

**NEW SOUTH WALES MINERALS COUNCIL LTD**

MININGENUITY™

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**MEDIA RELEASE**

**MINERS DELIVER PROSPERITY TO NSW**

The NSW mining industry has continued to deliver crucial new investment in regional areas according to a new industry report released today.

The long running resources boom has translated into a bonanza for many regional areas, with local businesses among the major beneficiaries of local economies buoyed by the mining sector.

The second annual NSW Minerals Council *State of the Industry 06* Report reveals the minerals industry has grown by around \$2 billion in the past year to an estimated \$11 billion for 2005-06 and continues to support in excess of 20,000 jobs, primarily in regional areas.

“The Report shows what we have been saying for some time – that the minerals industry in NSW is a major contributor to the success and prosperity of the State, in particular in key regions like the Central West, Hunter Valley, Illawarra and the far west,” said Dr Nikki Williams, NSW Minerals Council Chief Executive.

According to the latest figures released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics, investment in exploration in NSW has risen 55 per cent over the past year to \$114 million, representing increased exploration for coal, copper, gold and zinc.

The Newcastle Port has seen a record throughput of 85.6 million tonnes of coal for export in 2005-06 valued at \$7.5 billion.

“Mining continues to provide the highest wages of any industry in the State with average weekly total earnings for employees at more than \$1,800 and NSW mining engineers amongst the highest paid of any graduates,” said Dr Williams.

Research also shows that 5,000 new jobs will be created in mining in regional NSW over the next 10 years.

Dr Williams said the Report was an important opportunity to tell the human stories of the industry and to communicate the contribution of the industry to the welfare and success of people living in NSW at a time when some are challenging its right to operate.

“Many people don’t realise that more than 90 per cent of NSW’s electricity comes from coal and this supply of reliable, affordable energy underpins the State’s economy and our way of life.”

“NSWMC and its member companies will continue to work with dedication and commitment to achieve safe and healthy working conditions for employees, dynamic economic growth, responsible environmental outcomes and vital regional communities in NSW”.

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