

## MINERAL RIGHTS TENURE

By Deborah Spicer

The Department of Mineral Resources (DMR) has come a considerable way in promoting transparency in its granting of mineral rights by publishing the list of rights holders and applicants for mineral rights on its website along with the status and location of rights and mineral rights applications.

Mineral rights applicants had often been frustrated by a lack of information about their own applications as well as information about others' applications, and administrative confusion at the DMR had sometimes resulted in competing applicants being awarded the same farm's rights and the loss of applications. However, now the DMR has placed volumes of information on its website (with ~23MB , consisting of 8,359 pages of information, available just on Limpopo), and this should better assist the DMR and the minerals industry understand mineral tenure in South Africa.

However, while the DMR should be lauded for its efforts, which are believed to have kept DMR employees working overtime for months, Venmyn would like the following wishlist met when the DMR next reviews its National Mining Promotion System:-

- a file format that can be edited, since Venmyn finds the PDF file format that has been used difficult to run queries on;
- additional information, including farm names, portion numbers and the commodities to which applications relate;
- the number of the rights, in addition to the DMR reference numbers; and
- a more consistent co-ordinate system, since Universal Transverse Mercator and Longitude and Latitude co-ordinates are intermixed with each other.

Although this may take some time to develop, Venmyn would like to see the National Mining Promotion System eventually integrated into Google Earth with farm boundaries and mineral and prospecting boundaries indicated on them, along with the status of each application.

Venmyn encourages all of its clients to verify their mineral rights by going to <http://www.dmr.gov.za/MNPS/nmps.html>