



The Coal
Authority

Proposed public task statement

This statement sets out the functions carried out by the Coal Authority (“the Authority”) that are within the Authority’s public task under the Re-use of Public Sector Information Regulations 2015.

It is published primarily to provide clarity to re-users and potential re-users of the Authority’s information.

The Authority owns the vast majority of unworked coal in Great Britain, as well as former coal mines. It is a non-departmental public body (NDPB) sponsored by the Department of Energy and Climate Change (DECC), and was established by Parliament under the Coal Industry Act 1994 to undertake a range of statutory functions including:

- Licensing coal mining operations;
- Matters with respect to coal mining subsidence damage outside the Areas of Responsibility of coal mining licensees;
- Dealing with property and historic liability issues; for example environmental projects, minewater treatment schemes and surface hazards relating to past coal mining; and
- Providing public access to information held by the Authority on coal mining.

The Authority’s public task comprises all the functions, duties and responsibilities set out in the following documents:-

- The Coal Industry Act 1994 (“the 1994 Act”);
- The Coal Mining Subsidence Act 1991, as amended by the 1994 Act;

- A Revised Coal Authority Explanatory Note, produced by the Department of Trade and Industry (DTI) for Parliament in June 1994 to explain the intended provisions of the Coal Industry Bill;
- The Water Act 2003;
- The Water Services etc (Scotland) Act 2005;
- Statement by Lord Strathclyde in 1994 on the Government's expectations of the Authority relating to minewater remediation;
- Re-statement by John Battle MP in 1998 that the Authority is the designated body with responsibility for dealing with minewater discharges from former coal mines;
- Energy Act 2011.

The Authority's public task also includes any functions, duties and responsibilities as directed by the Secretary of State. To date the Secretary of State has not made any such direction.

Details of our activities can be found on our website www.coal.gov.uk

From 1 December 2015, you can see our IFTS licensing page for our information asset register, application terms, conditions, exceptions and charges.

Our public task information is available to licence for re-use subject to the condition and charges provided on request by contacting the Authority on data@coal.gov.uk and set out in the CON29M Reports section below. The Authority will consider any requests to re-use information falling outside its public task.

The Authority is accredited to the Information Fair Trader Scheme (IFTS) managed by the Office of Public Sector Information (OPSI). The Scheme sets and assesses standards for public sector bodies. It requires members to encourage the re-use of information and to ensure that level playing field access is provided to their information assets for both internal and external users.

In this regard the Authority acknowledges, understands and respects the importance of commercial confidentiality in all its dealings with the re-use community and is prepared to sign a Non Disclosure Agreement (NDA) with potential information re-users prior to any discussions in these conditions. The NDA is not intended to create any lack of transparency on behalf of both parties nor to provide any unfair advantage to those parties entering into the NDA.

CON29M Reports and constituent parts (and equivalent reports in Scotland) for re-use under licence and the use of the Authority's data in the production of mining reports under licence

The activity of supplying CON29M reports (ie not just the information, but the information formatted into the prescribed layout and content) is a part of the Authority's public task. This follows the "*Revised Coal Authority explanatory note provided by the DTI*" on the *Coal Industry Bill 1994* that the Authority would continue to provide mining reports much in line with British Coal's previous practice. To this end the Authority provides CON29M reports.

The licensing of the Authority's coal mining information and data to create equivalent products to the CON29M also falls within the Authority's public task and does not constitute re-use for the purposes of regulation 4 of the Re-Use Regulations.

The Authority will, subject to licence approval criteria, licence its data and constituent parts of its CON29M report for the production of CON29M coal mining reports or successors or variants to CON29M (or equivalent reports in Scotland) or any similar product which is used to substitute for the user's need of the CON29M. This will effectively create a market for the production of mining reports.

The Authority considers the bundling of a Coal Authority CON29M report into another product or series of products to be an appropriate re-use of the CON29M report. Although the content of the report cannot be disaggregated the bundling of a report will allow users to integrate the contents of a CON29M into existing or new products deviating from the Law Society's prescribed form and layout.

The Authority will under licence and subject to licence approval criteria, supply its data for use in the creation of products and services relating to the purchase, sale, mortgage (or further advance), or development of property and land that would replicate or replace the requirement for a CON29M report or impact the property market. The approval criteria and licence terms can be obtained by contacting the Authority on data@coal.gov.uk

This statement is regularly reviewed and is due to be considered again no later than 2017. The process of review will provide for public consultation allowing licensees to register any comments, changes, additions or omissions. Public notice will be issued inviting submission to the consultation process. If you have any queries on this public task statement, you can submit them using the [contact us facility](#) on our website. If you wish to challenge the scope of the Authority's public task or have a complaint about the Authority under the Re-use Regulations, you can submit details using our general [complaints handling process](#).