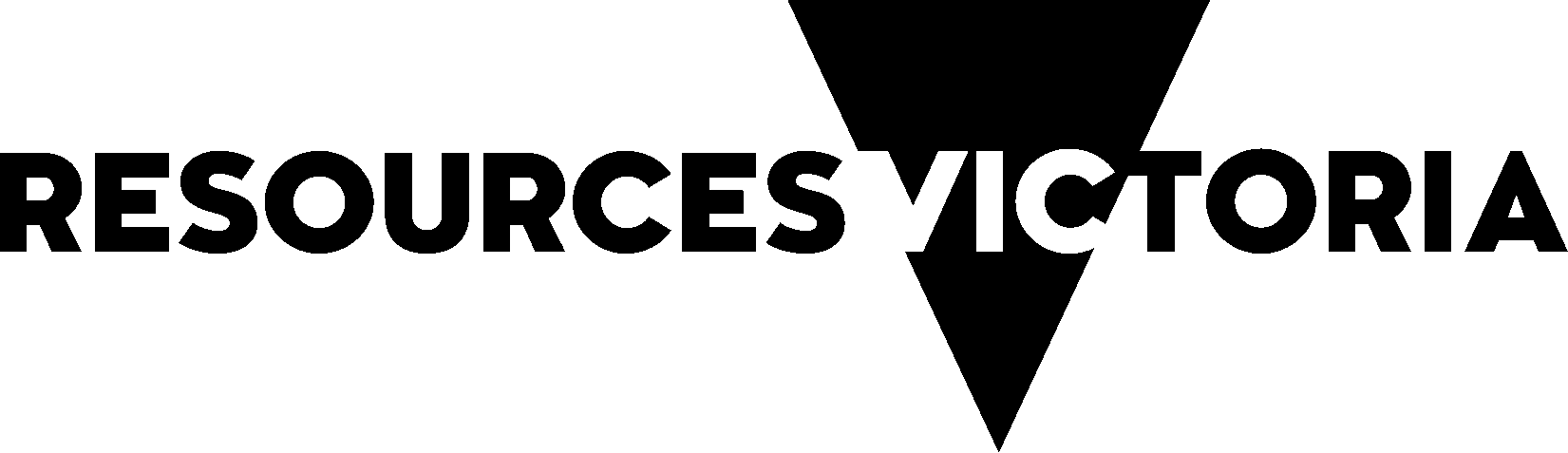
**Earth Resources Regulator**

Annual Statistical Report

FY 2023-24





**Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners**

We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria’s land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom   
has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria’s Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations

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Historical data in the report has been updated to reflect amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received after the publication of the previous year’s report. The current annual statistical report may be updated in future to accommodate annual returns received after this publication.

**Accessibility**

Accessible Word format at https://resources.vic.gov.au/legislation-and-regulations/regulator-performance-reporting/annual-statistical-reports

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# **1 Introduction**

The Earth Resources Regulator, under Resources Victoria within the Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA), is responsible for the regulation of minerals, extractive industries (quarries), petroleum, geothermal and carbon storage activities in Victoria and offshore Victorian waters, and for offshore pipelines in Victorian waters¹. We are committed to being an effective and transparent regulator.

The Earth Resources Regulator’s role includes:

* granting rights to access resources
* assessing works and setting controls for the extraction of resources
* assessing site rehabilitation liabilities and setting bonds
* conducting compliance operations to ensure that authority holders fulfil their regulatory obligations
* engaging with communities and stakeholders
* collecting regulatory fees and royalties

The Earth Resources Regulator administers the following Acts:

* Mineral Resources (Sustainable Development) Act 1990 (MRSDA): mineral exploration and mining, and quarrying extractive resources
* Petroleum Act 1998: petroleum exploration and development onshore
* Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2010 (OPGGSA): petroleum exploration and development, greenhouse gas storage and pipelines in Victorian offshore waters
* Geothermal Energy Resources Act 2005: geothermal energy exploration and development
* Greenhouse Gas Geological Sequestration Act 2008: greenhouse gas storage onshore
* Extractive Industries (Lysterfield) Act 1986
* Nuclear Activities (Prohibitions) Act 1983
* Underseas Mineral Resources Act 1963
* Mines (Aluminium Agreement) Act 1961

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1 Victorian waters are within three nautical miles of the coastline.

## **1.1 Key observations and statistics**

The *Earth Resources Regulator 2023-24 Statistical Report* presents a compilation of data as reported by tenement holders to the Earth Resources Regulator. All production and expenditure figures are certified by tenement holders. We are working to validate stone resources estimate data and exploring how to capture this information when work plans are varied. We will inform industry how and when this is available. The industry data in the report is derived from approximately 96 per cent of minerals and 95 per cent of extractive industries annual returns. Detailed breakdowns of annual returns submission rates are shown in *Table 7.2.1.*

Extractive industries operations

* Stone production decreased 11.8 per cent from 75.4 million tonnes to 66.5 million tonnes *(Table 2.1.1).*
* Value of sales decreased 3.8 per cent from $1,367.81 million to $1,315.16 million *(Table 2.1.1).*
* *Nine new work authorities were granted with an estimated 110 million tonnes of resources (Table 2.2.1).*

Minerals exploration and mining operations

* Mineral exploration expenditure decreased 8.0 per cent from $163.5 million to $150.4 million *(Table 3.1.1).*
* Mining expenditure increased 8.8 per cent from $945.9 million to $1028.9 million *(Table 3.1.1).*
* Gold production decreased 23.9 per cent from 491,575 ounces to 374,263 ounces *(Table 3.2.1).*
* Licence applications granted decreased by 36.4 per cent from 107 to 68 *(Table 3.3.3).*
* Licence renewals decreased by 21.2 per cent from 66 to 52 *(Table 3.3.4).*

Petroleum (gas)

* Gas production decreased 12.6 per cent from 8.92 petajoules to 7.80 petajoules of energy *(Table 4.1.1).*

Rehabilitation bonds

* Total value of Extractive rehabilitation bonds held by the state was approximately $121.5 million *(Table 5.1.1).*
* Total value of Mineral (inc. Coal) rehabilitation bonds held by the state was approximately $739.6 million *(Table 5.1.1).*
* Total value of rehabilitation bonds held under the Petroleum / Geothermal Act was approximately $35.1 million (5.1.2)
* Total number of bonds reviews conducted was 146 *(Table 5.2.1).*

Royalties and regulatory fees

* Royalties payable increased 0.9 per cent from $132.0 million to $133.2 million *(Table 6.1.1).*
* Coal royalties accounted for 62.5 per cent of total royalties payable ($87.3 out of 133.2 million) (Table 6.1.1).
* Gold royalties accounted for 21.6 per cent of total royalties payable ($28.8 out of $133.2 million) *(Table 6.1.1).*
* Revenue from regulatory fees was $7.4 million *(Table 6.2.1).*

# **2 Extractives**

Quarries predominantly produce hard rock, clay, sand and gravel, which are mostly used for constructing houses, public infrastructure and private sector developments.

## **2.1 Extractive industries production**

As at 30 June 2024, there were 817 quarries holding current extractive industries work authorities under the MRSDA. As at 25 October 2024, a total of 487 quarries reported production in financial year 2022-23.

Table 2.1.1: Production and value of sales by financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Current quarries at EOFY | 881 | 873 | 860 | 848 | 847 | 832 | 817 |
| Quarries recorded production | 558 | 549 | 534 | 511 | 496 | 501 | 487 |
| Production (million tonnes) | 61.39 | 63.20 | 64.76 | 68.18 | 71.85 | 75.40 | 66.54 |
| Value of sales ($ million) | $990.09 | $1,026.70 | $1,075.47 | $1,119.69 | $1,187.44 | $1,357.81 | $1315.16 |

Note: Some historical data has been adjusted to accommodate amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received after the publication of the previous year’s report.

Figure 2.1.1: Production and value of sales by financial year.

**Table 2.1.2: Extractive industries production and value of sales by product type over five financial years.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Product group | Product type groups | 2019-20 Production (million tonnes) | 2019-20 Production (million tonnes) | 2020-21  Production (million tonnes) | 2020-21  Value of sales ($ million) | 2021-22  Production (million tonnes) | 2021-22  Value of sales ($ million) | 2022-23  Production (million tonnes) | 2022-23  Value of sales ($ million) | 2023-24  Production (million tonnes) | 2023-24  Value of sales ($ million) |
| Clay products | Brick | 0.93 | $2.59 | 0.91 | $2.54 | 1.08 | $2.18 | 1.03 | $3.81 | 0.72 | $2.84 |
| Clay products | Stoneware pottery | 0.001 | $0.02 | 0.001 | $0.01 | 0.001 | $0.02 | 0.001 | $0.02 | 0.0001 | $0.02 |
| Clay products | Tile/pipe | - | - | 0.03 | $0.00 | 0.03 | $0.000 | 0.02 | $0.00 | 0.01 | $0.00 |
| Total clay products |  | 0.93 | $2.60 | 0.94 | $2.55 | 1.11 | $2.20 | 1.06 | $3.83 | 0.73 | $2.86 |
| Limestone products | Agriculture | 0.62 | $17.46 | 0.86 | $24.29 | 0.76 | $21.33 | 0.31 | $10.05 | 0.72 | $24.97 |
| Limestone products | Cement | 0.06 | $1.03 | 0.07 | $1.25 | 0.03 | $0.81 | 0.04 | $1.92 | 0.04 | $1.68 |
| Limestone products | Lime | 0.09 | $1.63 | 0.20 | $3.30 | 0.55 | $9.96 | 0.77 | $18.46 | 0.42 | $6.97 |
| Total limestone products |  | 0.77 | $20.12 | 1.14 | $28.84 | 1.34 | $32.10 | 1.12 | $30.42 | 1.19 | $33.62 |
| Miscellaneous | Dimension stone | 0.01 | $0.29 | 0.24 | $1.34 | 0.08 | $1.73 | 0.05 | $1.36 | 0.08 | $2.20 |
| Miscellaneous | Soil | 0.03 | $0.11 | 0.15 | $1.06 | 0.19 | $1.23 | 0.08 | $1.00 | 0.13 | $2.08 |
| Miscellaneous | Unspecified | 4.77 | $72.06 | 6.57 | $105.03 | 0.22 | $4.02 | 0.01 | $1.71 | 0.001 | $0.45 |
| Total miscellaneous |  | 4.81 | $72.46 | 6.96 | $107.43 | 0.49 | $6.98 | 0.14 | $4.07 | 0.21 | $4.74 |
| Multi-size products | Fill | 4.87 | $46.47 | 4.37 | $43.81 | 6.04 | $62.75 | 7.28 | $78.00 | 7.12 | $78.14 |
| Multi-size products | Road base | 5.49 | $91.16 | 4.43 | $80.72 | 7.26 | $140.59 | 7.26 | $175.07 | 6.13 | $148.66 |
| Multi-size products | Road sub-base | 13.16 | $175.55 | 12.56 | $169.19 | 18.61 | $250.40 | 18.40 | $304.34 | 16.37 | $273.81 |
| Total multi-size products |  | 23.52 | $313.18 | 21.36 | $293.72 | 31.91 | $453.74 | 32.94 | $557.41 | 29.62 | $500.61 |
| Sand products | Concrete sand | 8.76 | $153.84 | 9.67 | $151.72 | 11.79 | $173.59 | 10.37 | $178.10 | 10.60 | $190.21 |
| Sand products | Fine sand | 3.01 | $43.49 | 2.33 | $35.84 | 1.85 | $29.88 | 2.95 | $61.09 | 3.11 | $61.61 |
| Sand products | Foundry sand | 0.00 | $0.10 | 0.57 | $13.35 | 0.08 | $7.25 | 0.07 | $3.87 | 0.09 | $6.50 |
| Sand products | Industrial filters | - | - | 0.05 | $0.82 | 0.05 | $3.18 | 0.06 | $4.98 | 0.05 | $2.64 |
| Total sand products |  | 11.77 | $197.42 | 12.62 | $201.74 | 13.77 | $213.90 | 13.45 | $248.03 | 13.85 | $260.96 |
| Single-size products | Aggregate | 22.90 | $467.94 | 25.04 | $483.80 | 23.05 | $476.25 | 26.57 | $520.31 | 20.67 | $505.61 |
| Single-size products | Armour | 0.06 | $1.76 | 0.12 | $1.60 | 0.18 | $2.27 | 0.13 | $3.75 | 0.27 | $6.76 |
| Total single-size products |  | 22.97 | $469.69 | 25.16 | $485.40 | 23.23 | $478.52 | 26.70 | $524.06 | 20.93 | $512.37 |
| Financial year total |  | 64.76 | $1,075.47 | 68.18 | $1,119.69 | 71.85 | $1,187.44 | 75.40 | $1,367.81 | 66.54 | $1,315.16 |

Note: Some historical data has been adjusted to accommodate amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received after the publication of the previous year’s report.

Table 2.1.3: Extractive industries production and value of sales by rock type over five financial years.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Rock group | Rock type groups | 2019-20 Production (million tonnes) | 2019-20 Production  (million  tonnes) | 2020-21 Production (million tonnes) | 2020-21 Value of sales ($ million) | 2021-22 Production (million tonnes) | 2021-22 Value of sales ($ million) | 2022-23 Production (million tonnes) | 2022-23 Value of  sales ($ million) | 2023-24 Production (million tonnes) | 2023-24 Value of  sales ($ million) |
| Hard rock | Basalt new | 21.50 | $362.92 | 22.76 | $385.15 | 24.45 | $402.70 | 24.09 | $497.57 | 22.34 | $453.20 |
| Hard rock | Basalt old | 4.38 | $80.31 | 2.86 | $60.22 | 4.01 | $83.09 | 3.93 | $90.58 | 4.06 | $81.74 |
| Hard rock | Dolerite | - | - | 0.35 | $6.68 | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Hard rock | Gneiss | 0.08 | $1.92 | 0.0001 | $0.00 | 0.0001 | $0.00 | 0.01 | $0.0000 | - | - |
| Hard rock | Granite | 7.06 | $138.83 | 7.39 | $138.87 | 6.71 | $135.02 | 11.63 | $153.06 | 6.93 | $148.38 |
| Hard rock | Hornfels | 5.27 | $89.60 | 6.46 | $114.43 | 8.01 | $141.51 | 7.55 | $158.55 | 6.27 | $146.39 |
| Hard rock | Quartzite | 0.01 | $0.60 | 0.04 | $1.06 | 0.08 | $1.52 | 0.17 | $2.34 | 0.06 | $1.62 |
| Hard rock | Rhyodacite | 1.54 | $35.53 | 1.73 | $39.99 | 2.16 | $51.31 | 2.17 | $54.68 | 2.04 | $53.47 |
| Hard rock | Schist | 0.47 | $8.32 | 0.22 | $4.54 | 0.43 | $9.96 | 0.27 | $5.72 | 0.20 | $4.98 |
| Hard rock | Slate | 0.04 | $1.36 | 0.23 | $1.46 | 0.07 | $1.20 | 0.07 | $1.29 | 0.07 | $1.18 |
| Hard rock | Trachyte | 0.03 | $0.51 | 0.02 | $0.54 | 0.03 | $0.64 | 0.04 | $0.86 | 0.04 | $0.91 |
| Total hard rock |  | 40.38 | $719.90 | 42.08 | $752.94 | 45.97 | $826.94 | 49.93 | $964.65 | 42.01 | $891.86 |
| Soft rock | Clay and clay shale | 1.49 | $5.36 | 1.35 | $3.35 | 1.88 | $4.38 | 1.66 | $4.94 | 1.02 | $3.55 |
| Soft rock | Limestone | 1.97 | $31.32 | 2.28 | $38.52 | 2.37 | $41.68 | 2.08 | $39.69 | 2.09 | $44.38 |
| Soft rock | Peat | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | 0.0002 | 0.0000 |
| Soft rock | Sand and gravel | 15.75 | $257.70 | 17.32 | $264.05 | 17.06 | $253.86 | 16.99 | $289.71 | 17.20 | $307.56 |
| Soft rock | Scoria | 0.94 | $15.41 | 1.12 | $18.78 | 0.99 | $19.11 | 1.20 | $23.79 | 1.26 | $25.42 |
| Soft rock | Sedimentary\* | 3.61 | $40.26 | 3.68 | $38.59 | 2.89 | $35.54 | 2.98 | $39.21 | 2.64 | $38.14 |
| Soft rock | Soil | 0.06 | $0.11 | 0.15 | $1.08 | 0.19 | $1.23 | 0.08 | $1.00 | 0.13 | $2.08 |
| Soft rock | Tuff | 0.56 | $5.41 | 0.21 | $2.38 | 0.51 | $4.69 | 0.49 | $4.83 | 0.20 | $2.15 |
| Total soft rock |  | 24.38 | $355.57 | 26.10 | $366.75 | 25.88 | $360.50 | 25.47 | $403.17 | 24.53 | $423.30 |
| Financial year total |  | 64.76 | $1,075.47 | 68.18 | $1,119.69 | 71.85 | $1,187.44 | 75.40 | $1,367.81 | 66.54 | $1,315.16 |

Note: Some historical data has been adjusted to accommodate amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received after the publication of the previous year’s report.

\*Sedimentary (usually rippable rocks, including sandstone, shale, siltstone, chert, mudstone, claystone).

## **2.2 Extractive industries work authorities**

Table 2.2.1: Extractive industries work authorities granted by financial year.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Work authorities granted | 13 | 11 | 4 | 3 | 15 | 10 | 9 |
| Resource estimate\* (million tonnes) | 9.40 | 6.64 | 21.33 | 1.21 | 56.77 | 10.79 | 110.08 |

\*Resource estimate: The total estimated resource available for extraction from the granted work authorities.

Table 2.2.2: Extractive industries work authority variations by financial year.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Work authority variations submitted | 51 | 62 | 52 | 66 | 47 | 42 | 64 |
| Work authority variations completed | 59 | 52 | 55 | 24 | 41 | 45 | 57 |
| Work authority variations withdrawn and refused | 12 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 8 | 12 |

Figure 2.2.2: Extractive industries work authority variations by financial year.

## **2.3 Extractive industries work plans, codes of practice and administrative updates by notification**

Work plans and codes of practice applications submitted and approved by financial year:

* An initial work plan is the primary document describing the permitted activities to be undertaken on a work authority.
* A work plan variation is submitted by a licence holder when they want to change the scope of work in an existing work plan.
* Code of practice (eligible to operate under the *Code of Practice for Small Quarries*).

Table 2.3.1: Extractive industries work plans, work plan variations and codes of practice applications submitted.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 6 | 10 | 7 | 6 | 8 | 8 | 9 |
| Work plan variation | 10 | 11 | 21 | 12 | 13 | 9 | 14 |
| Code of practice | 8 | 7 | 5 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 8 |
| Total submitted | 24 | 28 | 33 | 23 | 24 | 19 | 31 |

Table 2.3.2: Extractive industries work plans, work plan variations and codes of practice applications approved.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 11 | 9 | 6 | 5 | 5 | 4 | 6 |
| Work plan variation | 9 | 6 | 14 | 14 | 5 | 8 | 16 |
| Code of practice | 9 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 7 | 1 | 5 |
| Total approved | 29 | 18 | 24 | 19 | 17 | 13 | 27 |

Table 2.3.3: Extractive industries work plans, work plan variations and codes of practice applications withdrawn/refused.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 2 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 7 | 3 | 2 |
| Work plan variation | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 7 | 1 | 10 |
| Code of practice | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 1 | 3 |
| Total withdrawn/ refused | 8 | 8 | 7 | 5 | 19 | 5 | 15 |

Statutory endorsement indicates that the Earth Resources Regulator has assessed and endorsed the work plan or work plan variation as having met the requirements under the MRSDA.

Table 2.3.4: Extractive industries work plans and work plan variations statutory endorsements.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 7 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 6 | 12 |
| Work plan variation | 2 | 8 | 12 | 7 | 6 | 9 | 7 |
| Total endorsed | 9 | 12 | 21 | 13 | 10 | 15 | 19 |

Administrative updates by notification are minor changes to the existing work plan with no significant increase in risk arising from the new or changing work.

Administrative updates do not require statutory endorsement (no further planning permission required). The administrative updates by notification process was introduced towards the end of   
FY 2017-18.

Table 2.3.5: Extractive industries administrative updates by notifications received and acknowledged.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Received | 3 | 16 | 28 | 12 | 25 | 22 | 24 |
| Acknowledged | 2 | 14 | 17 | 10 | 12 | 12 | 14 |

# **3 Minerals**

## **3.1 Mineral exploration and mining expenditure**

Table 3.1.1: Expenditure on mineral exploration and mining development ($ million).

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Mineral exploration  (ABS seasonally adjusted data )1 | $73.3 | $102.0 | $135.8 | $183.7 | $222.4 | $180.2 | $123.6 |
| Mineral exploration2 | $69.0 | $107.3 | $132.2 | $198.1 | $221.7 | $163.5 | $150.4 |
| Mineral mining3 | $654.6 | $734.5 | $837.1 | $831.7 | $802.9 | $945.9 | $1,028.9 |

Source: Figures collated from annual activity reports required under the MRSDA and by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (<https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/industry/mining/mineral-and-petroleum-exploration-australia/latest-release#data-download>).

1 The Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS) reports quarterly on private mineral exploration expenditure for all Australian states and the Northern Territory. Victorian mineral exploration and mining expenditure is also reported in accordance with MRSDA requirements. The ABS exploration expenditure statistics can vary significantly from expenditure reported under the MRSDA. The difference between these two exploration expenditure data sets is mainly due to the difference in methodologies for data collection and the inclusion of the exploration expenditure on mining licences in the MRSDA figure. The ABS statistics are a valid basis for comparison of Victorian expenditure with other states and territories. However, the MRSDA figures provide greater detail.

2 The mineral exploration expenditure figures for exploration and retention licences and any specified exploration expenditure on mining and prospecting licences.

3 The mineral mining expenditure figure covers all expenditure on mining and prospecting licences (including capital and operating expenses), less any specified exploration expenditure on mining and prospecting licences.

Figure 3.1.1: Expenditure on mineral exploration and mining.

Exploration expenditure is allocated to the primary nominated mineral commodity on the licence in accordance with the MRSDA.

## **3.2 Mineral production**

Table 3.2.1: Mineral production by financial year.

| Year | Gold  (ounces\*) | Silver  (ounces\*) | Antimony  (tonnes) | Mineral sands1  (tonnes) | Industrial minerals2  (tonnes) | Coal3  (tonnes) | Others⁴ (tonnes) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2017-18 | 364,294 | 0 | 2,570 | 100,286 | 808,951 | 45,061,567 | 7,998 |
| 2018-19 | 567,501 | 1,931 | 2,016 | 0 | 588,135 | 42,255,570 | 6,050 |
| 2019-20 | 790,052 | 7,481 | 3,141 | 0 | 687,877 | 40,372,215 | 6,741 |
| 2020-21 | 722,239 | 7,689 | 3,551 | 0 | 853,575 | 42,263,209 | 14,072 |
| 2021-22 | 627,014 | 41,446 | 2,896 | 0 | 1,016,982 | 39,126,368 | 19,168 |
| 2022-23 | 491,575 | 8,377 | 2,144 | 0 | 745,045 | 38,596,216 | 15,263 |
| 2023-24 | 374,263 | 7,045 | 1,563 | 0 | 930,286 | 39,021,590 | 29,045 |

\*Gold and silver reported in troy ounces.

Note: Some historical data has been adjusted to accommodate amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received after the publication of the previous year’s report.

Table 3.2.2: Mineral production value by financial year ($ million).

| Year | Gold | Silver | Antimony | Mineral sands1 | Industrial minerals2 | Coal3 | Others⁴ | Total |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2017-18 | $613.5 | $0.0 | $28.2 | $172.6 | $11.7 | N/A | $0.2 | $826.1 |
| 2018-19 | $1,015.5 | $0.0 | $21.2 | $45.7 | $10.3 | N/A | $0.0 | $1,092.7 |
| 2019-20 | $1,843.0 | $0.2 | $24.8 | $19.9 | $10.3 | N/A | $0.2 | $1,898.4 |
| 2020-21 | $1,781.5 | $0.3 | $36.7 | $10.1 | $13.6 | N/A | $0.3 | $1,842.5 |
| 2021-22 | $1,592.5 | $1.3 | $58.2 | $0.0 | $15.7 | N/A | $0.8 | $1,668.5 |
| 2022-23 | $1,236.1 | $0.3 | $73.6 | $44.7 | $12.2 | N/A | $0.3 | $1,367.2 |
| 2023-24 | $1,090.1 | $0.3 | $35.3 | $23.8 | $17.0 | N/A | $0.9 | $1,167.4 |

¹ Mineral sands (zircon, rutile, ilmenite).

² Industrial minerals (feldspar, gypsum, kaolin and fine clay).

³ No unit value is assigned to coal for the purposes of determining its production value. Coal is almost entirely used for electricity production and is largely an internal transfer within mining/generation entities. As such, there is no available market price for coal.

⁴ Others (includes peat, quartz and tailings,).

Note: Some historical data has been adjusted to accommodate amendments to annual returns by tenement holders and annual returns received since last publication of this report.

## **3.3 Mineral tenements**

Table 3.3.1: Number of current licences at the end of each financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 200 | 212 | 217 | 291 | 357 | 425 | 432 |
| Mining licence | 156 | 145 | 141 | 139 | 131 | 123 | 114 |
| Prospecting licence | 59 | 55 | 60 | 66 | 57 | 52 | 43 |
| Retention licence | 20 | 21 | 27 | 30 | 32 | 38 | 48 |
| Total | 435 | 433 | 445 | 526 | 577 | 638 | 637 |

Figure 3.3.1 Number of current licences at the end of each financial year.

Table 3.3.2: Number of licence applications submitted by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 72 | 67 | 138 | 111 | 126 | 50 | 35 |
| Mining licence | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 |
| Prospecting licence | 17 | 14 | 7 | 10 | 8 | 3 | 5 |
| Retention licence | 7 | 6 | 14 | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 98 | 88 | 160 | 127 | 139 | 54 | 43 |

Figure 3.3.2: Number of licence applications submitted by financial year.

Table 3.3.3 Licence applications granted by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 63 | 36 | 25 | 89 | 77 | 94 | 56 |
| Mining licence | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| Prospecting licence | 12 | 14 | 14 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 1 |
| Retention licence | 7 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 2 | 6 | 11 |
| Total | 85 | 52 | 47 | 101 | 83 | 107 | 68 |

Figure 3.3.3: Number of licence applications granted by financial year

Table 3.3.4: Licences renewed by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 29 | 19 | 11 | 15 | 6 | 55 | 35 |
| Mining licence | 26 | 22 | 9 | 4 | 5 | 11 | 15 |
| Retention licence | - | - | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Total | 55 | 41 | 21 | 21 | 12 | 66 | 52 |

Figure 3.3.4: Number of licence applications renewed by financial year.

Table 3.3.5: Licence variations submitted by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 124 | 191 | 211 | 187 | 171 | 105 | 137 |
| Mining licence | 48 | 63 | 28 | 17 | 22 | 20 | 24 |
| Prospecting licence | 3 | 14 | 8 | 5 | 9 | 2 | 9 |
| Retention licence | 6 | 7 | 9 | 4 | 6 | 6 | 19 |
| Total | 181 | 275 | 256 | 213 | 208 | 133 | 189 |

Figure 3.3.5: Number of licence variations submitted by financial year.

Table 3.3.6: Licence variations completed by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Exploration licence | 147 | 185 | 145 | 152 | 121 | 91 | 100 |
| Mining licence | 55 | 56 | 15 | 13 | 20 | 21 | 26 |
| Prospecting licence | 4 | 13 | 7 | 3 | 7 | 6 | 7 |
| Retention licence | 5 | 7 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 0 | 12 |
| Total | 211 | 261 | 171 | 172 | 152 | 126 | 145 |

Figure 3.3.6: Number of licence variations completed by financial year.

## **3.4 Mineral work plans, codes of practice and administrative updates by notification**

Work plans and codes of practices submitted and approved by financial year:

* An initial work plan is the primary document describing the permitted activities to be undertaken on a licence.
* A work plan variation is submitted by a licence holder when they want to change the scope of work in an existing work plan.
* Code of practice (eligible to operate under the *Code of Practice for low impact exploration or low risk mines*).

**Table 3.4.1: Mineral work plans and work plan variations and codes of practice applications submitted.**

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 8 | 10 | 8 | 9 | 13 | 10 | 9 |
| Work plan variation | 22 | 12 | 14 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 |
| Code of practice | 4 | 10 | 3 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 |
| Total submitted | 32 | 32 | 25 | 16 | 23 | 17 | 12 |

**Table 3.4.2: Mineral work plans, work plan variations and codes of practice applications approved.**

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 1 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 10 | 1 | 9 |
| Work plan variation | 14 | 14 | 7 | 4 | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| Code of practice | 3 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 5 | 1 | 2 |
| Total approved | 18 | 22 | 19 | 11 | 17 | 4 | 15 |

Table 3.4.3: Mineral work plans, work plan variations and codes of practice applications withdrawn/refused.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 1 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 11 | 4 | 3 |
| Work plan variation | 7 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Code of practice | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Total withdrawn/  refused | 8 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 13 | 7 | 3 |

Statutory endorsement indicates that the Earth Resources Regulator has assessed and endorsed the work plan or work plan variation as having met the requirements under the MRSDA.

Table 3.4.4: Mineral work plans and work plan variations statutory endorsements.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Initial work plan | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 6 |
| Work plan variation | 1 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 1 |
| Total endorsed | 1 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 7 |

Administrative updates by notification are minor changes to the existing work plan with no significant increase in risk arising from the new or changing work. Administrative updates do not require statutory endorsement (no further planning permission required). The administrative updates by notification process was introduced at the end of FY 2017-18.

Table 3.4.5: Mineral administrative updates by notifications received and acknowledged.

|  | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Received | 2 | 11 | 10 | 7 | 11 | 0 | 5 |
| Acknowledged | 2 | 8 | 9 | 7 | 8 | 0 | 4 |

# **4 Petroleum, geothermal, offshore pipelines and greenhouse gas**

Exploration within Victoria’s jurisdiction for petroleum occurred in the offshore parts of the Otway, Gippsland geological basins and onshore. Production activity occurred in the Otway Basin.

Offshore activities occur within three nautical miles of the coast, according to Victorian legislation. Waters further than three nautical miles are covered by Commonwealth legislation and reported separately by Commonwealth Government agencies.

Hydraulic fracturing is banned under Victorian legislation.

## **4.1 Gas production and storage**

Gas production located offshore within Victoria’s three nautical mile zone.

Table 4.1.1: Gas ex-wellhead production figures by financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Types | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| Condensate (barrels) | 134,178 | 146,186 | 99,094 | 122,569 | 167,353 | 185,519 | 136,682 |
| Gas production (MMscf\*) | 13,118 | 14,523 | 9,069 | 7,534 | 8,759 | 8,225 | 7,192 |
| Gas production (petajoules^) | 13.91 | 15.40 | 9.83 | 8.17 | 9.50 | 8.92 | 7.80 |
| CO2 production (tonnes) | 33,643 | 32,293 | 31,029 | 27,149 | 27,003 | 16,230 | 533 |

\*MMscf = million standard cubic feet.

^Convert Gas MMscf to petajoules using online sales gas converter: https://www.convert-me.com/en/convert/energy/mscfgas.html.

Table 4.1.2: Underground gas storage by financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Type** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Condensate  (barrels) | 465 | 1,220 | 944 | 283 | 311 | 641 | 151 |
| Gas storage  (MMscf\*\*) | 11,670 | 13,100 | 15,959 | 16,144 | 12,470 | 14,990 | 19,526 |
| Gas storage  (petajoules^) | 12.38 | 13.89 | 17.31 | 17.51 | 13.52 | 16.26 | 21.18 |
| Gas injection  (MMscf) | 13,745 | 12,514 | 12,231 | 10,201 | 16,216 | 21,193 | 14,039 |
| Gas injection  (petajoules^) | 14.91 | 13.57 | 13.27 | 11.06 | 17.59 | 22.99 | 15.23 |

\*\*MMscf = million standard cubic feet.

^Convert Gas MMscf to petajoules using online sales gas converter: <https://www.convert-me.com/en/convert/energy/mscfgas.html>

## **4.2 Petroleum, offshore pipelines, geothermal and greenhouse gas licences**

Table 4.2.1: Overview of onshore petroleum tenements as at 30 June 2024.

| Onshore petroleum licences and permits | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Onshore petroleum production licence | 11 |
| Onshore petroleum exploration permit | 9 |
| Onshore petroleum special drilling authorisation | 2 |
| Onshore petroleum retention lease | 1 |
| Total | 23 |

Table 4.2.2: Overview of offshore (Victorian waters) petroleum tenements as at 30 June 2024.

| Offshore petroleum licences and permits | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Offshore petroleum exploration permit | 5 |
| Offshore petroleum production licence | 2 |
| Offshore petroleum access authority | 1 |
| Offshore petroleum retention lease | 1 |
| Total | 9 |

Table 4.2.3 Offshore pipeline licences as at 30 June 2024.

| Offshore pipeline licences | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Offshore pipeline licence | 14 |

Table 4.2.4: Geothermal Retention Lease as at 30 June 2024.

| Geothermal energy permits | Number |
| --- | --- |
| Geothermal retention lease | 1 |

Table 4.2.5: Non-MRSDA licence variations submitted by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Geothermal exploration permit | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore greenhouse gas assessment permit | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore petroleum access authority | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore petroleum exploration permit | 2 | 6 | 2 | 9 | 1 | 5 | 2 |
| Offshore petroleum production licence | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Offshore petroleum retention lease | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Offshore pipeline licence | 16 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 10 | 2 | 3 |
| Onshore petroleum exploration permit | 30 | 9 | 5 | 10 | 13 | 5 | 10 |
| Onshore petroleum production licence | 16 | 17 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Onshore petroleum retention lease | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Onshore petroleum special drilling authorisation | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 71 | 44 | 27 | 23 | 25 | 14 | 18 |

Table 4.2.6: Non-MRSDA licence variations completed by financial year.

| Licence type | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Geothermal exploration permit | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore greenhouse gas assessment permit | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore petroleum access authority | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Offshore petroleum exploration permit | 1 | 2 | 3 | 12 | 0 | 1 | 5 |
| Offshore petroleum production licence | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Offshore petroleum retention lease | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 |
| Offshore pipeline licence | 22 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 7 | 4 |
| Onshore petroleum exploration permit | 15 | 17 | 17 | 2 | 22 | 4 | 10 |
| Onshore petroleum production licence | 9 | 7 | 18 | 8 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Onshore petroleum retention lease | 4 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Onshore petroleum special drilling authorisation | 0 | 1 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Total | 55 | 33 | 56 | 27 | 25 | 12 | 23 |

# **5 Rehabilitation bonds**

## **5.1 Bonds held**

The total monetary value of the rehabilitation bonds held by the State under the MRSDA in 2023-24 was $896.2 million as at 30 June 2024. Up-to-date bonds held by the State are published on the Earth Resources Regulator website: <https://resources.vic.gov.au/community-and-land-use/rehabilitation>.

Table 5.1.1: Value of rehabilitation bonds by MRSDA tenement type and by financial year ($ million).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Sector** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Extractive industries  ($ million) | $92.2 | $91.9 | $93.0 | $92.9 | $100.8 | $109.0 | $121.5 |
| Mineral\* Licences  ($ million) | $720.0 | $720.9 | $721.2 | $721.6 | $723.8 | $719.8 | $739.6 |
| Non-MRSDA Licences  ($ million) | $5.4 | $5.4 | $5.4 | $11.1 | $15.7 | $26.0 | $35.1 |
| Total  ($ million) | $817.6 | $818.2 | $819.6 | $825.6 | $840.3 | $854.8 | $896.2 |

\* Mineral includes coal licences

**Figure 5.1.1: Extractive industries and mining rehabilitation bonds held at the end of financial year ($ million).**

## **5.2 Bond reviews**

Table 5.2.1: Rehabilitation bond reviews by financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Bond Reviews** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Result of review –  increase or initial bond | 47 | 28 | 38 | 147 | 96 | 69 | 104 |
| Result of review – no change | 7 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 6 | 7 |
| Result of review – partial or full release | 59 | 32 | 30 | 32 | 41 | 40 | 35 |
| Number of bonds reviewed | 113 | 62 | 69 | 180 | 140 | 116 | 146 |

The bond review numbers differ slightly from previous reports due to the undertaking of a data cleansing and re-alignment exercise for historical bond review records.

Figure 5.2.1: Outcome of bond reviews by financial year.

# **6 Revenue**

## **6.1 Royalties payable**

Table 6.1.1 Royalties payable by financial year ($ million).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Royalty Groups** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Extractive industries  ($ million) | $6.2 | $6.3 | $5.9 | $6.9 | $8.4 | $7.9 | $8.7 |
| Gold\*  ($ million) | N/A | N/A | $25.4 | $48.2 | $42.8 | $33.9 | $28.8 |
| Other minerals  ($ million) | $5.6 | $1.9 | $1.7 | $1.8 | $3.3 | $2.7 | $2.1 |
| Petroleum  ($ million) | $3.2 | $7.9 | $4.1 | $5.3 | $9.2 | $7.0 | $6.3 |
| Coal  ($ million) | $84.0 | $80.4 | $78.7 | $82.8 | $79.2 | $80.5 | $87.3 |
| Total  ($ million) | $99.0 | $96.5 | $115.8 | $145.0 | $142.9 | $132.0 | $133.2 |

\*From 1 January 2020, gold produced under a mining licence in Victoria is subject to a royalty. The royalty only applies to gold produced in a financial year in excess of 2,500 ounces.

Figure 6.1.1: Royalties payable by financial year ($ million).

## **6.2 Regulatory fees**

Table 6.2.1: Regulatory fees by financial year ($ million).

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Fee Types** | **2017-18** | **2018-19** | **2019-20** | **2020-21** | **2021-22** | **2022-23** | **2023-24** |
| Regulatory charges  ($ million) | $0.8 | $0.9 | $1.1 | $1.2 | $1.2 | $0.9 | $1.0 |
| Rent  ($ million) | $2.8 | $3.5 | $3.6 | $3.8 | $4.0 | $4.3 | $4.8 |
| Mine Stability Levy  ($ million) | $1.5 | $1.5 | $1.5 | $1.5 | $1.5 | $1.6 | $1.6 |
| Total  ($ million) | $5.1 | $5.9 | $6.2 | $6.5 | $6.7 | $6.8 | $7.4 |

Figure 6.2.1: Regulatory fees by financial year ($ million).

# **7 Compliance**

## **7.1 Compliance activities**

The Earth Resources Regulator undertakes a compliance program to ensure that authority holders comply with their obligations. Monitoring, compliance and enforcement activities under the MRSDA are summarised in the table below. More information on regulatory actions can be found here Regulatory actions Regulatory actions - [Resources Victoria​](https://resources.vic.gov.au/legislation-and-regulations/compliance-enforcement/regulatory-actions)

Table 7.1.1: Compliance activities by financial year.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Activities | 2017-18 | 2018-19 | 2019-20 | 2020-21 | 2021-22 | 2022-23 | 2023-24 |
| Audits | 152 | 163 | 108 | 79 | 55 | 32 | 66 |
| Inspections^ | 458 | 376 | 490 | 342 | 287 | 251 | 194 |
| CRG` | 171 | 143 | 144 | 134 | 122 | 83 | 78 |
| Notices Issued\* | 10 | 27 | 59 | 60 | 48 | 63 | 92 |
| Infringements | 0 | 42 | 83 | 50 | 215 | 453 | 57 |

^Inspections include site closures and site visits.

` Community Reference Group: Meetings, Community reference groups

\*Notices Issued: s110 and s110a Notices issued

Figure 7.1.1: Compliance activities by financial year over seven financial years

## **7.2 Industry annual returns submission rate**

Tenement holders are obliged to submit an annual report on their activities by the due date even if no work has been undertaken in the financial year. The information submitted is used to monitor industry activities, specify regulatory fees and royalties, and inform management of Victoria's earth resources sector by understanding the state of the industry and aiding further investment and jobs.

Table 7.2.1: MRSDA tenements FY 2023-24 annual report submission rate as at 25October 2024.

| Tenement  type | % annual returns received by due date or with extensions\* | % annual returns received late | % total annual returns received | % annual returns outstanding |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Extractive industries | 93% | 2% | 95% | 5% |
| Mining licences | 93% | 3.5% | 96.5% | 3.5% |
| Prospecting licences | 99% | 0% | 99% | 1% |
| Exploration licences | 94% | 2% | 96% | 4% |
| Retention licences | 92% | 2% | 94% | 6% |

\*Due dates: extractive industries 31 July 2024; mining and prospecting 28 July 2024; exploration and retention dates varied during the year. (Note: annual returns submitted includes regulator approved extensions.)

**Annual returns submitted by tenement type**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Tenement type** | **Annual returns** |
| Extractive industries | Annual return extractive industries / Royalty return |
| Mining licences | Expenditure and activity / Production and royalty |
| Prospecting licences | Expenditure and activity / Production and royalty |
| Exploration licences | Expenditure and activity / Annual technical |
| Retention licences | Expenditure and activity / Annual technical |

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