

GAS WATCH 85.

Minister Macdonald says and offers nothing for the Hunter Valley communities.

On 3rd May 2010, Minister Macdonald addressed the NSW Minerals Councils OH & S Conference at Pokolbin.

We've been trying to get him to Broke for two years. He has said he would come on a couple of occasions, but became too busy. Maybe it wouldn't have been too hard to come another 20 minutes on 3rd May!

In the edited transcript of his address supplied to HVPA, Minister Macdonald failed to once mention or address:

- The environment.
- The air quality.
- Agriculture, the basis of food for Australians.
- The community, the human beings who live in the Hunter Valley.
- The cumulative impacts of coal mining, methane gas extraction, power station emissions, defence forces industry, on any of the above.

These are issues which have been put to him time and time again, however he continues to ignore them. He merely carried on with the usual Macdonald rhetoric and said nothing other than to, pretty well, praise the mining industry for producing so much money for the Government. **And he also made such deep comments such as: that without coal we wouldn't be able to have iPods, or a morning cup of coffee!! Give us a break. Who writes this nonsense.**

Not only that, he basically criticised the community for seeking to look after the environmental and future interests of its children and grandchildren.

It is within the power of this Government for all Ministers to work together to initiate a full cumulative impact study on the environment of the Hunter Valley.

But this Minister continues to refuse the unrefusable. He continues to hide behind the Planning Minister rather than working with him.

We are still waiting for an appointment with the Planning Minister who is currently "considering our issues".

Let's hope he gives us a better hearing than Ian Macdonald, Minister for Major Events.



PO BOX 120 BROKE NSW 2330 www.huntervalleyprotectionalliance.com

May, 2010.

Tel: 02 65791062

Edited transcript ..

Ian Macdonald - NSW Mineral Resources Minister
NSW Minerals Councils OH&S Conference, Pokolbin Mon May 3, 2010

Now, I'd just like to go a bit broader for a moment because there are a number of issues confronting this sector that I think I need to make a few comments about.

Firstly, again I want to highlight the importance of this industry, of mining, to society.

The NSW mining industry is a vibrant one employing nearly 30,000 people directly and almost 81,000 indirectly through the provision of both mine and non-mine related services.

Direct employment in the NSW coal industry June 2009 was nearly 17,000.

NSW produces a diverse range of minerals including coal, gas, metals industrial minerals and construction materials.

The total value of the NSW mineral production in 2008-09 was estimated at nearly \$23-billion, an increase of 63 per cent over the previous year.

Coal production valued at almost \$19-billion in 2008-09 is the state's largest mining sector.

Coal is the single largest export from NSW in value terms.

Mining brings significant economic benefits and employment opportunities for people living in regional and rural areas of the state through job creation, investment, community enhancement programs and regional development.

The mining industry supports manufacturing, construction, banking, financial, engineering, property and transport sectors.

It is a broad impact on our economy.

Coal provides an affordable and reliable source of power for NSW households and businesses and is one of the most competitively priced electricity sources in the world.

More than 90% of local electricity needs in NSW are met with locally mined thermal coal.

We can't get away from the fact that coal is the dominant source of power generation in NSW, in Australia and across the world.

So imagine if there was no mining for one day, what effect it would have on each of our lives.

There'd be no morning cup of coffee, no toaster, no microwaves, no hot water for the shower, no hairdryers, no irons, electric shavers, no car-train-or bus, no computers, no lights, no phones, no mobiles, stereos, no Ipods, no air conditioning, no heating, no plasma TV, no radio, no newspapers.

All of these are composed of steels, alloys, lead, zinc, platinum, iron ore and many run on electricity, the list is endless.

No overseas holidays, no theatre, no movies, there would be no export industry, automobile industry, building or manufacturing industry.

In other words, our living standards would be greatly reduced.

So any suggestion to ban or limit mining which is increasingly getting credence in some sections of the media is completely unrealistic.

For instance in NSW, the Greens assume by limiting the amount of mining that somehow the people of NSW would be better off.

The Greens don't understand that the NSW mining industry directly contributes to their standard of living and is striving to make itself a world leader in occupational health and safety and in environmental performance.

The Opposition in parliament have attacked the government's support of the mining and extractive industries, support for which I make no apology.

We have to deal with these issues and we have to project mining as a vital part of our society, not one that can be kicked in some sections of the media on an endless basis on a locational basis often and on a small area basis.

... As I said mining today faces many unprecedented threats.

Although it has the tacit support of the overwhelming majority of Australians, it suffers from a complacency and lethargy towards its actual industry and production.

Mining is prey to the energetic activities of a vocal minority as I've been referring to that demonise the industry, whilst denying its overall and fundamental benefit to humankind.

This is particularly true in the Hunter, where we have a number of largely small groups opposing mining in the region on a number of grounds, well organised and exploiting the media's insatiable demand for copy and conflict.

Whereas the day-to-day activity of tens of thousands of people and their families engage directly or indirectly with mining are ignored.

Positive stories receive very little coverage compared to the sensationalised views of a minority.

This poses great problems as the industry confronts significant threats from many areas which will require painstaking attention to detail and consultation to avoid contraction of this important industry, a contraction we can ill afford in this state and in this country.

In some areas very real concerns such as in the Upper Hunter, there are some very real concerns, these concerns will need to be patiently negotiated with other industries that have significant contributions to make.

It is a challenge to us all both in terms of the consultation and negotiation but also at the government level, painstakingly ensuring the industry can renew itself to continue to contribute so greatly to the NSW economy and the everyday lives of citizens of this state.