

6 October, 2016

Attn: Research Director
Agriculture and Environment Committee
Parliament House
BRISBANE QLD 4000
Email: aec@parliament.qld.gov.au

Submission to request amendment to Environmental Protection (Underground Water Management) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2016 (QLD).

Suggested Changes – Transitional arrangements / exemption for operations that are operational and / or part through application / approval process

Impacts -

Delays to approvals for current applications cause uncertainty for employees and families of operating assets. Probable redundancy of employees while a mining operation seeks additional water licensing.

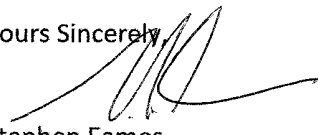
I am employee of New Hope Group. The company has been pursuing a mining lease application for a number of years to extend the life of the New Acland Mine, by following the regulatory processes laid out by successive State and Commonwealth governments. The application is being assessed (including Underground Water) by this rigorous process, including a 31-week Land Court hearing, where ground water was examined for approximately 2 weeks. This additional piece of legislation, if passed, as currently written will delay the granting of the Mining Lease application and will result in uncertainty of employment for over 450 people and their families as this additional assessment is undertaken. These people are direct employees at the mine. Additional employees working at the port and rail transport operations and at other supporting businesses will also be affected (and potentially lose their jobs).

New Acland Mine has been working diligently through the prescribed approvals process for over 8 years at considerable cost to the company and stress to its employees.

I understand that this piece of new legislation requires the mine to obtain water licenses that may take 12 months to gather the information and proceed through another Land Court process. As the company has followed the prescribed process, why should additional delays be added at the eleventh hour to further delay the process. Suitable transitional arrangements can be added to allow the current approval process to come to its conclusion and allow the employees of the mine to see an end this stressful process.

Thank-you for your consideration.

Yours Sincerely,


Stephen Eames