

29 September 2006

MEDIA RELEASE

**NSW MINING INDUSTRY STRIVES FOR
STRONGER COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS**

The NSW mining industry is striving for community engagement and partnerships that go beyond compliance and build stronger relationships with local communities. The latest initiative towards this goal is the NSW Minerals Council Community Engagement Handbook, which has been released this month.

The Handbook, titled "Towards Stronger Community Relationships", provides direction for mining operations undertaking community engagement programs and assists in the planning of effective strategies to promote open dialogue between mines and the communities in which they operate.

NSWMC Chief Executive, Dr Nikki Williams, said the Handbook contains best practice examples of effective community engagement from across the industry.

"By promoting the best practice of today we hope to ensure that it becomes the minimum standard of tomorrow," she said.

It has received the endorsement of the Association of Mining Related Councils, the body which represents mining related councils and their communities throughout New South Wales.

Dr Williams said that the State's mining industry operated in a unique environment in which mining operations are located proximate to established communities.

"This creates a challenge because notwithstanding the enormous efforts of all those who work in the industry, mining can impact on neighbouring communities."

"It is critical that our mining operations not only minimise these impacts, but also that they engage with and involve local people in how the mining project develops. This applies throughout the life of any mine, from exploration, right through to mine closure," said Dr Williams.

The handbook contains practical tools in the rear of the document which can be easily replicated and tailored for use. It is available both in hard copy and online. There is also a summary brochure which outlines the scope and content of the larger document.

The Handbook sets out each step of the engagement process and captures the NSWMC's vision for engagement.

"This is not a definitive "how-to" guide – we accept that communities are unique and that each scenario is different. However, this Handbook will be invaluable in helping to crystallize the thinking around strengthening community relationships," said Dr Williams.

The Handbook is a collaborative effort of NSWMC and its member companies, in association with ERM Consultants.

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