



MEDIA RELEASE

Mining related councils hit hot topics in Liverpool Plains

When the Association of Mining Related Councils (AMRC) met in Quirindi recently, delegates from member councils around the State took the opportunity to tour contentious sites in the Liverpool Plains Shire. They visited the site of the proposed BHP Billiton Carooona coal mine, which farmers claim would impact on water in one of Australia's richest agricultural districts. They also visited Whitehaven's Werris Creek Coal mine, where the principal concern has been reverberations of blasting in nearby Werris Creek. The following day saw a productive meeting, with numerous issues address.

"This was a good opportunity for us to network with other councils with mining operations right on their doorstep," said Liverpool Plains Shire Mayor Cr Andrew Hope. "We have many mining royalties and infrastructure issues, which we need this Association to represent our concerns straight to the State Government," he said. "I've seen us make headway through mining debates."

The Association Chair, Mayor of Warrumbungle Shire Council, Cr Peter Shinton said that IPART (the Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal) will be conducting a comprehensive review of local government rating legislation. "The Association will be asking IPART to ensure its terms of reference encompass the rating of mine operations. We saw this issue have a major financial impact on Broken Hill Shire Council," he said.

Following a motion by Narrabri Shire Council delegate Cr. Catherine Collyer, the Association moved to lobby the NSW Government to honour its pre-election promise relating to dust monitoring at the large-scale Maules Creek mine development. Gunnedah Shire Mayor Owen Hassler reiterated Cr. Collyer's statement that people need to be able to have more trust and faith in their Governments, adding that NSW needs to be proactive, not reactive when it comes to dust. "

AMRC members were updated on their progress in building an information database and panel resource. Association CEO Don Tydd told the meeting that responses had come in from 43 consultancies, from small to multi-national. "There is days of reading in the responses. The extent of the interest we received speaks volumes about the knowledge base relating to mining impacts and the growing standing of this Association," he said.

Chair Peter Shinton said that the Association has called for action on Voluntary Planning Agreements and was delighted to see two senior staff from Planning NSW give a presentation on a position paper concerning Planning Agreements at the meeting. "These agreements can involve ongoing multi-million dollar deals between a mine and local government towards redressing infrastructure impacts. It is fantastic that Planning NSW took our input on board, toward producing guidelines that will help councils negotiating these deals in regards to new mines, in the future."

Captions:

[AMRC-Liverpool_Plains_1789.jpg]

BHP Billiton Snr Manager, Corporate Affairs Andrew Garrett, Association of Mining Related Councils' CEO Don Tydd and Chair Cr. Peter Shinton, with BHP Billiton Carooona Coal Project Manager Mick Lovely, in front of the ridge where the proposed controversial Carooona coal mine would be established.

[AMRC-Liverpool_Plains_1846.jpg]

AMRC Chair Peter Shinton, Werris Creek Coal Mine Manager Jeremy Taylor and AMRC CEO Don Tydd, with the open-cut mine below them.

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

*For further information, contact AMRC Chair (and Warrumbungle Shire Mayor) Cr Peter Shinton: 0428 255 420
Or Chief 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



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/



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

Association of Mining
Related Councils Inc.



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



Narrromine Shire Council
narrromine.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

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