

## NEW SOUTH WALES MINERALS COUNCIL LTD

MININGENUITY™

LEVEL 12, 59 GOULBURN STREET, SYDNEY NSW 2000  
PO BOX A244, SOUTH SYDNEY NSW 1235  
• T: 61 2 8202 7200 • F: 61 2 8202 7255

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#### FOCUS ON SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES IN NSW MINING

Mining in NSW achieved record production valued at over \$12.3 billion in the last year, delivering more benefits to both regional communities and Government revenue, according to the NSW Minerals Council *State of the Industry Report 2007*, released today.

The Report celebrates a year in which the value of mineral production went past \$12.3 billion, returning more than \$1 billion in government royalties and taxes, much of which is used to provide essential government services across NSW.

NSW Minerals Council Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said the report, titled *Shedding Light on the Issues*, focuses on the industry's commitment to delivering on its environmental and social responsibilities.

"As a community we are becoming increasingly aware of the fact that the economy and the environment are closely linked," said Dr Williams.

"We are very proud of the benefits the industry provides through the creation of employment opportunities, its contribution to robust regional economies and the fabric of local communities across the State," she said.

"At the same time, we are focussed on delivering technological solutions to major issues such as climate change and water management, as well as continuing to work with governments and communities to minimise the impacts of mining activities," said Dr Williams.

The report features case studies on some of these initiatives, including the BHP Billiton West Cliff Ventilation Air Methane Project (WestVAMP). WestVAMP will utilise 20 per cent of West Cliff's available mine ventilation air to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions of 200,000 tonnes CO<sub>2</sub>-e per year. This is equivalent to producing enough electricity for 20,000 homes, or removing emissions from 45,000 cars from the environment each year.

In addition to on-site innovations such as WestVAMP, NSW coal producers are major contributors to the \$1 billion national COAL21 Fund, a world first voluntary industry initiative to demonstrate, then commercialise low emission coal technologies which have been identified as a crucial part of the global fight against climate change.

The industry's leading role in the development of technology to improve water management and efficiency is also profiled in the report. Rio Tinto Northparkes Mines' Floating Module is an initiative to improve water efficiency by reducing evaporation losses through technology innovation. The module acts as a floating cover on the surface of water storage facilities. Trial work to date has shown that evaporation reduction during summer can be reduced by up to 90 per cent.

Dr Williams said the NSW mining industry had an important contribution to make to the State's economic, environmental and social future.

"At a time when NSW is preparing for major investment in upgrade of its critical infrastructure, the strength of the mining industry is underpinning the State's growth plans and 'open for business' mantra," she said.

"The NSW mining industry employs 47,000 people in mining and minerals processing. It is estimated that for every direct job another 4.5 positions are supported elsewhere, meaning that altogether around a quarter of a million people in NSW are sustained by the mining industry.\*"

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Contact Jai McDermott: T: (02) 8202 7200 | M: 0400 435 646 | E: [jmcdermott@nswmin.com.au](mailto:jmcdermott@nswmin.com.au)

