



MEDIA RELEASE

Association of Mining Related Councils to take action on State Government's promised royalties scheme

The Association of Mining Related Councils (AMRC), which represents 21 local government councils and their communities in NSW, is taking action in relation to the State Government's promised "Royalties for Regions" scheme. This action was commenced prior to the release of the Government's "Economic Assessment of Mining Affected Communities" document on 21 February, 2011.

"This matter was raised as a high priority issue at the Association's meeting held in Coonabarabran on 10 February, 2012. It was apparent that some member Councils are becoming frustrated at what they see as a lack of progress in relation to this important promised regional funding issue," newly appointed Executive Officer Don Tydd said.

Association Chairperson, Councillor Colleen Fuller said a similar scheme operates in Western Australia.

"The Association met with the now Deputy Premier, the Honourable Andrew Stoner MP, when he was in opposition prior to the March 2011 State election. He promised to introduce a "Royalties for the Regions" scheme once the opposition parties were elected to government, to address identified funding shortages where mining is taking place. Many mining related councils have only a relatively short history of mining on a large scale but the affected councils are facing immediate costs in the provision of related infrastructure," she said.

"The scheme discussed in 2011 would ensure 30% of mining royalties collected by the State government were returned and reinvested in regional communities each year. Almost one year on, while the Association welcomes the Government's recent release of the document "Economic Assessment of Mining Affected Councils", there are still a lot of issues to be addressed in relation to the provision of local infrastructure where mining is occurring or exploration is underway."

"The document identifies that the Hunter Valley region has inequities in revenue returned to that area, compared to the funds received by the State Government from mining royalties. However, in the document, newer mining regions in NSW such as the North-West and Central West do not reflect the revenue from State royalties that would be required for infrastructure related to the rapidly expanding mining activities taking place in those regions".

"Local communities where mining and exploration are taking place are expected to fund facilities and improve assets and infrastructure to allow for related development and expansion of services for the resulting increases in population. This places a huge burden on the local ratepayers who are already being asked to provide ever increasing revenue for local services where costs are increasing," Cr Fuller said.

The Association is currently approaching the Premier's office, Deputy Premier's office and Treasurer's office, seeking a combined meeting to renew its push for some equality in meeting the ever increasing burden of cost in expanding local services in mining communities. The Association has also reformed its "Royalties for Regions" Sub-Committee to ensure that its focus for the introduction of the scheme is maintained in a strategic campaign over coming months. AMRC Member Councils will be bringing this matter to the attention of their local State parliamentary members, to ensure there is a united approach to this important regional funding issue.

For further information contact the Chairperson Cr Colleen Fuller 0429 420 290 or 02 6742 0290 or email crfuller@bigpond.com.au

Caption: Chair of the Association of Mining Related Councils, Councillor Colleen Fuller.