



MEDIA RELEASE

Mining related councils to focus on CSG and Voluntary Planning agreements

The Association of Mining Related Councils (AMRC) is holding its next quarterly meeting this Friday, 9 May. The Bland Shire Council is hosting the meeting in West Wyalong, with the focal issues being Coal Seam Gas (CSG) and Voluntary Planning Agreements (VPAs).

The AMRC has just welcomed Wentworth Shire Council in the State's south-west, as its 24th member. The peak representative body for mining affected councils in NSW heard from the Deputy Premier and the Minister for Resources and Energy at its February meeting in Sydney.

AMRC Chair, Cr. Col Mitchell of Wollondilly Shire said that it is important to convene a meeting in the council chambers of one of our more remote councils. "It will be good to see and hear of the positives in the Bland Shire area from mining. The experiences there, particularly the economic impacts, have often been far from negative."

"The meeting will feature a presentation by CEO of the NSW Minerals Council, Steve Galilee," Cr. Mitchell said. "Special Projects Officer with Wollongong City Council, Ron Zwicker, will also give a presentation entitled 'Summary Report into Community Enhancement/Development Contributions Conditions for Mining Related Projects Across NSW Since 2006'. This research will inform the Association toward better resourcing for members as they negotiate a Voluntary Planning Agreement with a mining operation in their Local Government Area."

AMRC CEO, Don Tydd said that it is important the Association develops a policy position on CSG at the upcoming meeting. "The Association only began looking into Coal Seam Gas last year. There is a lot of emotion and inapplicable data from overseas. The Association is trying to get to a point where we can rationally discuss the realities of the CSG issue, with the parties involved. The Association is aware that a lot of scientific concerns have not been addressed by the industry. However, the Association does recognise that NSW needs a secure gas supply. The Association aim is to look at all sides of the issue and be positioned to assist member councils in dealing with this very important issue."

"Voluntary Planning Agreements are among the principal documents signed by local councils and mining companies. These VPAs address the effects that the mine will have and cover funding for vital infrastructure improvements, such as the upkeep or reconstruction of roads leading to the mines, as well as social and community infrastructure, even capital investment in local airports," Mr Tydd said.

"There has been no uniform measure across NSW in relation to these agreements. They have been negotiated on an individual basis. The Association is tabling a summary of all such agreements published since 2006, to see if we can get some uniformity or benchmarks in regards to conditions that councils have achieved through VPAs, to assist in the drawing up of future Agreements. The State Government, through the Department of Planning and Infrastructure is taking an interest in these Agreements and the AMRC wants to be at the table (and well resourced) when the NSW Government's draft guidelines are being discussed."

Caption: CEO of the NSW Minerals Council, Steve Galilee, will address the Association on Mining Related Councils meeting in West Wyalong this Friday

Member Councils listed below. For further information on the AMRC, please go to: <http://www.miningrelatedcouncils.asn.au/>.

For further information, contact AMRC Executive Officer, Don Tydd: 02 6775 3844 or 0418 681 320.



Members



Bland Shire Council
blandshire.nsw.gov.au



Blayney Shire Council
blayney.local-e.nsw.gov.au



Broken Hill City Council
brokenhill.nsw.gov.au



Cabonne Shire Council
cabonne.nsw.gov.au



Campbelltown City Council
campbelltown.nsw.gov.au



Cessnock City Council
cessnock.nsw.gov.au



Cobar Shire Council
cobar.nsw.gov.au



Gloucester Shire Council
gloucester.nsw.gov.au



Gunnedah Shire Council
infogunnedah.com.au



Lachlan Shire Council
lachlan.nsw.gov.au



Lithgow City Council
council.lithgow.com



Liverpool Plains Shire Council
lpsc.nsw.gov.au/

**Association of Mining
Related Councils Inc.**



Mid-Western Regional
Council
midwestern.nsw.gov.au



Narrabri Shire Council
narrabri.local-e.nsw.gov.au



Narromine Shire Council
narromine.nsw.gov.au



Newcastle City Council
ncc.nsw.gov.au



Orange City Council
orange.nsw.gov.au



Parkes Shire Council
parkes.nsw.gov.au



Singleton Shire Council
singleton.nsw.gov.au



Upper Hunter Shire Council
upperhunter.local-e.nsw.gov.au



Warrumbungle Shire Council
warrumbungle.nsw.gov.au



Wollondilly Shire Council
wollondilly.nsw.gov.au



Wollongong City Council
wollongong.nsw.gov.au



Wentworth Shire Council
wentworth.nsw.gov.au