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LEADING BUSINESS

Hunter Business Chamber

Warkworth Coal Mine

Warkworth Modification 6

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P: 02 4969 9600

F: 02 4969 9620

E: info@hunterbusinesschamber.com.au

PO Box 607, Hamilton NSW 2303
99 Selwyn Street, Mayfield East NSW 2304

hunterbusinesschamber.com.au

Introduction

The Hunter Region has long held the reputation as the powerhouse of the NSW economy and ranks highly as one of the most valued, diverse and resilient regions in Australia.

The Hunter Business Chamber is the largest regional business chamber in Australia and is now over 127 years old. The Chamber represents over 1300 member businesses to all levels of government. The Chamber is the peak industry association in the Hunter which represents all sectors of business in the region.

The Hunter Business Chamber welcomes the opportunity to provide a brief submission to the *Warkworth Consent 2003 – Modification 6*.

Key Points

The Chamber strongly supports Coal & Allied's Warkworth Modification application to gain access to an additional 350m of land owned by the mine. The approval of this extension is vital to avoiding a significant drop in production and employment.

- The Chamber notes that mining in the West Pit at Warkworth has now reached the consent levels (southern and western). The proposed modification is seeking to continue mining up to 350 metres beyond the existing approved limit of mining operations (including up to 50 metres of disturbance area for required infrastructure).
- The Chamber notes all aspects of the consultation and the subsequent Environmental Assessment (EA) lodged with the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.
- The proponent's commitment to socially and environmentally responsible development is acknowledged with due attention to matters such as ecology, air quality and noise reduction.
- The Chamber also notes the importance of proactive management strategies in regard to noise, air quality, groundwater monitoring, aboriginal cultural heritage, social and visual impacts.
- The Chamber strongly endorses the sentiments expressed in the EA regarding the potential importance of the economic contributions for the project and the region.
- Of crucial importance is the acknowledgement of the protection of ongoing employment for the current workforce of 1300 employees. Without the approval of this current EA, the Chamber fears there will be an immediate and destructive effect on the employees and families and also more broadly throughout the supply chain in the Hunter region economy.

The Chamber is pleased to provide its overall support to progressing the delivery of the *Warkworth Consent 2003 – Modification 6* project as a vital contributor to the growth and sustainability of our region with subsequent positive influence on the state economy.

Contact

For further information please contact:

Kristen Keegan
Chief Executive Officer
Hunter Business Chamber

P: 02 4969 9600
F: 02 4969 9620
E: info@hunterbusinesschamber.com.au

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