

timesofoman.com

Plans for single window clearance for mining projects in Oman

by A E JAMES/businesseditor@timesofoman.com

January 16, 2017 | 6:11 PM

Public Authority for Mining has issued 500 licences to private sector players for all types of minerals, which include permanent and temporary licenses. - Times file picture



Muscat: A one-stop-shop facility for investors applying for a mining licence is under the consideration of the Public Authority for Mining (PAM). The proposed facility will become a part of the new mining law.

The move is expected to check any delay and hassles faced by the investors, including foreign ones, in developing mines in the country.

“Going forward, we will be having a different approach to offer opportunities to investors by allocating blocks and finalising ourselves all the permits required to be issued by the various ministries. These will then be offered to the investors,” said Hilal Al Busaidi, chief executive officer of the Public Authority for Mining (PAM).

It is a single window clearance system and the investors will receive the block ready to start mining activity. In

2017, the PAM will be able to introduce a major part of the single window clearance system.

Talking to journalists on the sidelines of the Oman Minerals and Mining Exhibition and Conference, Al Busaidisaid it is illegal to transfer a mining licence in the country. “We have to legalise the transfer of licences and it is already included in the new law.” However, the first licence holder has to achieve 40 per cent of project execution and then seek an approval from the Public Authority for Mining to become eligible for transferring the licence.

Al Busaidi said the PAM has issued 500 licences to private sector players for all types of minerals, which include permanent and temporary licenses.

He said the prices of minerals dropped as in case of any other commodity in 2015 and 2016. “But we hope that as oil prices recover this year, the mining sector will also flourish.”

“Our expectations from the data available so far are that Oman has a lot of minerals, both metallic and non-metallic, and both need a bit of discovery and appraisal activity.”