



# **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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Friday 2 December 2011

### **NSW GOVERNMENT EXTENDS FRACGING MORATORIUM**

Minister for Resources and Energy, Chris Hartcher today announced the extension of the NSW Government's moratorium on fracking until April 2012 pending the completion of an independent review process.

The moratorium, previously scheduled to end on 31 December 2011, will allow for the review and strengthening of existing standards for fracking in NSW, as well as the development of technical guidelines.

The fracking standards are to be reviewed by industry experts and will also be peer reviewed by the NSW Chief Scientist and Engineer, Professor Mary O'Kane, prior to implementation.

"The NSW Government recognises significant recent community concern over the potential for pollution of aquifers by the coal seam gas industry as part of the fracking process," Mr Hartcher said.

"That's why we're proceeding with caution and making sure the proper frameworks are in place for the protection of our aquifers, our environment and our prime agricultural land."

The review is considering local material with a particular focus on Queensland, as well as overseas standards in the US and Canada.

The NSW Government is also currently reviewing the standards for coal seam gas well integrity to ensure all activity is contained within the well and to prevent the potential escape of any gases or liquids.

"This review is addressing the health, safety and environmental risks associated with the loss of well integrity and covers conventional onshore petroleum activities as well as onshore coal seam gas activities in NSW," Mr Hartcher said.

"The NSW Government is working to ensure we have world's best practice in well integrity, design and fracking standards.

"We are working very carefully to strike the right balance between resource development, continued agricultural production and environmental protection while meeting the State's future energy needs."