

**Ministry of Energy, Mines and
Low Carbon Innovation**

**2024/25 – 2026/27
Service Plan**

February 2024



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Minister's Accountability Statement



The Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation 2024/25 – 2026/27 Service Plan was prepared under my direction in accordance with the *Budget Transparency and Accountability Act*. I am accountable for the basis on which the plan has been prepared.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Josie", written in a cursive style.

Honourable Josie Osborne
Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation
February 12, 2024

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Strategic Direction

In 2024/25, the Government of British Columbia will remain focused on providing the services and infrastructure that people depend on to build a good life. Government will continue delivering results that matter to British Columbians including helping people with costs, attainable and affordable housing, strengthened health care, safer communities, and a secure, clean and fair economy. Government will continue working collaboratively with Indigenous Peoples as it implements the Action Plan for the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act and delivers initiatives that advance reconciliation in ways that make a difference in communities throughout the province.

This 2024/25 service plan outlines how the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation will support the government's priorities including the foundational principles listed above and selected action items identified in the 2024 [Minister's Mandate Letter](#).

Purpose of the Ministry

The [Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation](#) (Ministry) is responsible for British Columbia's (B.C.'s) electricity, alternative energy, hydrogen, oil, and natural gas sectors and related infrastructure, and the province's mining and mineral exploration sectors. These sectors are made up of diverse interests that use and develop energy, low carbon fuels and electricity generation, transmission, and distribution infrastructure and that explore for and produce oil, natural gas, coal, and valuable minerals. To support Government's coordinated climate, energy and economic objectives, the Ministry focuses on advancing energy efficiency and clean or renewable energy sources and technologies, making sure that the energy we use, develop and export is the cleanest possible.

The Ministry facilitates electricity, mining, oil and gas, and clean energy sectors which are globally competitive, demonstrate leading environmental practices, and advance reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, while providing opportunities and quality jobs for British Columbians and a fair return on resources to support the province's priorities.

The Ministry carries out this work in support of the [CleanBC plan and Roadmap to 2030](#), as well as commitments to Indigenous reconciliation including the Declaration Act Action Plan. In fulfilling its mandate, the Ministry consults and collaborates with other ministries and levels of government, private sector stakeholders, Indigenous people, communities, regulators, environmental and industry organizations, and the public.

The Ministry supports the Minister in discharging responsibilities for the following Crown Corporations: [British Columbia Hydro and Power Authority](#) (BC Hydro), the [BC Energy Regulator](#).

Operating Environment

The CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 and the [StrongerBC Economic Plan](#) set out the Government's integrated approach for long-term low carbon energy production and use, reducing

greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and economic resilience. Ministry programs further the advancement of the Province's climate goals through the decarbonization of energy used in the built environment, transportation, and industry. The Site C Project continues, and once complete in 2025, will provide 1,100 megawatts of dependable capacity and generate about 5,100 gigawatt hours of energy each year — enough to power the equivalent of 450,000 homes. The Ministry continues to work with the First Nations Leadership Council and First Nations directly on current and future opportunities in B.C.'s low carbon energy sector.

British Columbians are adopting zero-emission vehicles (ZEVs) at high rates, across all regions of B.C. Zero-emission vehicles use cleaner energy, improve air quality, and cost dramatically less over time to fuel and operate. To increase supply of ZEVs to B.C., Government has increased the requirements of the light-duty ZEV mandate and committed to implement regulated targets for medium- and heavy-duty ZEVs. The suite of CleanBC Go Electric programs is supporting the market transformation with funding and rebates to help make ZEVs more affordable, and spur investment in outreach, infrastructure, skills training, and economic development in the ZEV sector.

There is a need for energy efficiency as well as fuel-switching policies in the transportation sector. To this end, the Ministry committed to develop, along with other ministries, a Clean Transportation Action Plan that will outline further actions to reduce emissions, increase energy efficiency, through reducing distances travelled and switching to more energy-efficient modes like walking, cycling, bus, rail, and marine, and move to low carbon energy in the transportation sector. B.C.'s ZEV sector continues to deliver jobs and significant economic opportunities across the province, supporting approximately 11,300 full-time jobs and contributing \$1.15 billion to the provincial gross domestic product.

The Ministry is implementing policies and programs to support the decarbonization of buildings and community energy systems. Energy efficiency retrofits reduce energy costs and increase the health and comfort of buildings while supporting local businesses. The CleanBC [Better Homes](#) and [Better Buildings](#) suite of programs support individuals, low-income households and businesses to complete energy retrofits, including the installation of heat pumps. In the case of remote communities, the Province's partnership with Indigenous nations, BC Hydro and the federal government aims to replace diesel generators with renewable alternatives while supporting Indigenous economic development.

Through the Low Carbon Fuel Standard, B.C. is reducing GHG emissions from fuels supplied in the province, driving innovation and investment in low carbon fuel production and strengthening fuel supply chains to increase the availability of low carbon energy.

B.C. is partnering with the Federal government and the First Nations Leadership Council on [Regional Energy and Resource Tables \(RERT\)](#), an initiative created by Canada to enable provinces, including First Nations, to address barriers and seize economic opportunities enabled by the transition to a low carbon economy. RERT will focus on priority areas and joint actions, including aligning resources, timelines, and regulatory processes to accelerate goals outlined in CleanBC and StrongerBC. The six priority areas are: electrification, critical minerals,

clean fuels/hydrogen, carbon management technology and systems, forest sector, and regulatory efficiency.

There is a growing trend in the global marketplace toward the consideration of Environmental, Social and Governance performance in important investment and decision-making. The B.C. government is committed to creating an economic and investment climate that is ESG-centric, as we continue building an inclusive, sustainable, and innovative economy that works for everyone. The Ministry is enabling digital tools to support B.C.'s sustainable economic development while maintaining high levels of environmental protection. The Ministry's collaboration with industry on the Energy & Mines Digital Trust (EMDT) empowers operators to securely and efficiently share critical data on their sustainability performance and prove where their products originated and how they were produced. EMDT has the potential to open new market opportunities for B.C.'s natural resource industry and solidify the province as a world leader in low carbon innovation.

In 2023/24, B.C.'s mining industry saw mixed results due to fluctuating commodity prices. Prices for precious metals (gold and silver) increased over 2022/23 and copper prices remained strong finding support in emerging technologies including ZEVs. However, the price for metallurgical coal decreased over 20% from 2022/23 due to global oversupply conditions and slowing demand from major steel producers including China. B.C.'s long-term outlook remains positive with the demand for critical minerals expected to grow significantly. B.C. is Canada's largest producer of copper and only producer of molybdenum and has potential for nickel, cobalt, graphite, rare earth elements, niobium, platinum group minerals, tantalum, vanadium, and zinc. B.C.'s low carbon mining sector has significant potential to attract global investment and a fair share of the [\\$3.8 billion in federal funds earmarked for a critical minerals strategy](#). Three new mines are anticipated to start production in the next three years and several new mines and expansions are currently under or scheduled for regulatory review.

The Ministry continues to focus on First Nation consultation and permitting improvements to advance a regulatory framework that protects the environment while ensuring competitiveness. Delivering on a [Declaration Act Action Plan](#) commitment to modernize the Mineral Tenure Act (MTA), including responding to a recent, related decision by the BC Supreme Court, will be key to the long-term outlook for the sector.

Oversight of mining activity is critical to fostering greater confidence in B.C.'s mineral exploration and mining sector. The Office of the Chief Inspector of Mines (OCIM) provides regulatory oversight of approximately 4700 permitted mines and mineral exploration sites across the province, as per the [Annual Report of the Chief Inspector of Mines 2022/23](#). This represents a 19% increase in permitted sites since 2020/21. This increase is largely due to growth in mineral exploration activity and placer mining in the province, which are closely linked to changes in commodity prices and speculation related to critical minerals, as well as efficiencies in permitting new sites. The numbers of permitted major mines, and stone, sand and gravel sites have remained relatively stable. The OCIM continues to prioritize inspections in consideration of site and operational risks, to ensure that inspection resources are allocated to the highest risk sites, which is in keeping with the Natural Resource Sector Compliance Management Framework. Additionally, the OCIM is actively engaging with First Nations to

increase participation and collaboration in compliance activities, including increasing the number of inspections accompanied by First Nations.

On September 1, 2023, the provisions of the *Energy Statutes Amendment Act, 2022* (Bill 37) were brought into force. The amendments renamed the *Oil and Gas Activities Act* to the *Energy Resource Activities Act*, established the [BC Energy Regulator](#) (formerly the BC Oil and Gas Commission), and expanded their responsibilities to include hydrogen, ammonia and methanol. Additional amendments clarified government's authority to regulate the safe and effective storage of carbon dioxide from any source; and, along with regulatory updates, advanced a provincial approach to carbon capture, utilization and storage, a key action in the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030.

The majority of natural gas produced in the province continues to make its way via pipelines to Alberta, eastern Canada and into the United States, with the remainder supplying domestic consumers. According to the Canada Energy Regulator's [Energy Future 2023](#), and the US Energy Information Agency's [Annual Energy Outlook 2023](#), strong demand for natural gas throughout North America is expected to continue into 2024. In terms of domestic consumption, the Ministry continues to develop policies to decarbonize B.C.'s natural gas grid and reduce emissions in the buildings and industry sectors.

Performance Planning

Goal 1: An innovative, low carbon energy portfolio that advances CleanBC economic opportunities across all sectors.

This goal is key to supporting the CleanBC Plan and Roadmap to 2030. The Ministry facilitates energy sectors which demonstrate leading environmental practices while providing opportunities and quality jobs for British Columbians. The first objective under this goal outlines the Ministry's efforts to electrify B.C.'s economy, which will contribute significantly to the reduction of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The second objective outlines the Ministry's programs to incentivise British Columbians to decarbonize their energy choices to further reduce GHG emissions.

Objective 1.1: Accelerate efforts to electrify B.C.'s economy to support the provincial CleanBC plan.

Electrification of the B.C. economy supports the greenhouse gas (GHG) reduction targets set out in the CleanBC Plan and Roadmap to 2030.

Key Strategies

- Continue implementing CleanBC policy objectives and initiatives into ministry legislation, policies, programs, and operations to meet provincial energy, economic and climate goals.
- Support Government's coordinated, climate, energy, and economic objectives through energy innovation and clean technology development, including continued support provided by the Innovative Clean Energy (ICE) Fund.
- Develop a climate-aligned energy framework for B.C., which will articulate the Province's overall vision, principles, goals, and priority areas for direction that will lead to a clean, competitive, and inclusive B.C. that is powered by our world-leading low-carbon energy resources.
- Work with BC Hydro to support their plan to acquire new clean or renewable energy resources through a competitive Call for Power in 2024.
- Pursue new Indigenous community partnerships (including ownership and/or equity interest) in clean energy and infrastructure with BC Hydro and support Indigenous leadership in community clean energy projects.
- Work with BC Hydro to advance the electrification of the B.C. economy – including their updated electrification and capital plans.
- Work with the BC Utilities Commission to advance B.C.'s clean energy transition to support the Province's climate goals and affordability objectives.

- Work with BC Hydro to support their plan to acquire new clean or renewable energy resources through a competitive Call for Power in 2024.
- Continue the development and implementation of the CleanBC Remote Community Energy Strategy in collaboration with Indigenous nations, BC Hydro and the federal government to reduce the use of diesel fuel for electricity generation by 80% by 2030.

Discussion

The strategies under Objective 1.1 focus on electrification, industrial decarbonisation, and energy efficiency, all of which support the CleanBC plan and the plan transition to a low carbon energy system. The Ministry will work with Indigenous nations and communities, to provide partnership opportunities in the green economy. The Ministry will continue to monitor progress on its CleanBC policies and programs.

The Ministry will continue to work with Canada and stakeholders to expand electrification of industries of all sizes across sectors to fast-track their efforts to go green. The Ministry will work with academia, industry and all levels of government to support innovation of clean energy technology and systems.

This includes continuing to work with BC Hydro to ensure the Province's generation, transmission and distribution assets continue to deliver reliable and cost-effective service to all British Columbians, including those living in remote communities.

Objective 1.2: Effective programs and incentives that encourage British Columbians to decarbonize their energy usage, by choosing greener homes, buildings and transportation.

The Ministry encourages energy market transformation by incentivizing consumers and businesses to manage energy costs and switch to low carbon transportation and heating fuels in support of CleanBC outcomes.

Key Strategies

- Increase affordability and accessibility of clean transportation options through the [Zero-Emission Vehicles Act](#) and [GoElectric](#) program investments in public awareness, skills training, advanced research and commercialization, home and workplace charging rebates, public charging and hydrogen fuelling infrastructure, fleets, vehicle rebates across all vehicle classes, and commercial vehicle pilots.
- Work with utility, private and public partners to complete B.C.'s Electric Highway in 2024 to ensure geographic connectivity for EVs across all highways and major roads in B.C., and to install 10,000 public chargers by 2030.
- Enhance utility and provincial energy efficiency programs through improved accessibility, alignment with CleanBC and supports for low-income households.
- Continue to implement legislation and policies to advance energy efficiency and conservation in the built environment, including highest-efficiency equipment

standards and a virtual home energy rating tool to provide energy performance and retrofit guidance to homeowners, home buyers and renters.

- Implement a Clean Transportation Action Plan to reduce emissions in the transportation sector.

Discussion

The strategies under Objective 1.2 support clean energy and efficiency upgrades which reduce emissions in the transportation, buildings and fuels sectors, while ensuring affordability for British Columbians. The Ministry will continue to focus on the implementation of programs and raising public awareness, while monitoring its progress towards the listed outcomes.

The CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 (released in October 2021) proposes to complete B.C.'s Electric Highway in 2024 and reach a target of 10,000 public EV charging stations in B.C. by 2030. As of December 2023, the Electric Highway is 72% complete, with plans in place to complete the remaining stations in 2024. There are more than 4,800 public charging stations across B.C.

The CleanBC Go Electric Program was designed to reduce barriers to the adoption of electric vehicles (EVs) across all modes, including the cost of vehicles, access to infrastructure, public awareness, and skills training. It has been highly successful in starting the transition to a transportation system that is powered by clean energy. British Columbia is a leader in the adoption of ZEVs and has one of the highest uptake rates of zero-emission vehicles in North America. In 2023, the CleanBC Go Electric Passenger Vehicle Rebate program transitioned to being funded by revenues generated from BC Hydro's sale of credits created through the Low Carbon Fuel Standard.

In 2022, light-duty zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) sales represented 13% of all new light-duty vehicle sales in British Columbia, and as of September 2023 the ZEV share of new vehicle sales in 2023 was at 22%.¹ In 2024, the Ministry will draft regulations to implement the increased light-duty ZEV sales targets under *the Zero-Emission Vehicles Act* of 26% by 2026, 90% by 2030, and 100% by 2035, and developing targets for larger vehicle weight classes.

The CleanBC [Better Homes](#) and [Better Buildings](#) program provides financial incentives to help households, businesses and the public sector save energy and reduce GHG through heating equipment replacement and building envelope improvements. As of September 2023, the CleanBC [Better Homes](#) and the CleanBC [Income Qualified Program](#) have processed 55,144 residential retrofit rebates province-wide, including 15,031 rebates for heat pumps, since the programs were launched in 2018 and 2021 respectively. At least 377 capital incentives have also been approved for energy-efficiency and fuel-switching projects in large commercial, institutional and multi-unit residential buildings.²

The Ministry continues to reduce GHG emissions from transportation fuels through B.C.'s Low Carbon Fuel Standard (LCFS). The LCFS requires fuel suppliers to progressively decrease the average carbon intensity of the fuels they supply in B.C. Effective January 1, 2023, the LCFS

¹ Compiled by Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation staff from ZEV sales. Light-duty vehicle is defined here as one that weighs 4,536kg (10,000lbs) or less.

² Data source: Compiled by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation.

increased its stringency by raising the carbon-intensity reduction requirement for gasoline and diesel fuel pools from 20% to 30% by 2030, relative to 2010 levels. The new Low Carbon Fuels Act came into force on January 1, 2024, which streamlines the LCFS and enable a broader scope for emission reductions from regulated fuels.

The LCFS remains one of the most successful approaches to reducing GHGs from transportation. The LCFS considers the "fuel lifecycle" which encompasses all the components of a fuel product's life including extraction or production of the feedstock (raw material used to produce the fuel), through to the end use of the fuel. The LCFS is anticipated to meet 20% of CleanBC's 2030 target, by reducing GHG emissions generated in B.C. by 4.8 million tonnes in 2030. The LCFS is expected to reduce overall lifecycle emissions by 10 million tonnes in 2030.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[1 a] Clean, renewable and low carbon energy as a share of total utility and transportation energy sales ¹	33%	34%	35%	36%

Data source: Compiled by the Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation and includes data from BC Hydro.

¹ The following data is tracked to provide the performance measure: BC Hydro's performance in clean procurement; FortisBC's performance in deploying Renewable Natural Gas; relative sales of electricity and natural gas using data from the largest utilities; and transportation fuels data.

Discussion

The provincial CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 highlights the critical role of electricity and low carbon fuels (such as hydrogen, and biofuels; in reducing emissions where they displace higher carbon energy sources. This performance measure directly relates to the goal of an innovative, low carbon energy portfolio in B.C., by measuring the proportion of clean, renewable, and low carbon energy relative to GHG emitting energy sources. An increasing share of clean, renewable and low carbon energy will be achieved through measures such as increasing the proportion of biofuels in transportation, supporting fuel switching from fossil natural gas to electricity or low carbon alternatives (e.g., renewable natural gas) by gas utility customers. Targets under this measure are projected from historical performance, with 1% improvement per year selected for consistency with 2030 CleanBC targets.

Performance Measures

Performance Measures	2023 Forecast ¹	2024 Target	2025 Target	2026 Target
[1b) Zero-Emission Vehicle sales per cent of new light-duty vehicle sales.	22%	28%	32%	35%
[1c] Zero-Emission vehicle sales per cent of on-road medium- heavy-duty vehicle sales	1%	3%	5%	7%

Data Source: Compiled by Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation staff from ZEV sales. Light-duty vehicle is defined here as one that weighs 4,536kg (10,000lbs) or less.

¹ ZEV data is reported on a calendar year basis in the legislated ZEV Annual Update.

Discussion

Transportation accounted for 38 per cent of B.C.'s total GHG emissions in 2021. As a result, to reduce GHG emissions and meet B.C.'s climate targets, significant and sustained action needs to be taken to reduce GHG emissions from light, medium and heavy-duty vehicles. Increased adoption of ZEVs will contribute to reductions in B.C.'s GHG emissions and improve air quality. Performance measure 1b measures progress towards Government's target of increasing the number of light duty ZEVs in B.C., reaching 100% of all new light-duty vehicle sales by 2035, while new measure 1c tracks Government's commitment to implement a medium- and heavy-duty vehicle ZEV standard. Due to the increasing pressure ZEVs place on clean energy supplies and infrastructure, transitioning to clean electricity and hydrogen in the transportation sector necessitates significant efforts to reduce overall transportation energy demand (e.g., shift goods movement from truck to rail, and passenger movement from individual vehicles to walking, cycling, transit including passenger rail, etc.). The Clean Transportation Action Plan will outline further policies and performance measures in that area.

Goal 2: A sustainable and competitive mining sector that supports Indigenous reconciliation, reflects high environmental, social and governance (ESG) standards and contributes to the transition to a low carbon economy with responsibly produced minerals and metals.

A sustainable sector provides opportunities for all British Columbians, while contributing to a clean economy that combats climate change.

Objective 2.1: A strong, responsible, low carbon and innovative mining sector that creates good, family supporting jobs.

Innovation in mining contributes to the sector's competitiveness and fosters technological change which supports sustainable employment.

Key Strategies

- Modernize the Mineral Tenure Act (MTA) in consultation and cooperation with First Nations and First Nation organizations in accordance with the Declaration Act Action Plan through the newly created Mineral Tenure Act Modernization Office.³
- Support reconciliation with Indigenous peoples, continuously improve consultation and engagement processes on relevant permit applications and support work on strategic agreements for major mine developments.
- Continue to improve the authorizations review process for mining applications by implementing updated guidance documents and policies, as well as streamlined processes for application reviews for major and regional mines and exploration projects.
- Finalize a B.C. Critical Minerals Strategy to position B.C. to supply materials to the emerging clean global economy, accelerate the domestic low-carbon shift, drive inclusive economic development and economic reconciliation, and access federal funding opportunities.
- Update regulatory and policy tools that support and align improving B.C.'s stewardship of biodiversity and land use planning with a competitive, prosperous low carbon mining future.

Discussion

EMLI is developing a Critical Minerals Strategy to help unlock our potential to produce critical minerals, such as copper, molybdenum, nickel, cobalt and others. This Strategy also looks at how best to add value and grow downstream opportunities such as processing and manufacturing, as well as battery recycling that will add mined materials back into the supply chain. Beginning in 2023/24, the Province has allocated \$6 million over three years for this work.

Foundational to the Strategy is continuing to implement the *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act* and the Declaration Act Action Plan, MTA modernization, and advancing an efficient mining regulatory framework that protects the environment while ensuring competitiveness.

The Strategy will capitalize on this critical mineral-intensive global transition to clean energy with B.C. positioned as a supplier of choice supported by our strong geology, stable government, and social, environmental and governance (ESG) performance positions.

³ To prioritize and support this important work, the Ministry created a dedicated MTA modernization office in June 2023.

The Ministry sees the B.C. Critical Mineral Strategy as complementary to the federal strategy while advancing provincial interests and will support access to B.C.'s share of federal funding programs, such as the \$3.8 billion in federal funds earmarked for critical minerals in Canada.

The Ministry created a dedicated MTA modernization office in June 2023. The MTA Modernization office has started to engage and will be working closely with First Nations rights and title holders, as well as with First Nations organizations on transformation of the MTA. Industry and other interested parties will be consulted as stakeholders.

The foundational driver of this work is alignment with the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples Act (Declaration Act). Transformation of the MTA will also incorporate implementation of a recent B.C. Supreme Court decision on the MTA, while striving towards a healthy and responsible mining sector.

Objective 2.2: Oversight of the mining industry is continuously improved to protect the environment, health and safety, and the public interest.

Industry oversight contributes to both a safe and sustainable mining sector that produces the minerals needed to transition to a low carbon economy.

Key Strategies

- Continue enhancing environmental, climate and health and safety standards by reviewing legislation and regulations and continuing the work of the Code Review Committee to ensure the Health, Safety and Reclamation Code for Mines in B.C. is responsive to emerging trends and changing standards of practice and contributes to reconciliation with Indigenous nations.
- Ensure that owners of mining and exploration projects are bonded and responsible for environmental clean up costs associated with their projects and continue to support the Public Interest Bonding Strategy for all large industrial sites led by the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Strategy.
- Continue undertaking mine audits to evaluate the effectiveness of the regulatory framework for mining in B.C. and implement actions to continuously improve the mining regulatory framework.
- Ensure timely communication about health and safety incidents to support continuous improvement opportunities for mine operators.
- Continue identifying abandoned mines and assessing and mitigating public hazards.

Discussion

The strategies reflect a combined oversight focus on responsible development, the environment, health and safety as well as the impacts of the sector on climate. This supports the implementation of a critical minerals strategy and the continuous improvement envisioned in Objective 2.2. Continuing audits, the Code Review Committee's ongoing work, and the internal tracking of mine inspections per performance measure 2b (Minimum mine

inspections) will ensure that the regulation of mining remains effective over the coming fiscal year.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[2a] B.C.'s share of Canadian mineral resource development investments	16.4%	17%	17.5%	18%

Data source: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation and Natural Resources Canada

This may be influenced by provincial actions related to critical minerals and reconciliation, as well as overall global market conditions.

Discussion

The Ministry continuously strives to attract long-term investment in B.C.'s mining sector and related service industries to support lasting, well-paying jobs for British Columbians. Government can help to reduce risk and sustain investment levels through streamlined processes for mine project permitting, and this measure reflects the B.C. mining sectors' competitive performance. Between 2020-2022, B.C. has seen mineral resource development investment increase by 82%. However, investment in other jurisdictions, namely Ontario, Quebec, and Saskatchewan have also seen large increases which has muted the increase in B.C.'s share of Canadian mineral resource development investments (16.7% in 2022/23 vs. 15.1% in 2020/21). The current 2023/24 forecast shows mineral resource investment in B.C. increasing by a moderate \$175M, however, the Province's share of Canadian investment is forecasted to decline from 16.7% to 16.4% with other Canadian jurisdictions anticipated to report significant increases to investment in their mineral resource sectors over 2023/24. Considering the significant and increasing amount of investment in Canada's mining sector, an annual increase of 0.5% from the 2023/24 forecast for this performance measure is a realistic target for B.C. The level of investment in B.C.'s mineral resources is a measure of the sector's competitiveness. Additionally, given the increasing focus on responsible investment by financial institutions, it is also a reflection of B.C.'s high ESG standards.

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[2b] Minimum mine inspections	1,600	1,600	1,600	1,600

Data source: Manually compiled by Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation.

Discussion

Compliance verification activities, such as inspections, are a key part of regulatory oversight under the Natural Resource Compliance Management Framework to help ensure that mines are operating responsibly and protecting the environment, human health and public safety. Budget 2019 provided the Ministry with funding to hire new inspectors and build a robust and stable inspectorate. This gave the OCIM the ability to increase the minimum annual inspection

target from 1350 to 1600. The minimum annual inspection target provides the OCIM with a consistent baseline for effective annual risk-based inspection planning that is in line with the available resources, while maintaining the ability to efficiently and effectively implement other key components to regulatory oversight, such as reviewing compliance to permit conditions, responding to public complaints, refining and undertaking escalated enforcement actions as necessary, and responding to and investigating incidents that occur on mine sites. This approach also provides the OCIM with the ability to focus on other critical priorities such as increasing collaboration with First Nations on compliance activities, issuing certifications, and adjusting practice and resources to respond to new and emerging practices on mine sites. The OCIM continually seeks opportunities to engage with mine operators to create efficiencies for the inspectorate and to adopt best practices aimed at promoting responsible practices on mine sites. For example, the OCIM continues to use desktop compliance reviews, which is a practice that the OCIM adopted during the pandemic. The OCIM, is also exploring further opportunities for increasing the use of compliance promotion activities, such as developing guidance in consultation with industry on how to improve health and safety systems at mines. Last year, the OCIM exceeded the inspection target by monitoring inspection totals throughout the year and using resources responsibly through efficiencies such as joint inspections and a targeted inspection blitz.

Goal 3: B.C.'s oil and gas industry reduces its carbon footprint in a manner that supports economic sustainability, advances Indigenous reconciliation and exhibits high environmental, social and governance (ESG) performance.

Reducing the carbon footprint of oil and gas activities enhances the industry's ESG performance.

Objective 3.1: Policies, technologies and processes that support the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions in the oil and gas sector.

Reducing the carbon footprint of oil and gas activities enhances the industry's ESG performance.

Key Strategies

- Lead supply-side policy for hydrogen, biofuels, geothermal, carbon capture, utilization and storage, and natural gas in support of an inclusive and sustainable energy transition.
- Work with the BC Energy Regulator and Climate Action Secretariat (CAS) on the development of a sector- specific approach to reducing methane emissions through world-class regulations and research, an integrated methane measurement and monitoring program, and the promotion of innovative technologies.

- Encourage industry to invest in emission reduction technologies through the development and launch of a new program that will repurpose deep well credits into a land-healing and emissions-reduction project pool and explore options for transitioning any remaining oil and gas subsidies to clean energy and tech sectors.
- Work with the BC Energy Regulator and CAS to ensure an appropriate enabling environment to support the deployment of carbon capture and storage to reduce carbon dioxide emissions from the oil and gas sector.
- Work with CAS to reduce GHG emissions in the industrial sector by implementing regulations for net zero emissions plans and by setting a regulatory cap on oil and gas sector emissions to support B.C. meeting its sectoral targets.

Discussion

This objective and its strategies support Government's climate goals and the implementation of the CleanBC Roadmap to 2030 in relation to the oil and gas sector. The strategies all focus on emissions reduction and the storage of carbon dioxide. GHG emissions reduction positively impacts the province's carbon footprint and supports its ESG credibility. This in turn contributes to long-term economic sustainability, ensuring that the sector can continue to provide high-paying jobs and revenue to the Province as it transitions to a low-carbon energy future.

The Roadmap to 2030 includes commitments to reduce (GHG) emissions produced by the oil and gas industry in line with its sectoral target of 33-38 percent reductions from 2007 levels by 2030. This includes a commitment to achieve a 75 percent reduction in methane emission from 2014 levels by 2030 and near elimination of methane emissions by 2035. Through its work with BCER and CAS, EMLI will review and strengthen methane emissions regulations to ensure achievement of the 2030 target and advance supportive research for the 2035 target. The BC Methane Emissions Research Collaborative will develop and implement a new three-year research plan, and focused methane measurement campaigns, in partnership with the United Nations Environment Programme and Carleton University will continue.

Ensuring an enabling environment for carbon capture and storage delivers on the Roadmap commitment to advancing a provincial approach to carbon capture, utilization and storage and negative emissions technologies and will further be advanced by Ministry supported research initiatives to assess the geological potential for permanent underground storage in promising regions around the province.

The strategies support actions in the New Energy Action Framework to develop a regulatory emissions cap on oil and gas sector emissions to help meet sectoral emission reduction targets.

Objective 3.2: Value-added development of B.C.'s energy resources to maximize the benefits to all British Columbians and provide a fair return from our resources.

Oil and natural gas activities generate revenues to the Province that support services such as health care and education and facilitate reconciliation with Indigenous nations.

Key Strategies

- Promote price transparency and public accountability in the gasoline and diesel market through the implementation of the *Fuel Price Transparency Act*.
- Implement B.C.'s new oil and gas royalty system that encourages additional oil and gas emissions reduction projects, supported by a new land-healing and emissions-reduction pool program.
- Drive clean energy investment in and provide regulatory certainty and project support for a wide range of clean tech sectors.
- Add value to B.C.'s abundant natural gas resources by continuing to work with industry, Indigenous Peoples, BC Hydro, and the Climate Action Secretariat to ensure oil and gas development and related infrastructure supports CleanBC and clean growth.
- Work to implement a cumulative effects and conservation management framework in Northeast B.C. with respect to oil and gas energy development, as part of the Province's commitment to meeting the B.C. Supreme Court declarations from *Yahey v. B.C.*

Discussion

The strategies focus on transparency, GHG emission reduction, and initiatives that support clean growth and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. This value-added approach supports the positive social outcomes envisaged by the goal and objective for the responsible development of B.C.'s oil and gas resources. A fair return provides revenue that supports valuable public services like health care and education. In addition to Relative annual investment in natural gas and oil exploration and development (B.C. as % of Canada) (measure 3b,) which reports our investment relative to Canada, the Ministry will work with its industry and regulatory partners to ensure that development occurs in a responsible manner.

The Roadmap to 2030 commits B.C. to a net zero future, which will be backed by legislation. As a result of its net zero pledge, the Province will be instituting a new requirement for all new industrial facilities, including oil and gas facilities, to have enforceable plans to achieve net-zero emissions by 2050.

Performance Measures

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[3a] Annual GHG reductions from infrastructure improvements under royalty programs	290,000 tonnes	410,000 tonnes	500,000 Tonnes	620,000 Tonnes

Data source: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation

Discussion

This measure tracks the GHG reductions from oil and gas infrastructure royalty programs, which directly relates to the environmentally responsible development of oil and gas resources in B.C. The purpose of the programs is to help achieve the oil and gas sectoral targets and methane reduction targets, while also facilitating job creation, rural development and maintaining competitiveness. Through royalty deductions, infrastructure royalty programs partner with industry in projects to advance new technologies and processes that reduce methane emissions and promote innovative infrastructure including electrification projects to support reaching GHG emission reduction targets.

In order to receive royalty deductions under the infrastructure programs, project proponents for emission reduction projects must submit an Emissions Reductions Report that documents emissions reductions attributed to completion of the project and include a Verification Statement provided by an accredited third-party.

On May 19, 2022, the Province announced a new oil and gas royalty system. The new royalty system encourages additional oil and gas emissions reduction projects, which will be supported through a new Healing the Land and Emissions Reduction program. Projects continue to be completed under previous infrastructure programs resulting in emissions reductions and this completion of infrastructure will continue over the next several years. Previous infrastructure royalty programs are no longer being offered under the new royalty system, but the projects completed will continue to reduce GHG emissions.

Under the new program being considered, companies may transfer existing deep-well credits to fund healing the land and emission reduction work that goes beyond regulatory requirements. This new program would contribute to achieving the emission reduction targets under Performance Measure 3a in addition to the emission reductions achieved from projects approved under previous infrastructure programs as those projects are completed and emission reductions are verified.

Performance Measure	2023/24 Forecast ¹	2024/25 Target	2025/26 Target	2026/27 Target
[3b] Relative annual investment in natural gas and oil exploration and development (B.C. as % of Canada) ^{1,2}	14%	14%	14%	14%

Data source: Ministry of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation based on information from Statistics Canada and Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers Net Cash Expenditure historical data and forecasts. All data is only available and provided by calendar year.

¹Statistics Canada data not available until later in 2024

Discussion

The target is set to maintain B.C.'s share of investment at a level consistent with recent years reflecting government's goal to see the responsible development of the province's resources. This performance measure aligns with government's policy intentions under the New Energy Action Framework to design an oil and gas sector emissions cap that will not limit production in B.C. Measuring relative annual investment in natural gas and oil exploration and development is an indicator that investment in B.C., where the sector's relative emissions intensity is low, is not moving to other higher emissions intensity jurisdictions, i.e. carbon leakage is checked. Investment in the development of and reducing emissions from B.C.'s oil and gas resources are important for maximizing value to British Columbians. Maintaining B.C.'s share of annual investment in Canadian oil and gas resources, including value-added oil and gas development and the reduction of the carbon intensity of natural gas production, supports job creation, economic growth, and infrastructure development in B.C., and is important to provincial revenues and economic growth. Investment in B.C.'s oil and gas resources and the return it provides to the Province in the form of revenues support the provision of benefits and services to British Columbians. These revenues also provide the means to advance reconciliation with B.C.'s Indigenous Nations and provide opportunities for increasing economic benefits to be realized by Nations from resource development.

Financial Summary

(\$000s)	2023/24 Restated Estimates ¹	2024/25 Estimates	2025/26 Plan	2026/27 Plan
Operating Expenses				
Responsible Mining and Competitiveness	28,383	29,927	30,413	30,194
Mines Health, Safety and Enforcement	13,670	14,120	14,120	14,120
Energy Decarbonization	37,319	37,651	37,656	37,656
Electricity and Utility Regulation	3,002	3,206	3,201	3,201
Energy Resources	18,496	18,821	18,821	18,821
Strategic and Indigenous Partnerships	3,427	3,570	3,570	3,570
Executive and Support Services	14,198	13,816	13,998	13,998
First Nations Clean Energy Business Fund	8,044	8,375	9,177	8,524
Innovative Clean Energy Fund	10,128	11,768	10,268	8,735
Total	136,667	141,254	141,224	138,819
Capital Expenditures				
Executive and Support Services	546	546	546	546
Total	546	546	546	546
Other Financing Transactions				
By Core Business (and Purpose)				
British Columbia Energy Regulator Disbursements	45,000	53,600	53,300	54,800
British Columbia Energy Regulator Receipts	(45,000)	(53,600)	(53,300)	(54,800)
Net Cash Requirements (Source)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000
Total Disbursements	45,000	53,600	53,300	54,800
Total Receipts	(45,000)	(53,600)	(53,300)	(54,800)
Total Net Cash Requirements (Source)	0,000	0,000	0,000	0,000

¹ For comparative purposes, amounts shown for 2023/24 have been restated to be consistent with the presentation of the 2024/25 Estimates.

* Further information on program funding and vote recoveries is available in the [Estimates and Supplement to the Estimates](#).

Appendix A: Public Sector Organizations

As of February 28, 2024, the Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation is responsible and accountable for the following organizations:

[BC Energy Regulator](#)

The BC Energy Regulator is a single-window regulatory agency with responsibilities for regulating oil, gas, hydrogen and renewable geothermal operations in B.C. The BC Energy Regulator regulates activities from exploration and development to pipeline transportation and reclamation.

[BC Hydro](#)

BC Hydro is one of the largest electricity suppliers in Canada, generating and delivering electricity to 95 per cent of the population of B.C., and serving over four million people.

