1. The National Mine Safety Framework (NMSF) started as an initiative of the Conference of Chief Inspectors of Mines but became one of 27 Council of Australian Governments (COAG) reforms. One of the strategies under the NMSF is to develop a nationally consistent legislative and regulatory framework.
2. Queensland has participated in the NMSF based on the position that existing safety and health standards will not be diminished. Queensland, New South Wales (NSW) and Western Australia (WA) are collectively responsible for approximately 85 to 90 per cent of mining operations across Australia. Queensland, NSW and WA have maintained that their frameworks must include additional rigour to that of the other jurisdictions whose mining activity is far less complex, and have participated in a “non-core” NMSF process, in developing provisions additional to the “core” NMSF process (for all jurisdictions). The “non-core” provisions should ensure greater regulatory consistency across the three major mining states through more consistent technical and competency requirements.
3. Queensland’s Mine Safety Framework Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement addresses four options:
* Option 1 is to retain the current legislative framework together with amendments in key areas to improve safety and/or consistency with NSW and WA. The proposed amendments will add further rigour to the framework and address some of the strategic priorities of the Mines Inspectorate based upon current concerns and safety trends.
* Option 2 is similar to option 1 except Queensland’s two mine safety Acts would be combined into one longer piece of legislation.
* Option 3 is to develop mine safety legislation primarily based on the Model Work Health and Safety Act, plus any NMSF provisions that improve safety and consistency. The key risks for this option include diminution in mine safety standards and greater regulatory burden through less specific legislation and regulation applying to mining.
* Option 4 is maintaining the status quo.
1. The Regulatory Impact Statement indicates that improving requirements through option 1 with minimal costs that are offset by potential safety and health benefits, provides opportunities to further improve and fine tune the world class mining safety and health regime developed by the Queensland Government, industry and unions.
2. Cabinet approved that the Department of Natural Resources and Mines release Queensland’s Mine Safety Framework Consultation Regulatory Impact Statement for amendments to the *Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999* and *Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999* and their Regulations for further consultation in relation to options under the National Mine Safety Framework.
3. *Attachments*
* [Queensland’s Mine Safety Framework Regulatory Impact Statement](Attachments/Attachment%20-%20RIS%20mine-safety-framework.PDF)