



# **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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Monday 20 May 2013

### **DELIVERING INVESTMENT ONLY WHEN NECESSARY: GOVERNMENT RELEASES FINAL MID NORTH COAST REVIEW**

The NSW Government is requiring improved community engagement processes and greater flexibility and transparency in transmission developments following release of the final report into the Mid North Coast's energy needs.

Energy Minister Chris Hartcher released the final report today after commissioning prominent engineer, Mr Robert Rollinson to undertake an independent review of the region's energy needs in light of changing demand forecasts.

Though it focused on a single project in one region, the review makes a number of recommendations that can be used across the industry to plan for and respond to changing demand and energy needs.

The recommendations range from specific advice on the Stroud to Taree project to broader governance and community engagement strategies, infrastructure corridors and comments on non-network options including demand management and gas supply.

"As a result of the review initiated by this Government, I am pleased to see that TransGrid has announced it will no longer be proceeding with its proposed Stroud to Taree transmission line and will continue to review the region's demand forecasts," Mr Hartcher said.

"This is a good result for the region and testament to Myall Lakes MP Stephen Bromhead's ongoing representation of his constituents' concerns.

"But the report also highlights a number of issues which require further attention, including a closer look at how network businesses forecast and respond to demand in specific areas and the adequacy and timing of the decision-making process regarding proposed network developments.

"More importantly, the review makes clear the ongoing need for genuine engagement with the community.

"The energy industry is highly regulated and there are rules and protocols in place that require industry players to pass through certain steps.

"But genuine engagement means more than just going through the motions and the Government will be looking to TransGrid to closely assess its governance procedures and adopt a best practice community engagement program.

“I am pleased that TransGrid has been working closely with Mr Rollinson and has already responded to some of the recommendations, including releasing Terms of Reference for a review of their public consultation process.

“In line with the review’s recommendations, I look forward to receiving initial advice on TransGrid’s proposed changes and implementation plan within two months.

“The Mid North Coast review will serve as an important case study for approved and proposed developments across the industry. The NSW Government has been adamant that network and transmission businesses must consider the most effective ways to meet regions’ future energy needs before they invest – and changes to governance procedures will ensure this occurs.

“I thank Mr Rollinson for his work in preparing this review and for all those who were involved in the consultation process.

“The community can be assured that, unlike the former Labor Government, this Government will ensure all its investments in the electricity network are timely and cost effective.”

The Mid North Coast Review is available online at [www.energy.nsw.gov.au](http://www.energy.nsw.gov.au)