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MEDIA RELEASE

CO-OPERATION KEY TO IMPROVED MINE SAFETY

A new review of mine safety in NSW has identified the need for a more co-operative approach between industry, unions and government to achieve the safest possible mining culture.

The NSW Minerals Council (NSWMC) today welcomed the broad thrust of the NSW Mine Safety Review released by Mineral Resources Minister, The Hon Mr Kerry Hickey. The Review was chaired by former NSW Premier, the Hon Neville Wran AC QC.

NSWMC Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said an initial assessment of the Review suggested that whilst industry does not agree with the detail of every recommendation, it supports its overarching direction and clear focus on establishing a more co-operative environment between the major parties in the NSW mining industry.

The Wran Review states that the issue of trust “can only be resolved through a genuine commitment by all stakeholders towards achieving the common goal of zero serious injuries and fatalities.”

“Safety is the number one priority of the NSW minerals industry. We are committed to zero injury mining in NSW,” Dr Williams said.

“This Review provides us all with the opportunity to develop a more consultative approach to safety, building on the lessons learned to achieve this common goal. It offers the opportunity for a significant step forward in safety performance since the last mine safety review in 1997. We embrace the opportunity to work with government and the unions to deliver against the safety imperative.”

Dr Williams said the rate of workplace injuries and fatalities in the NSW minerals industry has been steadily falling since the mid 1980s – the result of significant contributions from all major stakeholders – the mining companies, their contractors and suppliers, the trade unions, governments, industry associations and others involved in and with the industry. She said processes which genuinely facilitated meaningful progress in mine safety would be wholeheartedly supported by the industry.

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