



MEDIA RELEASE

Deputy Premier to meet on mining royalties for regions

The Association of Mining Related Councils (AMRC) has secured a much anticipated meeting with NSW Deputy Premier, the Hon. Andrew Stoner to meet and discuss the Coalition Government's promised "Royalties for Regions" scheme. The meeting is to take place in Mr Stoner's Sydney office on Tuesday afternoon, 24 April. "This is a chance for Mr Stoner to hear first-hand where we're coming from," AMRC Chair, Colleen Fuller said.

The long-established AMRC is the lead local government organisation in the fight to see mining royalties benefit regional NSW. The representative body currently consists of 21 councils, including the Hunter Valley, the Lithgow to Wollongong area, the Central Western Ranges and the Western area from Parkes to Broken Hill, together with newer mining boom areas such as the North West (around Gunnedah and Narrabri).

Cr Fuller said she, as the Association's Chair, is seeking recurrent funding for mining affected local government areas, across NSW. "We are suffering and need a fair share of the State's mining royalties to address grassroots issues such as infrastructure, housing and health," she said. "Revenue from rates is not enough to cope with the challenges we are facing on a daily basis in the regions. It is time for a fair return for regional communities."

"At a Parliament House meeting before the March 2011 election, a commitment by the Coalition (if it was elected) was given to the Mining Related Councils and the Local Government Association," Cr. Fuller said. "This meeting with Mr Stoner is an overdue opportunity to sit down and work out the details of an equitable "Royalties for Regions" scheme. Our campaign has support from the likes of the Local Government and Shires Associations of NSW, the Miners Support Group of Australia, the Australian Local Government Women's Assoc (NSW) and the NSW Retired Mineworkers Association, because this is the fair way forward for mining affected communities."

The NSW Government receives well over \$1 billion in mining royalties annually. The proposed AMRC "Royalties for Regions" scheme is inspired by the successful West Australian model. The Association of Mining Related Councils are calling for a scheme whereby 30 percent of the State's mining royalties would go to the regions.

Narrabri Shire Councillor John Clements is the spokesperson for the AMRC Royalties Committee. A recent Committee teleconference connected council delegates from Blayney, Cobar, Gunnedah, Lithgow, and Narrabri. "We've had a structured Royalties for Regions program for over a year," he said. "It is two-tiered. Any regional council will be able to apply for revenue for regional infrastructure costs, such as roads, hospitals and water schemes. Accounting for about one-third of the scheme's revenue, the second tier would see a fixed return of over \$100 mil. per annum to go directly to Councils with direct and considerable impacts from mining."

"It's not hard to quantify the impacts on Councils affected by mining. Mid-Western Regional Council, for example, is facing mining impact on a local road to the value of \$6 mil. In Narrabri, we have an increasing population who are not residents. They are a drain on Council services. Neither Council nor the community sees benefits proportionate to the costs. Gunnedah is increasingly cut in half by coal trains," Cr Clements said.

"Now, after 12 months, we are set to meet with the Deputy Premier and we're optimistic that the NSW Government will deliver on its pre-election commitment," he said. "Government comments on its recently released land use policies insist that there can be an effective co-habitation of mining, other land uses and communities in regional areas. The 'Royalties for Regions' scheme would go a long way towards achieving that."

Caption: The Association of Mining Related Councils Executive Officer, Don Tydd; Chair, Cr Colleen Fuller and Royalties Committee spokesperson, Cr John Clements.

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Association of Mining Related Councils Inc.



The Association of Mining Related Councils comprises:

Bland Shire Council, Blayney Shire Council, Broken Hill City Council, Campbelltown City Council, Cabonne Shire Council, Cobar Shire Council, Gloucester Shire Council, Gunnedah Shire Council, Lachlan Shire Council, Lithgow City Council, Liverpool Plains Shire Council, Mid-Western Regional Council, Narrabri Shire Council, Newcastle City Council, Orange City Council, Parkes Shire Council, Singleton Council, Upper Hunter Shire Council, Warrumbungle Shire Council, Wollondilly Shire Council and Wollongong City Council. [as at April, 2012.]