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# BC establishes mining task force to grow jobs

27TH FEBRUARY 2018 BY: HENRY LAZENBY - CREAMER MEDIA DEPUTY EDITOR: NORTH AMERICA



BC Minister of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Michelle Mungall announces the provincial Mining Jobs Task Force  
Photo by: British Columbia Government

([miningweekly.com](http://www.miningweekly.com)) – The British Columbia (BC) government has established the long-awaited Mining Jobs Task Force on Monday.

The task force, which has its roots in the 2014 Mount Polley mine tailings pond failure in the Cariboo region of the province, is established amid intensifying disputes with Alaska over downstream pollution in cross-

frontier rivers and is etched against the recent rejection of KGHM Polska Miedź's Ajax copper/gold mine, near Kamloops.

Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources Minister **Michelle Mungall** announced the establishment of the task force in conjunction with Mining Day events at the Parliament buildings, and was flanked by Mining Association of British Columbia CEO **Bryan Cox**, stressing the need for minerals for an "electrified economy and for transportation".

The 12-member task force will include representatives from the mining industry, First Nations, municipal government, an environmental nongovernmental organisation, labour, post-secondary/training and the financial sector. The task force will submit its final report, including recommendations for legislative and/or regulatory amendments, to the Minister by November 21.

"One of our goals with this review is to find ways to ensure mines in BC remain viable when commodity prices fluctuate, so that people can keep working and communities can thrive," Mungall stated.

Cox, who will serve on the task force, said the mining association would tour the province with an illustrated electric car that highlighted the need for copper and other materials to electrify the transportation network.

"A strong and thriving BC mining industry can continue to play a pivotal leadership role in Canada's transition to a clean tech, lower-carbon future, for the benefit of BC families and workers," Cox said.

The task force will be responsible for providing the Minister with recommendations on:

- Establishing baseline metrics to measure the current state of the industry and provide an economic impact analysis of the mining sector in the province;
- Skills training and development;
- A coordinated provincial approach to geoscience;
- Potential financial incentive programmes and the province's competitiveness and approach to attract mining investment;
- Potential government actions to ensure the sustainability of existing mines and job protection during commodity cycles;
- Identify innovation and partnership opportunities that ensure an environmentally sustainable mining sector;
- Identify best practices in mining jobsite health and safety;
- Increasing public awareness of the importance of the mining sector to the province and its role in a low-carbon future; and
- In consultation with the Minister, any other matters arising over the course of the review that the task force considers significant.

Mineral exploration, mining and related sectors in British Columbia provide jobs for more than 30 000 people in communities throughout the province and add more than C\$6-billion to the province's gross domestic product, according to government data.

Currently, more than 1 100 businesses in British Columbia provide supplies or services to mining operations in the province. Mining is the largest private-sector employer of Indigenous people in Canada and British Columbia shares mineral tax revenue with First Nations.

British Columbia is Canada's largest producer of copper, largest exporter of steelmaking coal and the only producer of molybdenum, which is a key component in the steelmaking process. 🏠