



# 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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### OPAL MINING SECURITY DEPOSITS AT PRE-1 JULY LEVELS

The NSW Government has amended opal mining regulations which will see security deposit rates for opal mining remain at pre-1 July 2012 levels for small scale titles.

Resources Minister Chris Hartcher said the NSW Government remains committed to supporting the opal mining community and will continue working to strengthen Lightning Ridge's mining, agriculture and tourism industries.

"The NSW Government has listened and responded to industry concerns. We don't want to be in a situation where individual miners are unnecessarily burdened by an increase in up-front costs for obtaining or renewing an opal mining title," Mr Hartcher said.

"Those who have already paid the higher premiums will have the difference refunded on application to the Division of Resources. We are keen to preserve what have proven to be longstanding, workable administrative arrangements."

The amendments to the *Mining Act 1992* introduced last year increased the minimum security deposit for opal mineral claims to \$1,000. The security deposit requirement was also extended to opal mineral claims at White Cliffs, where no such requirement previously existed.

"The NSW Government is continuing to work through a number of issues facing the Lightning Ridge community in relation to opal mining, including compensation and access arrangements," Mr Hartcher said,

"The Government is currently collating submissions received to its response to the Wilcox Report, which will give a clearer position on the continued management and operation of the opal industry."

Minister for Western NSW, Kevin Humphries welcomed the amended regulations and said the changes highlight the NSW Government's commitment to working with the Lightning Ridge community to strengthen the region's mining, agricultural and tourism industries.

#### Minimum security deposit requirements for mineral claims (Lightning Ridge)

Security	Pre 1 July 2012 and continuing	
Residential small scale titles	\$200	
Preserved fields	\$700	<b>\$250</b>
Other fields	\$700	<b>\$250</b>

\*Figures in bold apply to members of industry associations with joint security arrangements.

#### Minimum security deposit requirements for mineral claims (White Cliffs)

Security	Pre 1 July 2012 and continuing
Area A (historic fields)	\$0
Area B (inner area – underground only)	\$0
Area C (outer area – underground and open cut)	\$0