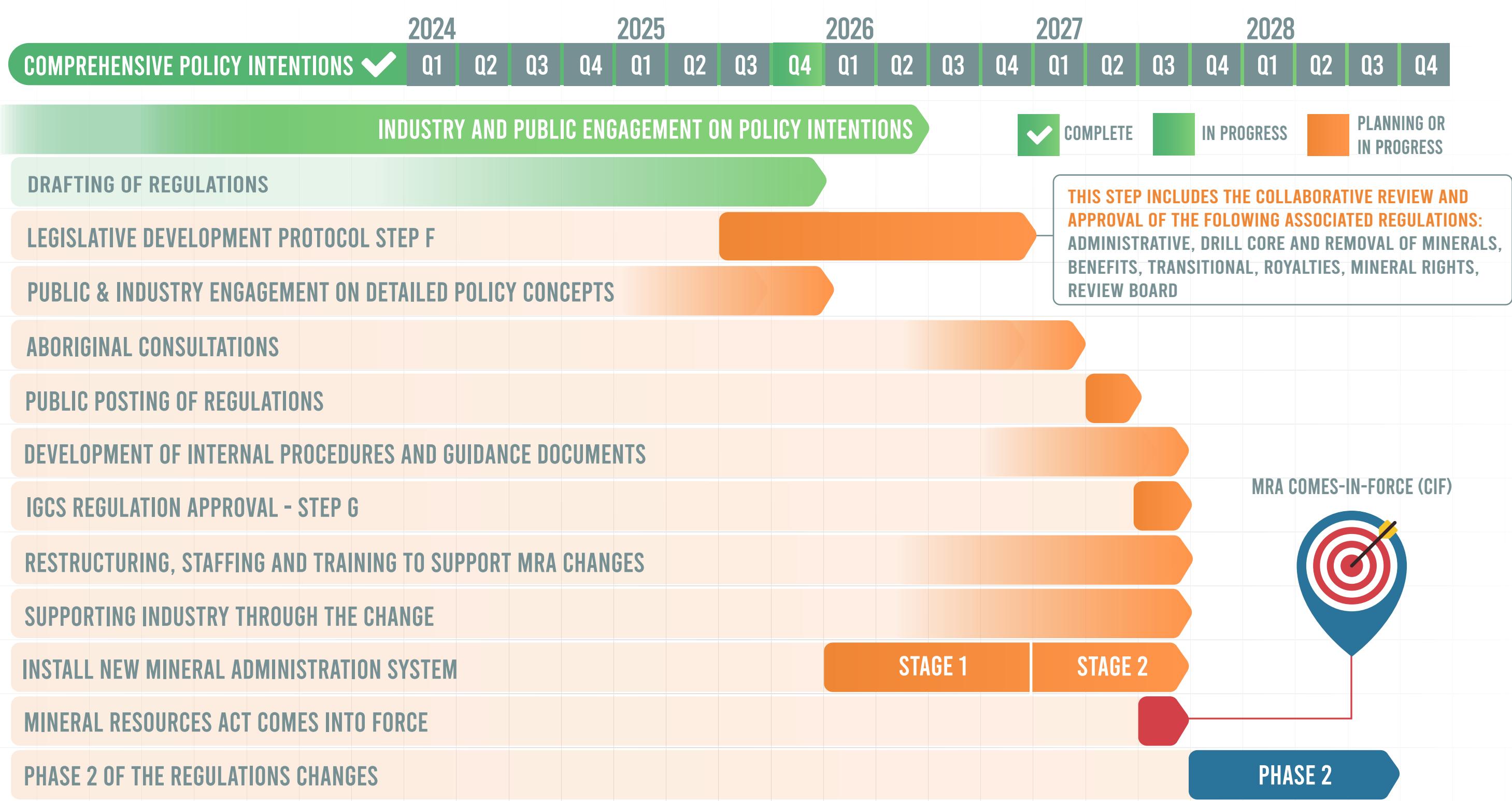


The Mineral Resources Act (MRA) is a law that explains how mineral rights are managed and developed in the Northwest Territories. It sets the rules for how people can get mineral rights, explore for minerals, and carry out mining. The Act also makes sure that mineral development benefits people in the North and respects Indigenous rights and interests.

The law was passed in August 2019, and the Government of the Northwest Territories is now working on creating the detailed rules (called regulations) to support the law.

The following is the timeline specific to the regulation and implementation steps to come-into-force.



This timeline will be updated quarterly with more accurate estimates and activities as they become available.

See page 2 for more information on each phase of the regulation development



## Industry and Public Engagement on Policy Intentions

The majority of public engagement occurred during the development of the **Mineral Resources Act (MRA)** and is summarized in the **Mineral Resources Act: What we Heard Report Key Elements**. Engagement on the regulations is focused on the specifics of how to achieve the goals included in the act and therefore tends to be more technical as GNWT works through putting regulations in place that are achievable and realistic.

While developing the policy intentions for the regulations, the GNWT met with representatives from the mining industry to do Q&A engagements. The GNWT also circulated a survey through the NWT & Nunavut Chamber of Mines to test whether the proposed policies were realistic and to identify potential concerns or alternative suggestions. A summary of the policy intentions was also shared with the general public, with six weeks provided for feedback by email, along with engagement meetings where the public could discuss the intentions that were being proposed. You can find the early summary of the policy intentions [here](#). This feedback, reported in the status document [here](#), helped to refine the policy intentions before the process of drafting the regulations started.

A final detailed engagement on the policy intentions will occur from September 2025 to April 2026. Results of this engagement will be discussed and changes to the draft regulations will be agreed on through the **Intergovernmental Council (IGC) Land and Resource Management: Legislative Development Protocol** collaborative process before draft regulations are publicly posted.

## Comprehensive Policy Intentions

The first deliverable created under the collaborative process was a document created jointly by the GNWT and the Indigenous Governments and Organizations. Together, the GNWT and IGOs form the Technical Working Group (TWG). The TWG is responsible for collaborating on all of the policy intentions for the regulations. The policy intentions explain the joint agreement on how the act is intended to be achieved and will form the base for the regulations and policies under the MRA.

## Drafting of Regulations

After the creation of the comprehensive policy intentions document, the drafting counsel worked on creating drafts of the new regulations, intended to be consistent with the policy intentions created with the help of the Technical Working Group and public engagement. These drafts were carefully reviewed by subject matter experts to ensure that they matched the goals set out in the policy intentions.

## Legislative Development Protocol – Step F

Once the final draft of the regulations meets the intentions of the comprehensive policy intentions document it is shared with the TWG. The TWG reviews the regulations to make sure they match their understanding of the policy intentions. This step is finished once TWG supports the draft regulation.

## Aboriginal Consultations

Section 35 consultations are a constitutional obligation of the Government to engage with Indigenous Peoples when proposed decisions or actions may impact their rights. These rights are affirmed under Section 35 of the Constitution Act, 1982. The government is required to meaningfully consider Indigenous concerns and, where appropriate, adjust its plans to minimize adverse effects. This consultation process ensures that Indigenous rights are respected throughout the development of new laws and policies. Importantly, Aboriginal consultations must take place before regulations are finalized, and they constitute a distinct legal process separate from the **Legislative Development Protocol**.

## Public Posting of the Regulations

The GNWT Open Government Policy 11.54 commits the GNWT to Open Dialogue through public engagement on government decision-making. **Under Cabinet Operational Guidelines publishing proposed regulations**. The GNWT will post the regulations for the public, who will be able to give their feedback to the GNWT and explain any possible concerns. The GNWT will then take this feedback into consideration, while editing the regulations into their final proposed form.

## Development of Internal Procedures and Guidance Documents

The GNWT needs to make sure it has the right resources in place before the regulations can take effect. This includes creating procedure and guidance documents for staff, so they have the information they need to carry out their new roles under the MRA.

## IGCS Regulation Approval - Step G

As per the **Legislative development protocol**, the final stage of the collaborative development process is formal review by the Intergovernmental Council Secretariat (IGCS). The draft legislation will be reviewed at an IGCS meeting, with a view to achieving final consensus on any outstanding matters.

## Restructuring, staffing and training to support MRA changes

The MRA has a number of new authorities that GNWT does not currently administer. These authorities create new regulations, business functions and commitments that must be put in place prior to the MRA coming into force. These new requirements are essential for modernizing mineral management and managing exploration and mining sustainably. The strategic plan for the departmental changes has been drafted. Initial resource requirements have been determined with the planned start of putting some new functions in place in 2026/27 and 2027/28 for the purpose of coming into force.

## Supporting Industry through the Change

The transition to the MRA is the largest transition the mining sector will ever go through in the north. It is a necessary change to ensure that exploration and mining remain resilient and economically empowering contributors to the Northwest Territories. This transition must reflect modern co-governance principles and uphold Aboriginal rights, laying the foundation for a sustainable and inclusive resource future. Supporting exploration and mining

companies through this transition is essential for minimizing disruption and impacts while requiring them to work under the new legislation. Supporting Industry through these changes will start with the development of a number of new guidelines and hosting a number of knowledge sharing sessions to familiarize everyone with the new requirements and processes prior to MRA coming into force. When in force there will be continual support to engage with and provide guidance to Industry while making transition.

## Install New Mineral Administration System

The changes to the mineral administration system are essential for enacting the new legislation and will take place in 3 stages (or phases). The first stage will occur in summer/fall 2026. This stage involves updating the current outdated software to a flexible, cloud-based solution that adds flexibility for more mature administrative rules (i.e. MRA business processes) and completes automation for businesses that increases access to tools (i.e. applications, reporting, submitting royalty returns, and automated payments).

The second stage includes updates to the software to support the new business requirements brought about by the MRA coming into force. Once the updated system is implemented all new administrative requirements, notifications to the public and Indigenous Governments will be in place and the act can come into force. This is expected to occur by summer/fall of 2027.

The third stage is putting into place the enhanced map tools that are required for selection of online map staking along with creation of zones and temporary restricted areas. The system updates will be in place for when the legislation is approved to enable this transition (see additional details below under phase 2 regulation development). Currently this is scheduled for summer/fall 2028.

## Mineral Resources Act Comes Into Force (MRA CIF)

At this point, the mining system will transition from the current state to the MRA and the MRA and associated regulations will be enacted.

## Phase 2 of the Regulations changes

The MRA gives the authority to enable Online Map Staking (OMS), create special zones to encourage prospectors to explore certain specific areas and the ability for indigenous governments to temporarily restrict issuance of mineral claims. The recommendation for changes to the royalty regime will also be coordinated with phase 2 enactment. While policy work and engagement on phase 2 elements has begun, drafting will not proceed until agreement and collaboration on phase 1 elements are complete and sufficient resources are available. It is planned that phase 2 will be complete by fall of 2028.