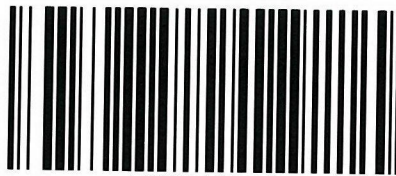


# Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service

Operated by Hunter Region SLSA Helicopter Rescue Service Ltd  
ABN 40 002 862 026 · Freecall 1800 155 155  
Bavin Road, Broadmeadow NSW 2292 · PO Box 230 New Lambton NSW 2305  
Tel (02) 4952 0000 · Fax (02) 4952 0055 · [www.rescuehelicopter.com.au](http://www.rescuehelicopter.com.au)



PCU54378

9 July 2014

NSW Planning and Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001

To Whom it may concern;

## Re: Letter of Support towards Mount Thorley Warkworth Expansion.

The Westpac Rescue Helicopter is a community based emergency service, which forms part of the NSW health care chain. Our role is to provide aeromedical retrieval services, which includes retrieval of accident victims, transfer of patients between hospitals and search and rescue. Each year the Service flies more than 1000 missions in the Hunter, New England and North West, Mid North Coast and Central Coast Regions of NSW. The Service was established in 1975 and has been able to increasingly meet the requirements of the NSW Department of Health and NSW Ambulance through the generous support of the community.

The community presently funds about 60 per cent of the total cost of \$14 million of providing these services. At present two aircraft are located at Tamworth providing coverage for the New England and North West with two other aircraft located in Newcastle people in the cities, towns and outlying areas throughout the regions are provided with emergency care 24 hours a day.

Doctors and paramedics, specialist hospital retrieval teams and highly trained air crew fly missions according to patient needs. The mining sector was perhaps the first to recognise the advantages of aeromedical services as mining operations moved further from urban areas and consequently further from trauma hospitals. They understood that the speed with which a medical team on a helicopter can make the difference between for those in need. I am sure you have all seen the landing spots, marked by wind indicators, at man mine sites. At the same time miners recognised that because of the relative remoteness of new sites more and more of them are travelling greater distances to work.

Of course this also reflects the greater mobility of the wider population and in turn the need for faster access to medical support. It is particularly worth noting that even though missions involving mines represents only about 2 per cent of total missions the mining companies and workers contribute more than 15% of the community funding. Mining companies contribute in a range of ways including direct sponsorship, support for community fund raising functions and, often, the matching of dollars contributed by their employees through payroll deduction schemes.

Department of Planning  
Received  
15 JUL 2014  
Scanning Room



And the  
Community

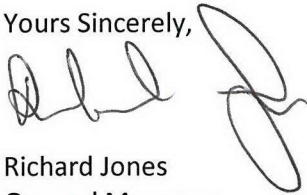
Our major contributors include the United Miners Federation, Coal & Allied, Whitehaven Mine, BHP Billiton, Glencore, Coal Services and NSW Mining. While these dollars are most appreciated and important in their own right, we know from long experience that this leadership from the mining sector has encouraged many other sections of communities to support the Service.

I am sure that when reviewing the expansion application of Mount Thorley Warkworth that you are aware that there has been a substantial downturn in the mining sector and while the immediate aspects of such a downturn are apparent there are wider impacts. The loss of mining jobs, already more than 1000 in the Hunter Region, has impacted in mining support companies as well and we have seen the result of these losses in a downturn in donations from workers.

We know through our long association with this industry that we can expect support from those at this mine if the expansion is approved and that will be most welcome.

Continued community funding is essential for this Service to continue. One of our biggest statements is that the Service is 'Free of Charge' to those who unfortunately need it, it has been since inception 39 years ago, and will be forever more.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Richard Jones', written over a horizontal line.

Richard Jones  
General Manager