coordinated project and existing regulation for the transport and export of Class 7 Dangerous Goods (Radioactive Material) be applied.	DSDIP (Coordinator-General) / TMR	This recommendation is endorsed . The Queensland Government will develop a policy that will require port uranium export facilities to be assessed through the Office of the Coordinator-General as a Coordinated Project. Departments such as TMR are a referral agency under this process and will provide expertise during assessment.	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action As part of action 4.1, the Queensland Government will incorporate this matter in its development of a broader policy for the assessment of uranium proposals as a coordinated project under the SDPWOA.</p>
4.14	As part of streamlining the current regulatory process for uranium transportation, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) should be developed between Queensland Health and the Department of Transport and Main Roads (TMR) regarding transport compliance inspections.	TMR / QH	<p>This recommendation is endorsed. TMR and QH will discuss a MOU on transport compliance inspections of uranium. It is anticipated that the MOU would be regionally focused that clarifies aspects of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> regulation licenses training requirements resources requirements. 	RF 3	<p>Outcome Provide a clear framework and promote efficiencies in the transport and export of uranium.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 3 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action(s) TMR and QH to develop a MOU to allow transport inspectors to conduct compliance inspections of uranium transport.</p>
4.15	As radiation safety regulator, Queensland Health should develop and implement guiding principles for emergency response with the Australian Uranium Association specifically for Queensland, in a similar fashion to that undertaken by the Western Australian Government. Queensland Health should also conduct education and training for emergency workers regarding response and procedures for uranium emergency responses.	QH	<p>This recommendation is endorsed. Emergency response procedures are contained in existing approved radiation protection programs for transport of radioactive material. A modified set of guiding principles can be developed for uranium transport.</p> <p>It is recognised that local implementation via SES or similar volunteer groups will necessitate on-site training to be conducted once a mine has been established.</p>	RF 3	<p>Outcome Provide a clear framework and promote efficiencies in the transport and export of uranium.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 3 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action Review the guiding principles that underpin the radiation protection programs for the transport of radioactive material to determine whether the principles are applicable to uranium.</p>

Environmental impacts and protection

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 5	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
5.1	In line with the Queensland Government's commitment to develop outcome-focused model conditions for mining approvals, model conditions developed for Environmental Authorities (EA) should be reviewed for relevance to the uranium mining industry and where necessary model conditions specific to uranium mining should be developed. The model conditions for EAs should consider best practice environmental management and focus on achieving positive environmental outcomes rather than specifying prescriptive measures.	DEHP	<p>DEHP is developing standardised outcome-focused model conditions for mining approvals under the Premier's six month action plan (January to June 2013).</p> <p>The environmental impacts of uranium mining are similar to other metalliferous mines and therefore these conditions are considered to be relevant to the mining of uranium.</p> <p>Nevertheless, the Queensland Government endorses a review of these conditions as part of the standard operational process to ensure contemporary best practice. This review is not a priority, however, given that an environmental authority is an operational document and not required until the operational phase of a uranium mine is imminent. Based on approval timeframes in Western Australia, it is expected that the earliest a uranium mine would be operational in Queensland is 2015 and more likely 2017.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action Review outcome focussed mining conditions as part of standard operational practice. Review to be carried out between 1 July 2013 and 30 June 2015.</p>
5.2	The initial and operational planning stages of a uranium mine must consider the potential water quality impacts of mining and should specify how water quality will be protected during high rainfall events that may be expected during the life of a mine. Specific consideration should be given to the effects of climate change on the scale and frequency of rainfall events and the potential mobilisation of radionuclides that may impact on environmental values.	DEHP	<p>The standard criteria under the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> (EP Act) requires DEHP to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any relevant EIS or assessment report; • The character, resilience and values of the receiving environment; • The best practice environmental management for activities under an environmental authority. <p>The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation as it is already a statutory requirement under the EP Act.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action DEHP to consider water quality impacts and adequacy of water management strategies during the assessment of proposed uranium mines.</p>
5.3	The Australian Government's leading practice guidelines should be used to manage and minimise the risks associated with in situ recovery. Any proposed in situ recovery operation must be considered with regard to potential impacts on groundwater resources generally and the Great Artesian Basin particularly.	DEHP	<p>The standard criteria under the EP Act requires DEHP to consider: Any Commonwealth or State government plans, standards, agreements or requirements about environmental protection or ecologically sustainable development. The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation as it is already a statutory requirement under the EP Act.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action Consider the Australian Government's leading practice guidelines and Australia's In Situ Recovery Uranium Mining Best Practice Guide: Groundwaters, Residues and Radiation Protection during the assessment of proposed uranium mines.</p>

Environmental impacts and protection

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 5	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
5.4	<p>The MOU between DEHP and Queensland Health should be reviewed with the aims of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> recognising that uranium mining is likely to be conducted in Queensland in the future incorporating the expert advice of Queensland Health's Radiation Health Unit in the assessment and regulation of uranium mines in Queensland. 	DEHP and QH	<p>QH and DEHP deliver services that are often closely aligned. There is a risk that some services may therefore be duplicated or overlooked. These services include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Health and environmental impacts from industrial and mining operations; Health and environmental impacts from contaminated land; Environmental values and the impact of the environment on public health. <p>On 15 November 2007 a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) was signed between the (then) Environmental Protection Agency and QH. This MOU expired on 15 November 2012.</p> <p>The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation to ensure a seamless delivery of services between DEHP and QH noting that uranium mining considerations represent only one aspect of a broader MOU between DEHP and QH.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action Develop a MOU between DEHP and QH that recognises the potential for future uranium mining operations and provides opportunities for QH to provide advice in the assessment of mines (5.4)</p>
5.5	DEHP should review uranium mining rehabilitation guidance material with particular consideration to the need for rehabilitation goals, objectives and completion criteria specific to uranium mining.	DEHP	<p>DEHP is currently reviewing rehabilitation guidance material and this will be conducted to ensure material produced is relevant to uranium mining.</p> <p>The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation consistent with the review that has already commenced.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action DEHP to consider the recommencement of a uranium mining industry during the review of rehabilitation guidance material.</p>
5.6	The normal financial assurances for mine rehabilitation should be applied to the uranium industry.	DEHP	<p>DEHP is currently reviewing the financial assurance arrangements for the mining industry including uranium mining. The review will consider the recommencement of uranium mining in Queensland.</p> <p>DEHP agrees that the current arrangements for financial assurance are relevant to uranium mining. The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation.</p>	RF 2	<p>Outcome Ensure that uranium activities, similar to other forms of metalliferous mines manage the environmental impacts consistent with contemporary standards.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 2 specific to uranium will be completed within six months.</p> <p>Action DEHP to apply current arrangements for financial assurance for uranium mining.</p> <p>Action Review of the financial assurance arrangements to consider the recommencement of uranium mining in Queensland.</p>

Environmental impacts and protection

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 5	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
5-7	Third party auditors should be used to augment the in-house expertise of regulators in Queensland.	DEHP	<p>Greentape amendments to the EP Act provide for functions that an auditor may carry out including, audit or evaluate (another) matter or thing prescribed under a regulation and prepare a report or certification about the audit or evaluation.</p> <p>There are currently no functions prescribed pursuant to this use of auditors however one may be to carry out audits of uranium mines.</p> <p>DEHP is currently preparing a scoping paper for functions that may benefit from the use of an auditor system. The Queensland Government endorses that DEHP consider the use of auditors to carry out audits of uranium mines as part of this scoping paper.</p>	CC 1	<p>Outcome Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State.</p> <p>Timing Capability and capacity actions will be completed in six months.</p> <p>Action Prepare a scoping paper which considers the benefits of including the audit or evaluation of uranium mines as a regulatory function for auditors pursuant to section 568 of the EP Act.</p>
5-8	The Queensland Government, third party auditors and industry should consider using the technical expertise and services of the SSD.	DEHP	<p>DEHP already enables industry (including auditors) to source appropriate expertise from commercially available sources. This would include the services of the SSD if they are commercially available.</p> <p>DEHP often uses external technical expertise to augment in house expertise. This could include the services commercially available from the SSD.</p> <p>The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation pending relevant tendering processes for government business.</p>	CC 1	<p>Outcome Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State.</p> <p>Timing Capability and capacity actions will be completed in six months.</p> <p>Action DEHP to continue with normal tendering processes which consider the use of technical expertise and services of the SSD.</p>

Mine site safety and health

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 6	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
6.1	The Queensland Government should continue to oversee health and safety on uranium mine sites through the existing mining legislation as it provides a workable framework for the safe and healthy operation of uranium mining.	DNRM	This recommendation is endorsed as uranium mining is similar to other forms of metalliferous mines. DNRM as the responsible department administering the <i>Mining Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999</i> (MQSHA) for mine site activity, considers the risk based approach adopted is suitable in its application for uranium. While the framework is appropriate for uranium mining, a collaborative approach across government is encouraged in order to foster effective management of activities as a result of the timeframes since the last uranium operation.	RF 4	Outcome Ensure a robust framework is in place that supports safe and healthy mine site operations. Timing An updated mine site health and safety framework for uranium will delivered by December 2014. Action DNRM to continue as the lead agency for managing safety and health matters on mine sites, including uranium activities.
6.2	The Queensland Government should update its safety guidelines for industry by drafting three documents based on Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Agency guidelines (containing mandatory and advisory actions) on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • exploration (based on the current guidance note QGN12) • uranium mining • uranium milling and ore processing operations. 	DNRM	The Queensland Government acknowledges that while the MQHSA can provide a framework for managing safety and health of uranium activities, contemporary guidance material is required following the removal of the ban. Therefore, this recommendation is endorsed .	RF 4	Outcome Ensure a robust framework is in place that supports safe and healthy mine site operations. Timing An updated mine site health and safety framework for uranium will delivered by December 2014. Action Revise QGN12 and develop guidelines on mining, milling and processing after consultation with industry. The guideline content will be in line with international and national radiation principles and is targeted specifically at what managers within mining organisations should do to protect the occupational health and safety of workers. Action DNRM is liaising with QH in relation to a draft MOU which it has prepared and will finalise the document following consultation. The MOU has provision for QH to input into these documents and DNRM will call upon internal expertise (see 6.4).
6.3	Selected mines inspectors should undertake training as radiation safety officers for naturally occurring radioactive material (NORM), so they can conduct proportionate and consistent assessments of radiation management plans and provide technical advice regarding radiation safety in mining.	DNRM	This recommendation is endorsed and has been completed. DNRM has internal expertise for mine-related radiation matters and will continue to ensure these skills remain current.	CC 1	Outcome CC 1 Develop contemporary capacity and capability within government to manage an emerging uranium industry in the State. Timing Capability and capacity actions will be completed in six months. Action Continue to ensure that internal expertise remains current as part of standard business operations.
6.4	Queensland Health and DNRM should continue to develop their collaborative approach by way of a formal MOU. Consideration should be given to forming a regulator working group operating under an MOU.	DNRM and QH	This recommendation is endorsed . The Queensland Government notes that there is significant expertise in managing radiation related matters across DNRM and QH.	RF 4	Outcome RF 4 Ensure a robust framework is in place that supports safe and healthy mine site operations. Timing An updated mine site health and safety framework for uranium will delivered by December 2014. Action DNRM is liaising with QH in relation to a draft MOU which it has prepared and will finalise the document following consultation. The need for a regulator working group will be considered by the UMOC as this is the responsible group for providing general oversight.

Mine site safety and health

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 6	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
6.5	<p>The Queensland Government should fully support the use of the Australian National Radiation Dose Register (ANRDR), including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • submission of occupational radiation exposure data from all Queensland uranium mining operations to the ANRDR • efforts to expand the ANRDR scheme to cover all workers in Australian mining operations involving occupational exposure to naturally occurring radioactive substances, however categorised (i.e. uranium, NORM, mineral sands or rare earth mining, etc). <p>The Queensland Government should also devise an internal state monitoring regime to ensure that radiation risks from naturally occurring radioactive materials are kept within acceptable levels in Queensland.</p>	DNRM and QH	<p>The recommendation to support the use of the ANRDR is endorsed and information on radiation exposure will be supplied once uranium mining operations commence in Queensland. Full implementation of this action is reliant on the Australian Government completing the development of the ANRDR to its final proposed form.</p> <p>A draft MOU prepared by DNRM is currently with QH for consideration. Overall management of radiation from minerals during exploration, mining, processing and transporting on or at mine sites is clearly detailed in the current mines' legislation.</p>	RF 4	<p>Outcome RF 4 Ensure a robust framework is in place that supports safe and healthy mine site operations.</p> <p>Timing An updated mine site health and safety framework for uranium will be delivered by December 2014.</p> <p>Action Liaise with the Australian Government to ascertain the timeframes for expanding the ANRDR to its final proposed form.</p>

Economic and community development

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 7	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
7.1	<p>The Queensland Government should continue investigations into the redevelopment of Mary Kathleen. In addition to the commitment to pursue rare earths, these investigations should consider the opportunities for producing uranium as a byproduct of rare earths production, and the possibility of including rehabilitation requirements as part of any tender process to release tenure.</p>	DNRM	<p>In December 2012, the Queensland Government announced that it was assessing the potential for future rare earths development at the Mary Kathleen site, including associated site safety and environmental issues.</p> <p>The Queensland Government endorses the UMIC's recommendation and incorporated uranium opportunities in the assessment of the site.</p> <p>As the first step of this process, DNRM is currently leading a field study at the site to confirm the current environmental condition and geology and mineralogy at the site. An improved understanding of the site will inform the way forward in terms of rehabilitation at the site and any potential future tender process.</p> <p>The area will continue to be subject to restricted area 232, which prohibits exploration and production tenure.</p>	ECD 2	<p>Outcome Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.</p> <p>Timing Actions under ECD 2 will be completed by the 2014-15 State Budget.</p> <p>Action The Queensland Government led by DNRM will incorporate uranium opportunities and rehabilitation requirements in the broader assessment of Mary Kathleen.</p>
7.2	<p>The Queensland Government should investigate extending the Royalties for Regions (R4R) program to those areas where uranium mines may be developed.</p>	DSDIP	<p>This recommendation is endorsed as the Queensland Government has extended the R4R program to all regional councils outside south-east Queensland.</p>	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013-14 financial year.</p> <p>Action No further action required as R4R has been extended to councils outside south-east Queensland.</p>

Economic and community development

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 7	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
7.3	The current framework of compensation rights to landholders and the protection of prime agricultural land from mining should be maintained as it is appropriate for the recommencement of uranium mining. The UMOC should inform and educate landholders regarding this framework.	DNRM	<p>The Queensland Government acknowledges that these frameworks are principle based and suitably appropriate for uranium mining given the UMIC's findings. This recommendation is endorsed.</p> <p>With respect to its applicability to the implementation of the six point action plan following the land access review, the government considers that any amendments to the framework continue to consider uranium in the same manner as other resource activities.</p>	RF 1	<p>Outcome Deliver a robust, considered and clear process for project assessment that provides certainty and clarity to the industry while building confidence in the community.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 1 specific to uranium will be completed within 12 months.</p> <p>Action Apply the same principles and frameworks for uranium activities. No actions required by DNRM that are specific to uranium.</p>

Opportunities and considerations for indigenous Queenslanders

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 8	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
8.1	The Queensland Government should establish a 'mining training and business development initiative' for Indigenous Queenslanders in cooperation with industry to address the barriers preventing Indigenous people from taking full advantage of the jobs on offer in the resources sector. This could potentially be in the form of a charitable trust arrangement which could provide a sustainable source of funding for projects which support training, employment and business development outcomes. A proposal for this trust arrangement is outlined in Appendix E (of the UMIC report).	DATSIMA	<p>The Queensland Government recognises the potential opportunities associated with the mining training and business development initiative, which extend beyond the scope of uranium activities. As such, this recommendation has been endorsed and also the proposal to deliver this initiative through a charitable trust.</p> <p>DATSIMA has commenced investigations into establishing a trust, including engaging independent legal advice.</p>	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013–14 financial year.</p> <p>Action Finalise the structure and operational framework for the trust.</p>
8.2	The Queensland Government should continue negotiations with the Queensland Resources Council on an updated MOU which outlines agreed priorities for increasing Indigenous economic participation in the resources sector, including those suitable for support by a charitable trust, as well as those more appropriately implemented directly by government or industry.	DATSIMA	The recommendation is endorsed . DATSIMA is in advanced stages of negotiations with the QRC for an MOU to boost Indigenous economic participation in the resources sector.	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013–14 financial year.</p> <p>Action Finalise the MOU between DATSIMA and the QRC.</p>

Opportunities and considerations for indigenous Queenslanders

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 8	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
8.3	The Queensland Government should not substantially differentiate uranium from other significant resource projects in the application of statutory processes related to Indigenous interests.	DNRM / DATSIMA	This recommendation is endorsed as the Queensland Government agrees that the existing processes can adequately capture uranium activities. Negotiations are site-specific and detailed considerations occur through this process.	RF 5	<p>Outcome As with other mining processes, ensure the interests of Indigenous communities and native title rights are captured in assessment processes.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 5 specific to uranium will be completed by 1 September 2013.</p> <p>Action Apply the same principles and frameworks for uranium activities with respect to statutory processes related to Indigenous interests. No further action required specific to uranium.</p>
8.4	The Queensland Government should consider how any future changes to the social impact assessment process can encourage greater consistency, transparency and alignment with government programs in the management of social impacts for Indigenous communities.	DSDIP	This recommendation is endorsed . DSDIP is working with the Coordinator General and across government agencies to develop a more focussed and robust Social Impact Assessment (SIA) process, that will encourage more consistent and transparent processes, and that aligns more closely with other government programs. This approach is reflected in Toward Better Social Impact Management Framework and associated SIA Guidelines and will result in tailored approaches for different locations, including those with Indigenous communities.	ECD 1	<p>Outcome Establish clear avenues for community participation and align benefits of uranium activities with regional development and economic opportunities for Indigenous Queenslanders.</p> <p>Timing The actions under ECD 1 will be completed by the third quarter of the 2013–14 financial year.</p> <p>Action Release Toward Better Social Impact Management Framework and associated SIA guidelines. The new approach will result in tailored approaches for particular locations, including those with Indigenous communities.</p>
8.5	The Queensland Government should advocate for the Australian Government to examine measures that minimise demands placed on Traditional Owner groups created by negotiating with multiple mining companies under Commonwealth laws.	DNRM	The Queensland Government endorses this recommendation. DNRM as the relevant department that administers the <i>Native Title (Queensland) Act 1993</i> will liaise with the Australian Government to determine whether actions can be undertaken to streamline the negotiation process to minimise the demands placed on Traditional Owner groups.	RF 5	<p>Outcome RF 5 As with other mining processes, ensure the interests of Indigenous communities and native title rights are captured in assessment processes.</p> <p>Timing The actions under RF 5 specific to uranium will be completed by 1 September 2013.</p> <p>Action DNRM to prepare correspondence with the Australian Government seeking to commence discussions on this matter.</p>

Resource royalties and charges

Rec No.	UMIC report recommendation Chapter 9	Responsible agency	Government response	Ref No.	Outcomes and timing
9.1	A competitive royalty rate of 5 per cent should be introduced for uranium which is consistent with other states.	Queensland Treasury and Trade	<p>The Queensland Government acknowledges the need to provide a competitive royalty rate for industry while ensuring an appropriate return for a finite state resource.</p> <p>The development of a royalty regime requires substantial analysis and the Queensland Government will undertake further assessment of this recommendation and make a final decision in the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>	ECD 2	<p>Outcome Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.</p> <p>Timing Actions under ECD 2 will be completed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p> <p>Action Commence assessment of the UMIC's royalty recommendations with a decision on an appropriate framework to be developed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>
9.2	A higher stepped royalty rate should be investigated by Queensland Treasury and Trade that could come into force when market prices for uranium are very high.	Queensland Treasury and Trade	<p>The Queensland Government acknowledges the need to provide a competitive royalty rate for industry while ensuring an appropriate return for a finite state resource.</p> <p>The development of a royalty regime requires substantial analysis and the Queensland Government will undertake further assessment of this recommendation and make a final decision in the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>	ECD 2	<p>Outcome Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.</p> <p>Timing Actions under ECD 2 will be completed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p> <p>Action Commence assessment of the UMIC's royalty recommendations with a decision on an appropriate framework to be developed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>
9.3	The Queensland Government should consider a 'new mine' concessional royalty rate of 2.5 per cent, regardless of the price of uranium, for the first five years of each new mine's life.	Queensland Treasury and Trade	<p>The Queensland Government acknowledges the need to provide a competitive royalty rate for industry while ensuring an appropriate return for a finite state resource.</p> <p>The development of a royalty regime requires substantial analysis and the Queensland Government will undertake further assessment of this recommendation and make a final decision in the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>	ECD 2	<p>Outcome Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.</p> <p>Timing Actions under ECD 2 will be completed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p> <p>Action Commence assessment of the UMIC's royalty recommendations with a decision on an appropriate framework to be developed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p>
9.4	The usual cost recovery mechanisms applicable in Queensland should be applied to uranium, including tenure and environmental authority application fees, rent and the safety and health levy. Any additional assessment or monitoring costs as a result of uranium mining should be recovered from industry.	DNRM / DEHP	This recommendation is endorsed as the administrative requirements will not significantly differ from other forms of mining.	ECD 2	<p>Outcome Establish an attractive investment environment in Queensland that facilitates opportunities for industry, but also balances the need for an appropriate return to the state and community.</p> <p>Timing Actions under ECD 2 will be completed by the 2014–15 State Budget.</p> <p>Action No further action required specific to uranium.</p>

Attachment 2 – Summary of key UMIC report recommendations

Best practice approval processes for Queensland (UMIC Chapter 4)

Coordinator-General approvals process for production

The UMIC provided a series of recommendations across the uranium mining cycle to achieve a robust yet efficient assessment process. The Queensland Government considers that regulatory efficiency is critical for uranium activities, as approvals are required at both the state and Australian Government level.

With respect to state approvals to undertake production activities, it was noted that the Queensland Government's 'coordinated projects' process under the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* can achieve this outcome. This process was recommended to government on the basis that it can coordinate approvals across various pieces of legislation (for example, the *Mineral Resources Act 1989*, *Environmental Protection Act 1994* and *Sustainable Planning Act 2009*). This allows for consideration of development that may occur both on and off a mining lease and the holistic approach retains flexibility to deal with Australian Government approvals.

Given this finding, it was recommended that all uranium proposals (for at least two years) be assessed through the Coordinator-General, within the Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning (DSDIP). The UMIC suggested that further efficiencies can be achieved if the Queensland Government seeks agreement of the Australian Government to assess all uranium mining proposals in the state according to the bilateral agreement between governments. This would ensure that environmental approvals processes are not duplicated and assessment responsibility would be delegated to Queensland. The bilateral agreement continues to require approval by the Australian Government.

Government oversight and consultation

With a period of over 30 years since the last operating uranium mine in Queensland (Mary Kathleen closed in 1982), the UMIC noted that a process to ensure the orderly oversight and reintroduction of uranium mining in Queensland is needed. It proposed a whole-of-government Uranium Mining Oversight Committee (UMOC) be formed to manage the implementation, operation and rehabilitation of activities in Queensland.

While the technical oversight would be the responsibility of the UMOC, the UMIC determined that a separate group should be established given the community perceptions and concerns associated with uranium. Consequently, a Uranium Mining Stakeholder Committee (UMSC) was proposed, which is intended to be responsible for providing appropriate communication and education materials to address these concerns. The UMIC suggested that the UMSC include a number

of representatives (for example, environmental organisations and indigenous groups) outside the Queensland Government to provide a conduit between community, industry and government. External representation was proposed to provide a level of independence during engagement with the community.

Transport and export

Queensland Health (QH) currently has the prime responsibility for managing radiation safety associated with the transport of radioactive material. This can include the transport of uranium. The report did not recommend a departure from this approach. As such, the focus of the UMIC's discussion sought to streamline processes and update guidance material to include uranium activities.

The major recommendations for transport and export relate to facilitating transport and shipping of uranium through existing licensed ports: the Ports of Darwin and Adelaide. These are the only ports in Australia permitted to export uranium. The relatively small quantities of uranium expected to be exported from Queensland mines and the complexity and cost in licensing a port to export uranium are unlikely to result in commercially viable shipping routes through existing Queensland ports. The UMIC stated that any future proposals to export through Queensland ports should be assessed as a coordinated project and through existing regulation for dangerous goods.

Environmental impacts and protection (UMIC Chapter 5)

Research undertaken by the UMIC identified that the environmental considerations for uranium mining are comparable to other metalliferous mining operations. Of particular relevance to government, no changes were proposed to the environmental management framework prescribed under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. Rather than legislative amendment, the UMIC stated that approvals should be outcome-based as opposed to setting prescriptive operational requirements. This forms part of DEHP's Regulatory Strategy and a set of outcome-based standards were delivered by government on 1 July 2013. These new environmental standards will transition the approvals process from prescriptive conditioning that focuses on the process to one that focuses on what should be achieved from an environmental protection perspective.

Beyond this, the UMIC noted that there are mining specific activities that require government attention. These include potential water quality impacts, appropriate coverage of radiation protection and ensuring rehabilitation guidance material reflects best practice. It was recommended to government that this should be supported by the appropriate technical expertise and third party auditors, where necessary.

Safety and health requirements (UMIC Chapter 6)

Chapter 6 of the report covers mine site safety and health issues, and for government, the areas of focus should relate to ensuring contemporary standards for safety and health requirements.

While existing mine safety and health regulatory frameworks are in place that can be applied to the uranium mining cycle, the government's assessment of the chapter and recommendations has identified that there are numerous national and international publications that can be used to develop mandatory and advisory material in Queensland for all stakeholders.

In addition, the Queensland Government also considers that managing radiation issues on mine sites is critical. This was raised as an issue by the UMIC. An area of significant concern is the management of radiation in the longer term. It was recommended that Queensland should develop a regime specifically for mine sites that monitors low levels of radiation exposure over the long term while also participating in the Australian National Radiation Dose Register. This allows continued monitoring so that workers' exposure to radiation does not exceed acceptable levels.

Economic and community development (UMIC Chapter 7)

Mary Kathleen tender release

While the UMIC noted that there are a limited number of actions the government can undertake to encourage market demand for uranium, the tender release of the Mary Kathleen mine site represents one distinct opportunity. The government notes that it has previously announced the intent to assess the economic potential of its release for rare earths, including a number of site safety and environmental issues. However, the UMIC stated that further economic and environmental outcomes may be achieved by expanding the scope of the potential release to include uranium.

Social impacts and compensation

The report details concerns voiced to the UMIC during the consultation process. These concerns primarily relate to social impacts, land-use conflict and compensation frameworks for uranium mining. Stakeholders queried the UMIC on the impacts of mining generally and those that may be specific to uranium.

Of significance to the government, the UMIC reported that the existing social impact and compensation frameworks (such as the EIS process and land access) can appropriately capture uranium activities as they are not resource specific. The UMIC did not raise any particular issues from uranium that would require additional consideration within these policies. As such, a recommendation was provided that stated that these frameworks should apply to uranium activities in the same manner as other resource activities.

However, the UMIC noted that the Royalties for Regions (R4R) initiative represents an opportunity to achieve social and regional outcomes. R4R helps to ensure that communities hosting resource developments also receive long-term benefits. Only a limited number of local governments with known uranium deposits were eligible for funding in the 2012-13 pilot round. An extended R4R scope would contribute to regional development for those communities that are impacted by future uranium mines.

Opportunities and considerations for Indigenous Queenslanders (UMIC Chapter 8)

The UMIC's major focus for this chapter relates to the creation of employment opportunities and realising community benefits from the uranium industry for Indigenous Queenslanders. A key recommendation to government is to develop a mining and business development initiative that could be in the form of a charitable trust.

Other issues that were brought to the attention of the UMIC include the impacts resulting from the uranium industry on the environment (affecting traditional hunting grounds and bush tucker) and human health. From these concerns, the government recognises that the UMIC's conclusion was that these issues can be addressed through existing approvals processes.

Resource royalties and charges (UMIC Chapter 9)

An appropriate royalty for the uranium industry is crucial to ensuring that industry is able to operate in a competitive environment while achieving an appropriate return to the state. To achieve this, the UMIC recommended that the Queensland Government set a royalty rate of 5 per cent for uranium, consistent with other states.

It was also suggested to government that due to current market conditions and to facilitate initial industry activity, it should apply a concessional royalty rate during the early years of the reestablishment of the uranium industry in Queensland. The UMIC stated that Queensland Treasury and Trade could investigate a higher royalty when uranium prices are particularly high.

