



The Hon Anthony Roberts MP

Minister for Resources and Energy
Special Minister of State

MEDIA RELEASE

Thursday 25 September 2014

FREEZE EXTENDED ON PETROLEUM EXPLORATION LICENCE APPLICATIONS

Minister for Resources and Energy Anthony Roberts today announced an additional 12 month freeze on NSW Petroleum Exploration Licence Applications (PELAs) and Petroleum Special Prospecting Authority applications (a PSPA is a desktop or geoscientific survey).

The six month freeze announced by the NSW Government on 26 March 2014 will be extended to 26 September 2015.

Mr Roberts said the extended timeframe will allow the Office of Coal Seam Gas (OCSG) to complete its comprehensive examination of current PELAs and allow the Government to further assess the application process for petroleum titles.

“The former Labor Government handed out 39 Petroleum Exploration Licences (PELs) in a careless and clumsy fashion with little oversight. NSW deserved better,” Mr Roberts said.

“The NSW Liberals & Nationals Government has put in place the most comprehensive regulations for the CSG industry in the country.

“These regulations ensure that gas extraction from coal seams is done in a way that is safe and has minimal impacts on the environment and other industries.

“The framework also ensures that companies involved in the NSW gas industry meet the highest standards of technical expertise and financial capability to undertake exploration.”

Mr Roberts said the NSW Government has refused 10 PELAs since March, in regions across the State.

“A number of companies have been asked to provide further information around environment, exploration and production reporting, community consultation and work programs,” he said.

“Petroleum Assessment Leases (PAL) will be available to companies with existing PELs or those who applied before the freeze.

“The NSW Government is committed to increasing our domestic supply of gas and is working to ensure only safe and sustainable gas supply projects proceed,” he said.