

News Release



Attention News Editors
For immediate release
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Illawarra Coal welcomes Report by panel of experts

Illawarra Coal has welcomed the release of the Report by a panel of experts following their strategic review of the Southern Coalfields, saying it reinforces the Company's already comprehensive and sustainable approach to mine planning.

Illawarra Coal's General Manager Sustainable Development and External Affairs John Brannon said Illawarra Coal welcomed the Report and looked forward to addressing its contents in detail, particularly any areas of concern.

"Firstly, we are pleased that the Report recognises the valuable social and economic contribution made by the coal industry, and we at Illawarra Coal are proud of our significant contribution," he said.

"Illawarra Coal has been operating in the southern coalfields for close to 80 years, and provides direct employment benefits for 1000 people and their families, and flow-on employment benefits for almost another 5000 people.

"We are committed to environmentally sustainable mining in order to continue to provide these ongoing economic benefits to the region and state, and features of this Report acknowledge our sustainable approach.

"It further supports what Illawarra Coal has said for some time – that our operations have no impact to Sydney's valuable water supply, or headwater swamps."

Mr Brannon said that like Illawarra Coal, the Report recognised that mining has impacts, and that what is important is getting the balance right.

"We look forward to working with Government on the issue of assessing what impacts are acceptable, with the view of encouraging a balanced approach.

"Our decision to move longwalls away from local river systems with our recent applications is proof of our commitment and evidence of our ability to address and manage environmental impacts taking into account all requirements of the regulatory Authorities and stakeholders.

"We are pleased to see that the Panel has rejected the call for blanket restrictions with the more balanced view that applications to mine must be assessed on their own merit taking into account the unique nature of each mining area, the value of the resource, and the views of all stakeholders.

"We are committed to sustainable mining for the future, and will continue to work with Government to ensure that the Report's recommendations support the economies and communities in which we operate."

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A member of the BHP Billiton Group which is headquartered in Australia
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The economic contribution of Illawarra Coal accounts for about 4.4 per cent of the Gross Regional Product in the Illawarra/Wollondilly regions. In detail that represents, including flow-on effects about 5900 jobs, \$520 million in Gross Regional Product and \$278 million in household income.

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