



# SQLRG – Mine Closure And Compliance With Regulations

Chris Wake – Manager Environmental Services  
Department of Environment and Science

# Presentation covers 3 main topic areas:

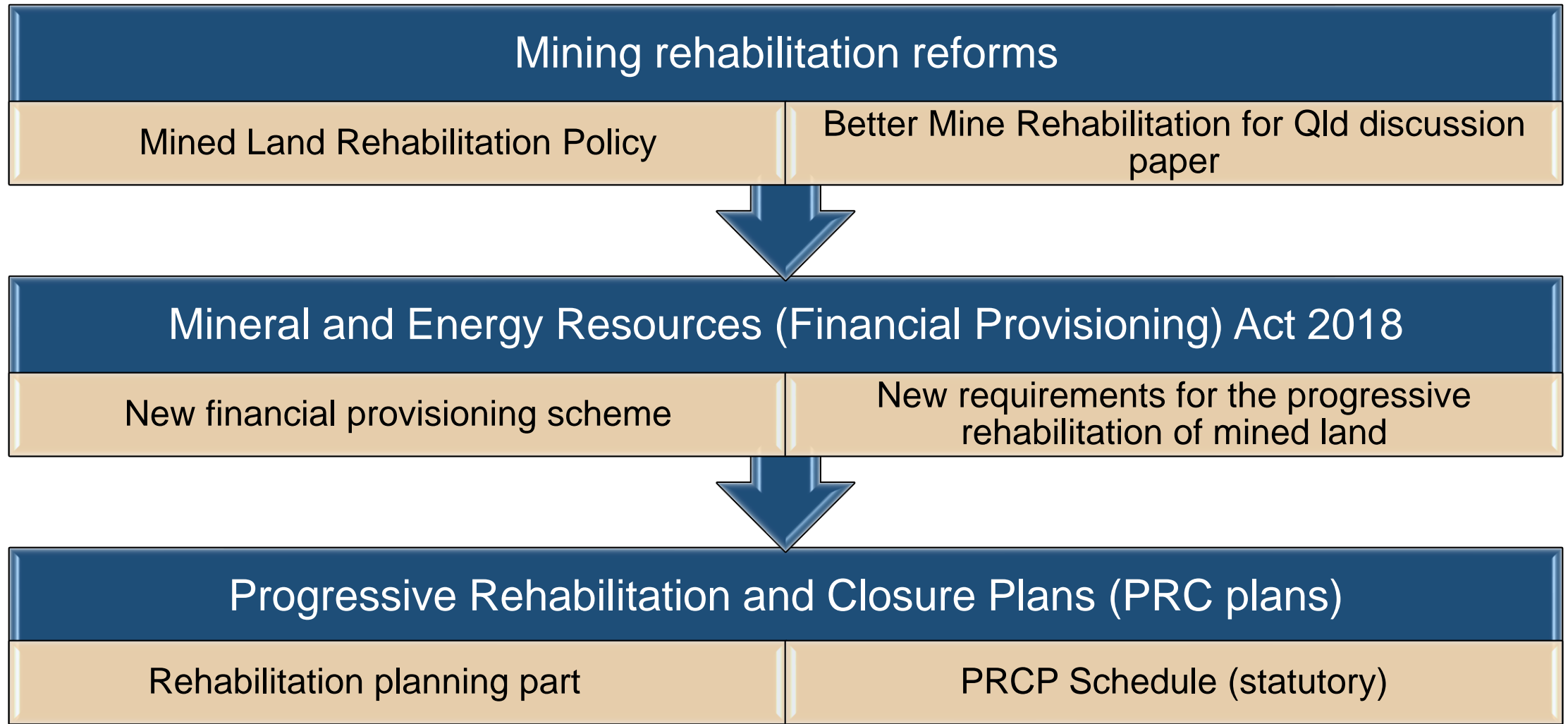
- Overview and update on PRCP requirements
- Overview of the assessment process
- What's coming up for PRCP's



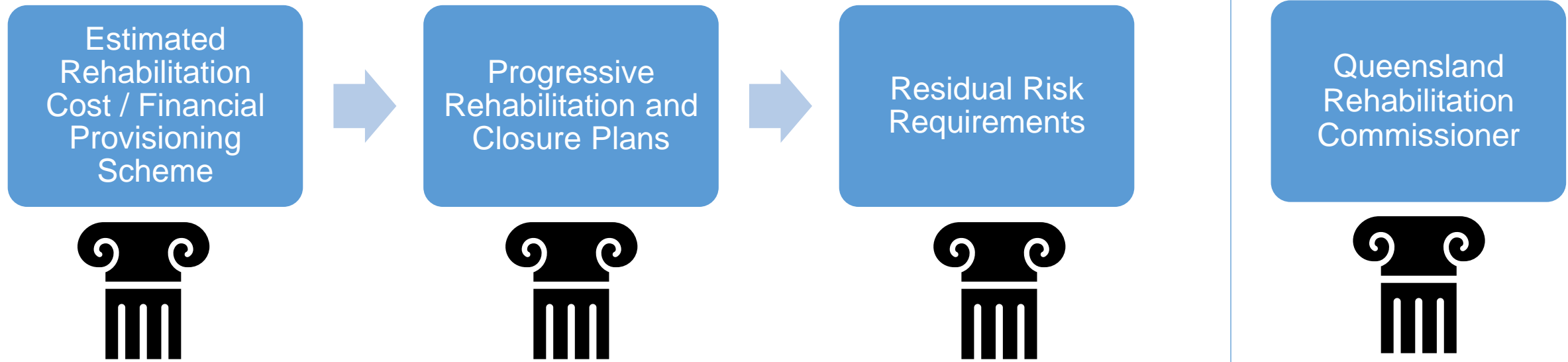


# Overview and Update on PRCP





# Pillars of the rehabilitation reform in QLD



# PRC plan

The main purpose of a PRC plan is to (s.126B):

- To maximise the progressive rehabilitation of land to a stable condition through a requirement to plan for how and where activities will be carried out.
- Outline the condition the land must be rehabilitated to before the EA may be surrendered.

A PRC plan consists of two parts:

1. Rehabilitation planning part
2. PRCP schedule

An applicant submits a completed PRC plan to the administering authority to assess. The PRCP schedule once approved is a statutory document which the holder must comply with.

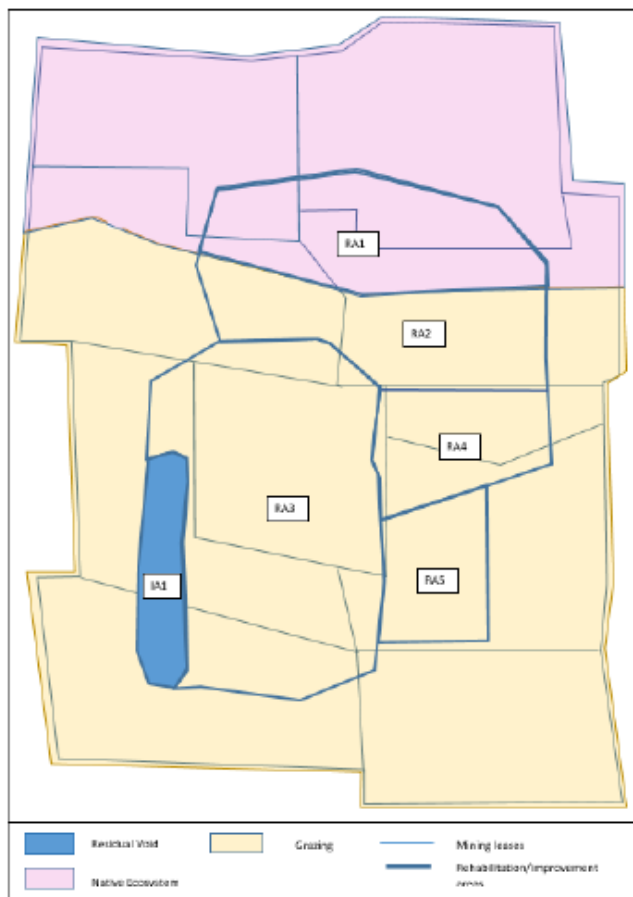


Figure 5: Reference Map 1

## Appendix 2. PRCP schedule example

Please note that the following example is not intended to be used as a standard for a PRCP schedule. All proposed PRCP schedule must be site-specific and suit the individual circumstances of each mine site. For further guidance on creating a PRCP schedule, please organise a pre-lodgement meeting with your relevant business centre.

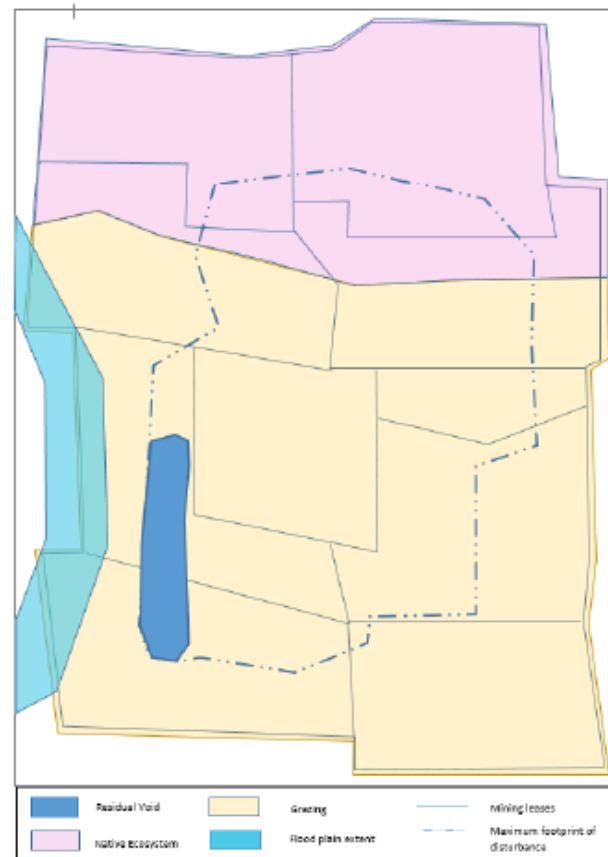


Figure 7: Final Site Design

Post-mining land uses—example only										
Rehabilitation area				RA1						
Relevant activities				Waste rock dump 1 and associated infrastructure						
Total rehabilitation area size (ha)				65						
Commencement of first milestone RM1				1 Jun 2021						
PMLU				Native Ecosystem						
Date area is available	10 Dec 2020	10 Dec 2023	10 Dec 2025	10 Dec 2030	10 Dec 2035	10 Dec 2040	10 Dec 2042			
Cumulative area available (ha)	10	15	25	35	45	60	65			
	Milestone completed by									
	10 Dec 2023	10 Dec 2025	10 Dec 2030	10 Dec 2035	10 Dec 2040	10 Dec 2042	10 Dec 2045	10 Dec 2048	10 Dec 2052	10 Dec 2060
Milestone reference	Cumulative area achieved (ha)									
RM1	10	15	25	35	45	60	65			
RM2	8	12	25	35	40	50	65			
RM3	3	8	15	20	30	40	55	65		
RM5		3	10	15	25	30	45	65		
RM7				10	15	20	30	45	65	
RM9										65
Rehabilitation area				RA2						
Relevant activities				Pit 2, waste rock dump and associated infrastructure						
Total size (ha)				35						
Commencement of first milestone RM1				1 Jun 2021						
PMLU				Native ecosystem						
Date area is available (ha)	10 Dec 2020	10 Dec 2025	10 Dec 2030	10 Dec 2035	10 Dec 2040	10 Dec 2045	10 Dec 2050			
Cumulative area available (ha)	5	10	15	20	25	30	35			
	Milestone completed by									
	10 Dec 2025	10 Dec 2030	10 Dec 2035	10 Dec 2040	10 Dec 2045	10 Dec 2050	10 Dec 2055	10 Dec 2060	10 Dec 2065	10 Dec 2070



# PMLU criteria

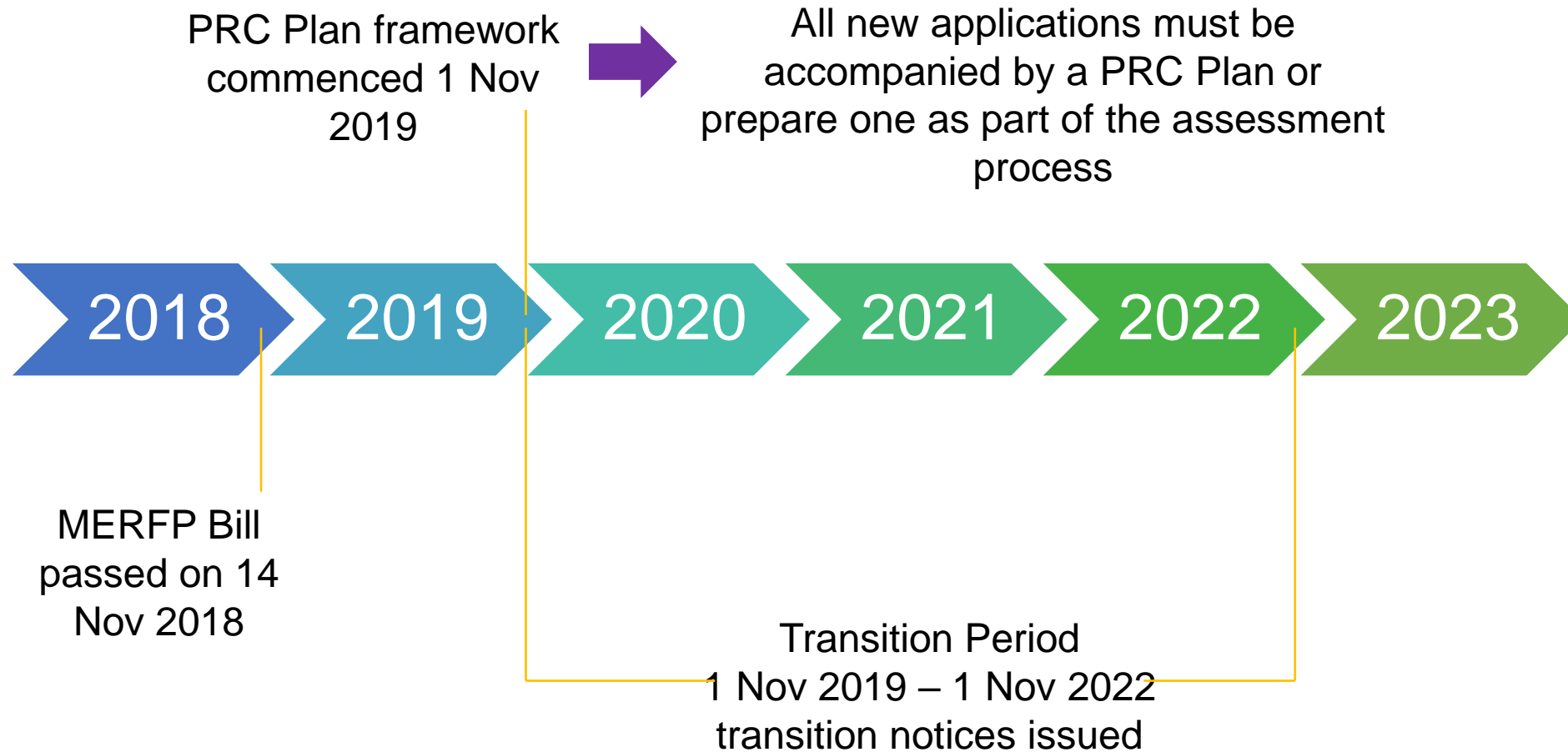
- Land must be able to be rehabilitated to a stable condition.
- s111A of the EP Act defines Land is in a stable condition if –
  - a) the land is safe and structurally stable, and
  - b) there is no environmental harm being caused by anything on or in the land, and
  - c) the land can sustain a PMLU.
- Schedule 8A of the EP Regulation (PRCP objective assessment) requires that each PMLU -
  - a) is viable, having regard to the use of land in the surrounding region, and
  - b) satisfies at least one of the following
    - i. the use is consistent with how the land was used before a mining activity was carried out on the land
    - ii. the use is consistent with a development approval relating to the land
    - iii. the use is consistent with a use of the land, other than a use that is mining, permitted under a State or Commonwealth Act, including, for example, a planning instrument under the Planning Act
    - iv. the use will deliver, or is aimed at delivering, a beneficial environmental outcome.

# Non-Use Management Area (NUMA)

- A non-use management area (NUMA) is defined in the EP Act as an area of land the subject of a PRC plan that cannot be rehabilitated to a stable condition after all relevant activities for the PRC plan carried out on the land have ended.
- Proposed NUMAs must be justified under the criteria set out in section 126D(2) of the EP Act.
- The applicant must demonstrate that the land cannot be rehabilitated to a stable condition due to either of the following reasons:
  - a) carrying out rehabilitation of the land would cause greater risk of environmental harm than not carrying out the rehabilitation; or
  - b) both of the following apply:
    - i. The risk of environmental harm as a result of not carrying out rehabilitation of the land is confined to the area of the relevant resource tenure.
    - ii. The applicant considers, having regard to each public interest consideration, that it is in the public interest for the land not to be rehabilitated to a stable condition.
- A NUMA cannot be located within a floodplain.

# Land Outcome Documents

- Land outcome documents (LOD) will be used to transition existing EAs into the PRCP framework and to establish pre-approved PMLU and/or NUMA.
- LOD's are defined under s750 of the EP Act and are in hierarchy as follows:
  - an EA for a resource activity on the land,
  - a document made under a condition of an EA and relates to the management of a void on the land, or the rehabilitation of the land,
  - a report evaluating an EIS under the SDPWO Act, section 34D,
  - an EIS assessment report,
  - a written agreement between the EA holder and the State that is in force on the assent date.



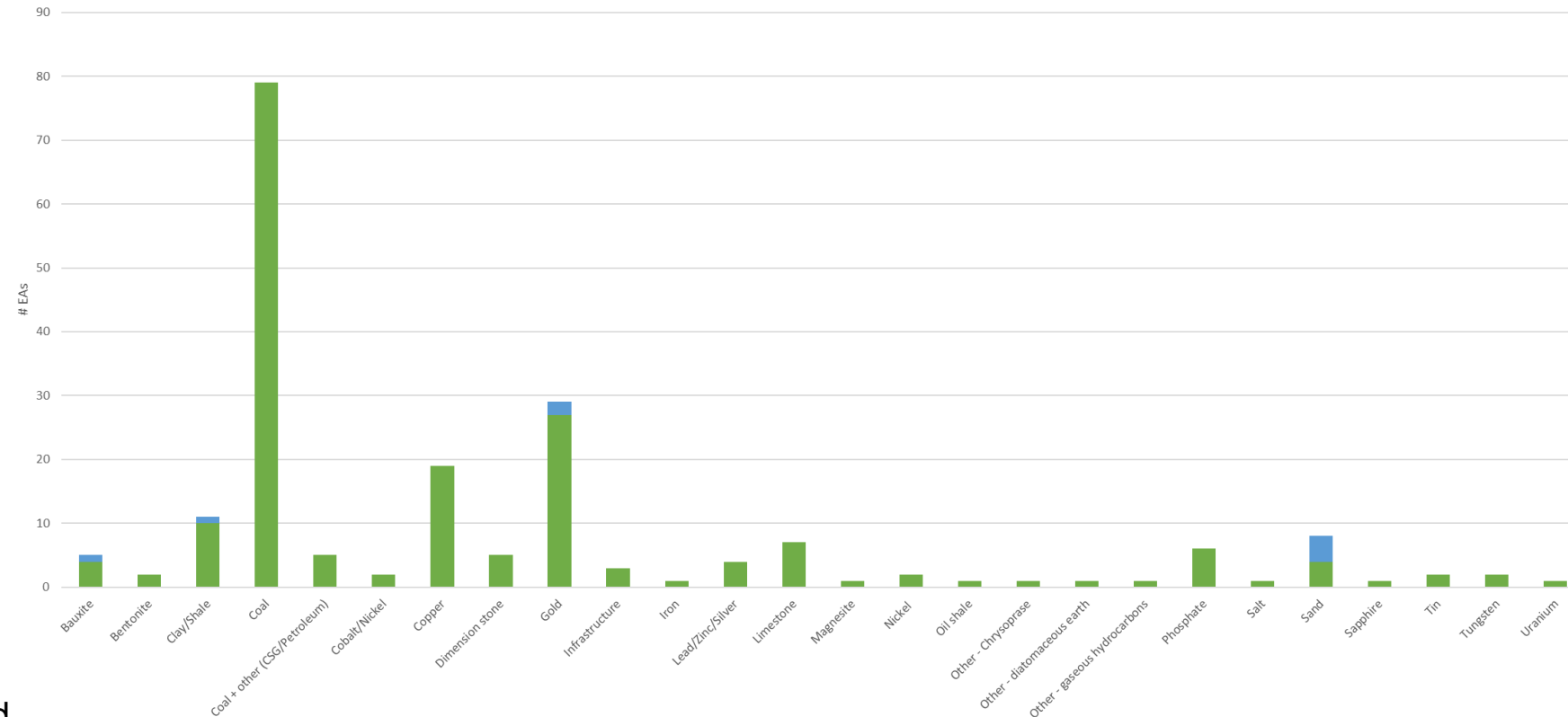
# ~ 200 mines to transition to PRC Plans

## Broad range of commodity types

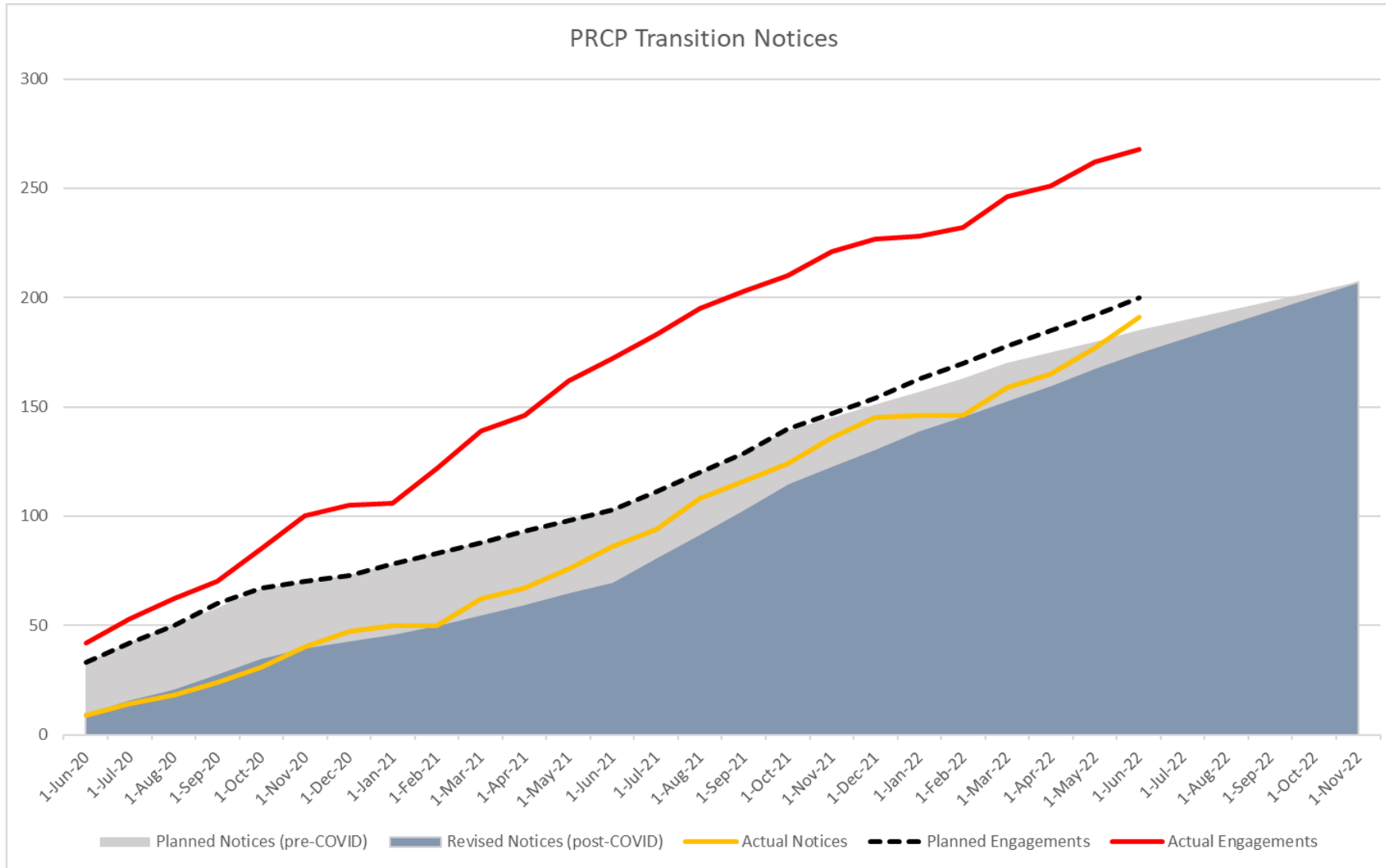
- Coal (Metallurgical and Thermal)
- Precious Metals (Au, Ag)
- Base Metals (Cu, Pb, Zn)
- Bauxite
- Mineral Sands and Silica
- Limestone
- Phosphate

## Diversity of mine scales and features

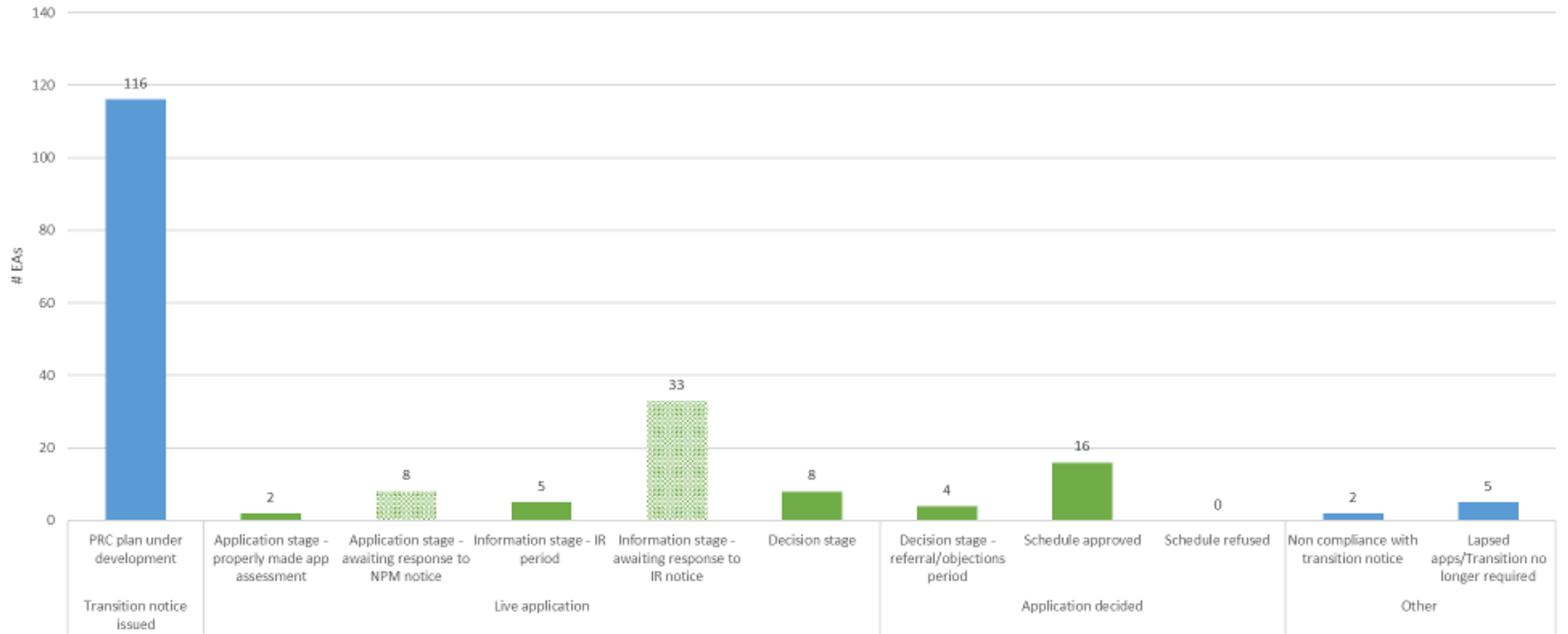
- Surface mining (e.g. open cut)
- Underground mining
- Heap leach
- Waste rock dumps
- Tailings storage facilities
- Processing plants
- Mine infrastructure (roads, rail and
- Water management (diversions and dams)



### PRCP Transition Notices



## Transitional PRC Plans Stage of Transition Process



# PRCP Assessment Process





# Application Stage

- Limited time (10BD) – presence/absence rather than detailed assessment – legislative requirements
- Not all guideline requirements applicable to every project
- Are the LOD's and transitional outcomes clear
- Is the authorised disturbance all accounted for and consistent with EA

# Information Stage

- IR is the key stage
- Generally structured in two parts – planning part and schedule
- Key focus on RA's, milestones and criteria
- LOD outcomes and standards vs schedule criteria
- Has the applicant given enough information to be satisfied land will achieve a stable condition or sufficient improvement?

## Decision Stage

- Administering authority draft schedule based on application
- General practice is to circulate draft schedule
- Common for some changes to be proposed by administering authority and negotiation to occur
  - SMART principles
  - Perceived gaps in criteria
  - To be satisfied schedule achieves stable condition or sufficient improvement



**What's next for PRCP's**

## Additional Guidance

- Exploration
- Sites without disturbance
- PIE
- PRCP Audit



# PRCP – ERC – Residual Risk



# Compliance with PRCP schedules

- First milestones 10 Dec 2022, several more schedules with milestones 2023
- Compliance inspections
- Refinement to conditions
- Statutory tools and compliance responses
- PRCP schedule amendments

# Thanks and questions...

- Contact details:

Chris Wake

Manager Environmental Services

Department of Environment and Science

[chris.wake@des.qld.gov.au](mailto:chris.wake@des.qld.gov.au)