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16th August 2011

Executive Officer
Economic Development & Infrastructure Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
East Melbourne, Vic 3002



Re: Inquiry into Greenfields Mineral Exploration & Project Development in Victoria

Dear Members

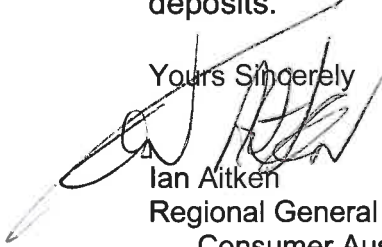
In reference to your inquiry into Greenfield mineral exploration, and in particular the potential for gold exploration, Minelab Electronics would like to encourage the committee to take a broad, open view on the possibilities that this presents.

Metal detecting along with gold panning, sluicing and other forms of alluvial work, are some of the only forms of prospecting happening in Victoria. It tends to be the hobbyists, scattered all over the state, who look in their own 'backyard' in the hope of finding gold in areas unknown in the past. There are numerous occasions where metal detectorists, recognizing the possibilities from commonality of rock types, vegetation and other geology with known goldfields, have discovered gold in areas that have never been mined. Often these areas may show signs of old exploratory shafts or trenches, but without hitting sufficiently rich deposits, the old-timers moved on.

The ease and low environmental impact of prospecting with a metal detector, is an ideal method to test the potential of 'undiscovered sites'. Access to land is an ongoing issue, with restrictions into some State & National Parks preventing the access to prospect these areas. The act of prospecting with a metal detector is well recognized as an extremely low impact activity which should be allowed in a wider range of areas than is currently available.

The other tool which is currently missing for the active hobbyist is a lay-mans guide to Victoria's geology. Showing the interlinks and similarities across the state, the strike of the reefs, etc would encourage amateur prospectors to venture away from the known deposits into the Greenfield areas with good deposits.

Yours Sincerely


Ian Aitken
Regional General Manager
- Consumer Australasia