

Tuesday, 18 May 2021

Cancellation of Exploration Licence 8967 near Wellington NSW

A mining exploration licence in the Great Western Plains region of NSW has been cancelled following an investigation by the Resources Regulator which identified a range of compliance and conduct issues.

Exploration licence 8967, issued to Kris Hetherington to explore for Group One minerals (gold) near Wellington, was cancelled effective from 17 May 2021 on the basis that the Regulator was satisfied the titleholder had been undertaking mining without authorisation and was not a 'fit and proper person' to hold a mining authorisation.

Resources Regulator Executive Director Anthony Keon said the titleholder's conduct during the Regulator's investigation was extremely concerning and completely unacceptable, which warranted the immediate cancellation of the title.

"During the course of the investigation the titleholder posted numerous videos on YouTube which made direct threats to an inspector and publicly posted abusive comments towards the department, other individuals and organisations," Mr Keon said.

"Concerningly, despite being faced with the ultimate sanction of cancellation of the licence, the titleholder made little attempt to rectify the identified issues or show any remorse but instead continued to take an aggressive, abusive and threatening approach in response to the Regulator's compliance activities.

"This type of behaviour is completely unacceptable and strikes at the very heart of a person's fitness to conduct mining activities in NSW and the Resources Regulator will not tolerate this type of behaviour."

The Regulator cancelled EL 8967 on the basis that the titleholder had conducted unauthorised mining activities and was not a 'fit and proper person' as he:

- Had committed several offences under relevant legislation, including threatening /intimidating an inspector
- Was not of good repute, by virtue of his abusive and threatening public posts.

"The Regulator has a range of enforcement tools and will take strong and decisive action where it is found that licence holders are operating outside of their legislative obligations," Mr Keon said.

Read the full reasons for decision at:

https://www.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0004/1312672/DOC21-387638-Reason-for-Decision-document-Cancellation-of-Exploration-8967-Act-1992-EL-8967-Redacted.pdf

For further information about the NSW Resources Regulator, go to:

www.resourcesregulator.nsw.gov.au