



Don Harwin MLC

Minister for Resources, Minister for Energy and Utilities,
Minister for the Arts, Vice-President of the Executive Council

MDPE18/1530

Ms Helen Minnican
Clerk of the Legislative Assembly
Parliament of New South Wales
Macquarie Street
SYDNEY NSW 2000



Dear Ms Minnican

I write in response to the petition lodged on Tuesday, 1 May 2018 by the Hon. Pru Goward MP regarding coal mining in the Sydney water catchment.

The protection of Greater Sydney's water catchment and drinking water is of paramount importance to the NSW Government.

The NSW Government has put in place a comprehensive regulatory framework that applies to any and all mines operating within the Sydney's drinking water catchments. NSW is regarded as a global leader in the regulation and management of underground coal mining.

Over the past 40 years this framework has been informed by a number of reviews that have extensively examined the impacts of mining in Sydney's drinking water catchments. These reviews have found no strong evidence of any major impacts on water resources from mining.

Notwithstanding, two recent reports commissioned by Government have made a number of recommendations about further work that should be undertaken, particularly in relation to improved monitoring and modelling.

The NSW Government takes these reports seriously and has commenced work to address the recommendations of these reports.

This has included the establishment of an Independent Expert Panel for Mining in the Catchment. The Panel comprises experts in mine subsidence, groundwater, surface water and swamps and is chaired by the Office of the Chief Scientist and Engineer. It is currently undertaking a thorough review of mining activities in the Special Areas of the catchment and is due to report to Government later this year.

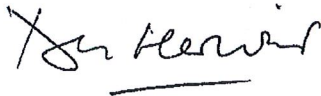
As part of this review, the Panel is seeking submissions from stakeholders. The petitioners can read more about the Panel and find instructions on how to make a submission at chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au.

The Panel's advice will assist the Government in determining appropriate measures to ensure the catchment continues to be protected.

Furthermore, it is important to note that all active coal mines in the catchment are tightly regulated by the conditions of their development consents. These conditions include strict water performance and rehabilitation criteria and stringent monitoring and auditing requirements.

The Department of Planning and Environment will continue to closely monitor and investigate the impacts of mining in the catchment and seek independent expert advice on water-related matters.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Harwin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Don Harwin MLC

Leader of the Government in the Legislative Council

Minister for Resources

Minister for Energy and Utilities

Minister for the Arts

Vice-President of the Executive Council

Date: 5 June 2018