UK’s first Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre to help build a more resilient economy

- Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre to boost UK resilience and growth by providing up to date data and analysis on supply of critical minerals
- critical minerals like cobalt, lithium and graphite are essential to manufacturing products such as electric vehicle batteries, wind turbines and fighter jets
- Centre to be run by the British Geological Survey in Nottingham and will help keep UK ahead of an increasingly competitive global market for critical minerals

The UK’s first-ever centre to collect and analyse information on the supply of critical minerals, which are vital to the UK’s economic success and national security, has officially launched, Industry Minister Lee Rowley announced today (4 July 2022).

Based in Nottingham, the Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre (CMIC) will improve the resilience of the UK’s critical mineral supply chain by providing policymakers with up-to-date data and analysis on supply, demand, and market dynamics. This data will then be used to develop evidence-based policies aimed at developing more robust critical mineral supply chains to the UK.

Critical minerals are essential for manufacturing products that are required for green technologies, national security, and daily life – such as electric vehicles, wind turbines, mobile phones and fighter jets. With the production of some critical minerals expected to increase by nearly 500% by 20501, it is essential the UK takes steps to secure a resilient and sustainable supply chain. This is vital for some of the industries that it’s hoped will drive growth and create jobs across the UK for decades to come, from EV manufacturers in the West Midlands, to Yorkshire’s Energy Coast.

Minister for Industry Lee Rowley said:

> Critical minerals are so important to every aspect of our daily lives, whether it’s the phones we use, the cars we drive, or the batteries in our laptops.
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> As the world shifts towards new green technologies, supply chains will become more competitive. That’s why we’re harnessing the British Geological Survey’s vast experience in geoscience, to ensure better access to these crucial resources, and support the delivery of our forthcoming Critical Minerals Strategy.

The British Geological Survey (BGS) in Nottingham – with its unparalleled

expertise and access to data – will deliver the programme, providing government with insights on the supply, demand, and market dynamics of critical minerals. Some of the CMIC's data and insights may be provided to businesses, where it's appropriate and of benefit to them.

BGS Director Dr Karen Hanghøj said:

> We are extremely pleased to host the new UK Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre. The British Geological Survey has a strong reputation for its work on mineral and metal supply, and is internationally-known for its expertise on critical raw materials.
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> Through the new Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre, we are looking forward to building on this track record to provide UK industry and policy makers with high quality information and advice.

The BGS will combine its own resources, expertise, and data with those of third parties to provide up-to-date analysis on the supply, demand, and flow of critical mineral supplies around the world. The CMIC will also provide policymakers with advice on emerging issues, including geopolitical, ethical or environmental risks associated with critical mineral sources.

Work is already underway and as its first major milestone, the CMIC has published a study into the future UK demand for, and supply security of, critical minerals required for electric vehicle batteries. As highlighted by major government investments in gigafactories with Britishvolt and Envision AESC, the UK is one of the best locations in the world for automotive manufacturing, and this study will help policymakers improve the durability of our battery metal supply chains.

The government will publish a UK Critical Minerals Strategy later in 2022, setting out its approach to bolstering the resilience of our critical mineral supply chains.

Notes to editors

- UK Industry Minister Lee Rowley will visit the British Geological Survey's headquarters in Nottinghamshire today, Monday 4 June 2022, to see where the Critical Minerals Intelligence Centre will be based. Hosting the Centre in the East Midlands is in line with the government's ambitions to level up opportunities across the whole of the UK.
- The Centre builds on work by the Critical Minerals Expert Group, set up by the government last year, to harness the UK's expert knowledge on critical minerals.
- The Centre will be governed by the Department for Business, Energy & Industrial Strategy, with guidance from an advisory panel of experts. Up to £3.6 million is available for the CMIC over 3 years.
- An important function of the CMIC will be to provide "criticality assessments", which review the criticality of minerals for the UK. The British Geological Survey undertook the first UK criticality assessment

in January 2022, which has recently been published. Criticality is constantly evolving, and this assessment will be updated over time to reflect changes in supply and demand.

- The government is also supporting businesses that are working on access to new, innovative sources of raw materials found in the UK, which haven't been utilised before.
- Cornish Lithium and Geothermal Engineering are collaborating to build a zero carbon, lithium extraction pilot plant at an existing site in Cornwall. This £4 million project will be part supported from the Government's Getting Building Fund, via a £14.3 million allocation to the Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP).
- Cornish Lithium, alongside the Natural History Museum and Wardell Armstrong, were awarded over £350,000 for the project "Securing a Domestic Lithium Supply Chain for the UK (Li4UK)".
- In August last year, British Lithium Limited (BLL) was awarded an Innovate UK Smart Grant, with match funding of up to £500,000 from the government to progress its research and development of hard rock lithium extraction in the St Austell area of Cornwall.
- To stay up to date with the CMIC and for more information, please visit the official website.