

# JUNIOR AND EMERGING MINERS' DESK


Fact sheet

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**MINERALS COUNCIL**  
SOUTH AFRICA



 Orion Minerals

“The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk hopes to be a voice for the developing mining sector of South Africa.”

## Who are junior miners?

The term “junior mining”, internationally, generally refers to prospecting companies only involved in the early stages of mining development. This is particularly true for Canada where junior exploration companies are supported through the Prospectors & Developers Association of Canada. In Australia, junior mining usually refers to mid-tier producers. In South Africa, however, the term junior mining has taken on a wider meaning and includes, in addition to exploration companies, mid-tier producers. Examples of junior producers operating in South Africa are Wesizwe in the platinum sector and Kuyasa in the coal sector. Orion Minerals is an example of a junior exploration company operating in the Northern Cape.

## Who are emerging miners?

“Emerging miners”, a term indigenous to South Africa, typically refers to smaller mining companies or micro-enterprises. Most are new entrants to the industry and many have full BEE credentials. Since the advent of the Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act (MPRDA) in 2002, there has been significant increase in the number of smaller mining companies operating in South Africa.

## What is the Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk?

The purpose of the Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk is to provide advice and support, and to act as a resource centre for smaller Minerals Council member companies.

While the Minerals Council, at policy level, presents a consolidated position on key policy areas, it is sensitive to the needs of its smaller members who often lack the capacity and resources to implement policy and legislation.

There are several areas where junior companies require assistance: for example, in managing regulatory issues and legal compliance and in the raising of finance. While the Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk does not directly assist individual companies, it is, however, able to lobby on behalf of its junior members at a policy level.

**WHAT THE JUNIOR AND EMERGING MINERS’ DESK OFFERS ITS MEMBERS**

**WEBINARS ON TOPICAL ISSUES**

**MENTORSHIP PROGRAMME**

**RESEARCH**

**COMMITTEE WORK**

**LOBBYING AND RECRUITMENT**

**MEDIA ENGAGEMENT**

**POLICY LOBBYING**



**Webinars:** Webinars are open to all junior and emerging mining companies and are not exclusive to Minerals Council members. To date, webinars have been held on topics such as Mine Community Development, Finance for Junior Miners, Water Management, and the Mining Charter and Junior Mining.



**Mentorship:** The Minerals Council initially established a mentorship group to support junior and emerging miners. Latterly, however, mentorship has been largely through the Junior and Emerging Miners Leadership Forum where key policy issues are debated. This is supported by ongoing briefing sessions in key areas such as modernisation and new technologies in mining.



**The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Leadership Forum:**

Leadership fora are the most senior committees in the Minerals Council. The Chair of the Junior and Emerging Miners’ Leadership Forum represents this committee on the Board of the Minerals Council. Open to the CEOs of Junior members, this committee debates policy positions, shares strategic, non-competitive information from departments within the Minerals Council and sets the policy position for the junior sector.



**Policy Committees:** Junior miners also sit on various policy committees within the Minerals Council such as the Mining Charter Reference Group, the Occupational Health and Safety Committee and the Legal Advisory Committee.



**Research:** Various research exercises are undertaken into policy related issues. In 2019 a major research report was released which examined the economic impact of the junior mining sector in South Africa. Snap surveys are also conducted with our members, an example being the impact that COVID-19 had on junior mining companies.



**Recruitment:** Recruitment of new members takes place continuously. Although the Minerals Council does not actively recruit new members, junior membership has been increasing over the past few years at the rate of 20 percent per annum.



**Media:** The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk reaches wide audiences through various media platforms, including the Minerals Council’s website. In this way, it also provides an interactive forum for junior and emerging miners seeking information and advice.



**Policy lobbying:** In many cases, junior and emerging miners have particular needs, in terms of mining policy and regulations, which the Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk aims to address. In representing broader and collective policy positions for relevant stakeholders, the Minerals Council is sensitive to these requirements without compromising compliance and leading practice. The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Leadership Forum successfully lobbied for concessions in the Mining Charter pertaining to smaller companies, as well as holding regular engagements with the Department of Mineral Resources and Energy. Since 2020 the Minerals Council junior miners have been deeply involved in the exploration revival strategy through participating in the Exploration Revival Task Team.



**WHAT DOES THE JUNIOR AND EMERGING MINERS’ DESK DO?**

The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk hopes to be a voice for the developing mining sector of South Africa. Its key role is in supporting its junior members through policy lobbying, providing advice, linking junior and emerging miners to networks, providing mentorship and disseminating relevant policy information.

The Junior and Emerging Miners’ Desk also supports contracting companies and two mining associations representing over 200 smaller companies.

To provide strategic leadership, the inaugural Junior and Emerging Miners’ Leadership Forum convened in March 2018. Membership is limited to chief executive officers with an allowance for the appointment of alternates. The chair of the Forum sits on the Minerals Council board.

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