



# **The Hon Chris Hartcher**

## **Minister for Resources and Energy**

### **Special Minister of State**

### **Minister for the Central Coast**

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Tuesday 19 November 2013

### **STAKEHOLDERS AGREE WITH GAS EXPLORATION LAW CHANGES: DRAFT CODE RELEASED FOR COMMENT**

The NSW Government has tabled modifications to the laws overseeing gas exploration after extensive consultation and discussions with key stakeholder groups.

Land and Water Commissioner Jock Laurie was tasked with consulting with key stakeholders and has reported back to Government that clarifications and amendments should be made to satisfy a range of concerns held by landholder groups.

Mr Hartcher said the Government has agreed to the amendments and they will be introduced this evening into the Parliament to enable interested stakeholders to review the changes prior to debate progressing in the Upper House.

“This package of legislative change will put landholders in a much stronger position than they are in today, with a greater say over natural gas exploration companies seeking to access their land,” Mr Hartcher said.

“The changes include stipulation that permit provisions may only be utilised for environmental data collection and geological survey purposes such as water monitoring, flora and fauna – at the exploration phase only.

“The community has broadly recognised that baseline data is important prior to any project being considered for approval. The permit system will support that aim.”

Part of this stakeholder consultation has been the creation of a Code of Practice for Land Access. Feedback will now be sought on the draft Code which sets out a best practice framework for how explorers can negotiate access arrangements with landholders.

The Code also sets out mandatory requirements that must be included in an access arrangement such as promptly paying any agreed compensation and ensuring any information obtained about the landholder’s property or operations is kept confidential.

“This is yet another measure to further strengthen the rights of landholders as part of the NSW Government’s stringent regulations for coal seam gas exploration,” Mr Hartcher said.

“It is important that community concerns about potential impacts are addressed and clear standards are established and adhered to. The Code will ensure that access arrangements between landholders and titleholders are fair and reasonable.

“I’d like to thank Jock Laurie and the stakeholder reference group for their hard work and dedication in developing this Code of Practice.”

Consultation on the draft Code of Practice will run from tomorrow 20 November 2013 and close 5pm, Monday 16 December 2013. A copy of the draft Code will be available at: <http://www.haveyoursay.nsw.gov.au/>.

Written submissions can be emailed to: [ocsq.enquiries@industry.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ocsq.enquiries@industry.nsw.gov.au) or sent to:

Code of Practice for Land Access Submission  
NSW Trade & Investment, Resources & Energy  
GPO Box 3889  
Sydney NSW 2001