

Business Secretary opens latest meeting of the Critical Minerals Expert Committee

Business Secretary Kwasi Kwarteng today (28 January) opened the latest meeting of the Critical Minerals Expert Committee, chaired by BEIS Chief Scientific Advisor, Professor Paul Monks, along with representatives from across academia, finance, industry and government.

The Critical Minerals Expert Committee aims to leverage the UK's extensive research expertise for the development of a Critical Minerals Strategy. It provides high quality, independent advice to the government on certain minerals and metals.

It will also suggest suitable actions the government can take to secure sustainable sources of these critical materials to help maintain national security and meet net zero ambitions.

Metals such as lithium, cobalt and rare earth elements are critically important for use across a wide range of applications, including electric car batteries, computer hard drives, and high-tech consumer products.

The Business Secretary opened the meeting by reiterating the important role critical minerals play in supplying new green industries, as well as the government's determination that the UK continues to have a resilient, long-term supply chain to deliver a green industrial revolution. He stressed the need to make efficient use of critical minerals and to embed their recycling in the supply chain.

Following the Business Secretary's opening remarks, the committee discussed the development of a UK criticality assessment, which will define a set of critical minerals according to economic vulnerability and security of supply, due to be published later this year.

The committee discussed emerging priorities for the Critical Minerals Strategy, plans for engaging more widely with the sector and the possible scope of the Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre, which will provide ongoing intelligence on the supply of and demand for critical minerals.

The Critical Minerals Strategy will be published later this year and will set out steps to ensure the UK's long-term security of supply for critical minerals. It will help create the conditions needed to grow this vital sector and set out how the UK aims to work with other countries to create international standards and ensure supply chains are robust.

This is the third meeting of the committee, following the first on 2 December 2021, which was attended by Minister Lee Rowley, and a second on 17 December 2021.

The external members of the Critical Minerals Expert Committee include:

- Siân Bradley, Senior Research Fellow, Energy, Environment and Resources Programme, Chatham House
- Professor Paul Ekins OBE, Professor of Resources and Environmental Policy, University College London
- Neil Glover, CEng FIMMM, President, The Institute of Materials, Minerals & Mining (IOM3)
- Dr James Goddin, Founder, Hoskins
- Dr Sarah Gordon, CEO, Satarla
- Dr Karen Hanghøj, Director, British Geological Survey
- Professor Richard Herrington, Head of Earth Sciences, Natural History Museum
- Dr Ian Higgins, Managing Director, Less Common Metals
- Dr Ben Jones, Lead Economist, Anglo American
- Simon Moores, Managing Director, Benchmark Mineral Intelligence
- Judith Richardson, Global Purchasing Director, Jaguar Land Rover
- Dr Emma Schofield, PGM Research Fellow, Johnson Matthey
- Isobel Sheldon OBE, Chief Strategy Officer, Britishvolt
- Dr Jessica Sparks, Rights Lab Associate Director, University of Nottingham
- Dr Nigel Steward, Chief Scientist, Rio Tinto
- Julian Treger, Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer, Anglo Pacific
- Professor Frances Wall, Camborne School of Mines, University of Exeter
- Professor Allan Walton, Professor of Critical & Magnetic Materials, Birmingham University
- Guy Winter, Partner, Fasken
- Jeremy Wrathall, Founder & CEO, Cornish Lithium