



| NSW Department of Education

# Drillers, Miners, Shot Firers

The mining industry is always on. As a driller, miner or shot firer, you'll assemble and operate drilling rigs and mining equipment to excavate, load and transport rocks and minerals, or you'll detonate explosives to extract materials, or demolish structures.

## What drillers, miners & shot firers do

Drillers, miners and shot firers work at construction sites, mines and onshore and offshore oil and gas facilities. Depending on the location, they may face extreme and variable conditions. In a mine, conditions include heat, noise, darkness, and humidity.

Drilling is a complex process that can change rapidly. Driller's understand geological formations and can identify formation change by the sound of the rig, the chatter of the bit and the colour change of the mud. They know the functions of their drill so they can select appropriate bits to create cuttings to remove from a borehole.

A shot firer assembles, positions and detonates explosives to dislodge rock or soil. They inspect blasting areas, cut channels, check and clean boreholes, place and detonate explosives then declare areas safe. They may demolish buildings, clear areas for civil construction, entertain the public with fireworks, remove earth for mining or create access to oil and gas reserves.

A miner extracts ore, coal or other minerals from the earth. Their role depends on the type of material they're mining, but can include working at the rock face heaving, cutting or removing rock, loading materials into carts and transporting them to the surface.

## Will I get a job?

Some growth in this occupation is predicted, with 3,400 new jobs in Australia in the next four years, bringing the total to 60,400.

## What will I earn?

Over \$1,650 median full-time weekly salary (before tax, excluding super).

### You'll like this job if...

You follow instructions and prioritise safety. You work unsupervised. You concentrate on the task at hand. You have smooth hand-eye coordination. You can read plans. You have strong attention to detail. You like performing hard labour. You can work in confined spaces. You have an aptitude for mechanics. You're willing to work in remote areas.

### A day in the life...

Work as a driller, miner or shot firer may involve these tasks:

- dismantle, move and reassemble drilling rigs and mining equipment
- take samples of ore, liquids and gases
- perform minor maintenance and repairs
- lubricate and clean the plant
- keep operational logs and record information obtained from wells
- operate surface and underground mining equipment
- undertake development work such as opening new shafts, drives, vents and rises
- position, prime and detonate explosives
- monitor the operation of mining equipment and ensure the safety of workers
- operate auxiliary plant equipment such as pumps to expel air, water and mud.

### VET qualifications

The following government-subsidised qualification is available in NSW:

#### Certificate II in Surface Extraction Operations (RII20215)

- Up to 12 months full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 78%\*

#### Certificate II in Underground Coal Mining (RII20315)

- Up to 12 months full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 86.2%\*

#### Certificate III in Drilling Operations (RII31815)

- Up to 2 years full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 87.9%\*

#### Certificate III in Surface Extraction Operations (RII30115)

- Up to 2 years full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 71.1%\*

#### Certificate III in Underground Coal Operations (RII30215)

- Up to 2 years full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 87.9%\*

#### Certificate III in Underground Metalliferous Mining (RII30315)

- Up to 2 years full-time
- Available as a traineeship
- Graduates employed or in further study: 87.9%\*



To find out more regarding these related jobs, visit [education.nsw.gov.au/job-guides](http://education.nsw.gov.au/job-guides).

#### Information sources

Income: Australian Government Department of Employment, Australian Jobs Report 2017, Occupation Matrix. ANZSCO ID: 2211. Earnings can vary greatly depending on the skills and experience of the worker, and the demands of the role. Career trend: Australian Government Department of Employment 2017 employment projections to May 2022. Graduate outcomes: National Centre for Vocational Education Research. \*Approximately 6 months after they completed VET.

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### Roles to look for

- Driller
- Drilling plant operator
- Miner
- Mining plant operator
- Shot firer
- Powder monkey

### Main employing industries

- Mining
- Construction

### Other jobs you may like...

- Plant operator
- Engineering production worker