



## OUR APPROACH TO TAILINGS MANAGEMENT

Tailings are a by-product of the mining and refining process after recoverable metals and minerals have been extracted from mined ore. Tailings are commonly in the form of a slurry (a mixture of solids and process water) and are discharged into a tailings storage facility (TSF). The safe management of TSFs is an integral part of mining and processing activities.

We recognise the potential risks TSFs present to our people, our communities, the environment and other stakeholders. Our approach to tailings management reflects our commitment to safe and responsible management throughout the TSF lifecycle and applies to all South32-operated TSFs.<sup>(1)</sup>

### Our commitments

We are committed to:

- Managing our TSFs with the aim of protecting our employees, surrounding communities, the environment and our physical assets, throughout the TSF lifecycle;
- Implementing the Global Industry Standard on Tailings Management (GISTM) at all South32-operated TSFs. We also support and advocate implementation of the GISTM at all our non-operated joint venture TSFs, within the limits of the joint venture arrangements;
- Monitoring and independent auditing of our TSFs so that controls for TSF risks can be comprehensively assessed and continually improved;
- Regularly updating and testing our tailings emergency preparedness and response plans;
- Pursuing opportunities that will improve reuse and recovery of our tailings waste streams thus reducing our environmental footprint and closure legacy;
- Financial provisioning for TSF closure; and
- Assessing the physical impacts of climate change at all our operated assets to anticipate required changes in management of our current and future TSFs.

### Meeting our commitments

The principles that support us to meet our commitments are outlined below:

- **Compliance and risk management:** we design, construct, operate, monitor, maintain and decommission all our operated TSFs in a safe manner, consistent with regulatory requirements, applicable guidelines and our internal standards. We aim to minimise long-term environmental and social risks, as well as liabilities associated with our TSFs;
- **Community engagement:** we engage with our communities on the design, operation, and management of our TSFs;
- **Knowledge-sharing:** we actively support improvements in tailings management through the ICMM, industry conferences and research projects; and
- **Innovation:** we actively look at how we can apply innovative solutions to improve tailings management.

(1) The number of TSFs operated by South32 is published annually in our Sustainable Development Report.

## Our management approach

Our overarching approach to tailings management is to achieve stable tailings. This involves understanding tailings behaviour, reducing water content at TSFs, and developing innovative construction techniques for these TSFs.

Resourcing and accountability for tailings management:

- We maintain adequate resourcing to meet the requirements of the GISTM, including Accountable Executives (AE), Responsible Tailings Facility Engineers (RTFEs), Engineers of Record (EoR) and Independent Tailings Review Boards (ITRB)/ Independent Reviewers (IR).
- The safety and integrity of our tailings facilities are included as key performance indicators that inform performance outcomes and incentive payments for all roles (including relevant executive managers) related to tailings management.

Identifying and managing risks:

- We conduct risk assessments at each of our operated TSFs and associated major projects to identify material risk issues. This is managed according to our System of Risk Management.
- We commission independent technical reviews of design, operational performance, and risk assessments of our operated TSFs including dam safety reviews in accordance with the GISTM requirements.
- We manage risks associated with our TSFs in accordance with the consequence category defined by regulatory requirements, applicable guidelines and standards.

Monitoring and surveillance:

- We inspect and monitor our TSFs, including tailings deposition control, surface water management, instrumentation, and embankment performance in accordance with each operation's Operating, Maintenance and Surveillance Manual.

Emergency preparedness and response:

- TSF failure contingency and emergency response plans specific to each TSF are prepared and routinely tested, considering the hazards and consequence category of each TSF. This includes the involvement of relevant local communities and emergency response agencies.

Community engagement and human rights:

- We engage with local communities to build open and transparent relationships and share information on our approach and emergency response (where relevant) to ensure a shared state of readiness and understanding.
- We conduct human rights due diligence on our tailings storage facilities over their full lifecycle in alignment with the GISTM requirements.

Reporting and disclosure:

- We disclose information on our TSFs in accordance with the requirements of the GISTM.
- We report tailings related data through our Annual Reporting Suite, and to relevant regulatory agencies as required in the jurisdictions in which we operate.

## What guides us

Our Approach to Tailings Management is consistent with the ICMM Tailings Management Good Practice Guide, which is informed by the requirements of the GISTM and the commitments in the ICMM's Tailings Governance Framework Position Statement, the ICMM Mining Principles, as well as the Australian National Committee on Large Dams (ANCOLD) guidelines. These external requirements are embedded in our internal dam management standard.

Our Approach to Tailings Management supports our Sustainability Policy and is managed through our relevant executive management-approved internal dam management, environment and climate change, social performance, and closure standards. These are supplemented by operational procedures that account for local and regional needs and regulatory requirements.

We comply with local laws, and where applicable law differs from the commitments in this approach, we seek to follow the higher standard. Where there is a conflict between local law and this approach, we will comply with the applicable law while seeking to meet our tailings management commitments.

## Governance

Our Board has ultimate responsibility for our company's governance and strategic direction. The Sustainability Committee assists the Board in its oversight of our sustainability management, performance, assurance, and reporting practices. This includes endorsing our public tailings management commitments to the Board for approval, overseeing our tailings-related risks, and monitoring the adequacy and effectiveness of our tailings management approach.

Management accountability for TSFs is assigned to our Chief Operating Officers (implementation at the operations), Chief Development Officer (non-operated joint ventures, within the limits of the joint venture arrangements) and Chief Technical Officer (standards and stewardship).

The appointed ITRBs and IRs provide independent review across the lifecycle of the TSFs.

We periodically undertake internal and/or independent third-party assurance to assess compliance with our internal standards, as well as the ICMM Mining Principles and associated Performance Expectations.

## Application

Our approach applies to all directors, management, employees, contractors and third parties who act on behalf of South32. We work closely with our non-operated joint ventures to support the adoption of standards of conduct consistent with ours, as relevant and within the limits of the joint venture arrangements.

Our approach will be reviewed every two years, or more frequently, if necessary, so it remains relevant and appropriate to South32's tailings management activities. It was approved by our Board in July 2023.

## To learn more

Further information on our approach to tailings management, including performance and progress, can be found on our Tailings page and in our Annual Reporting Suite at [www.south32.net](http://www.south32.net).

