

Taroborah Coal Project Media Release – 13/03/15

TAROBORAH EIS APPROVAL A WELCOME DEVELOPMENT

The acceptance by the State government of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Taroborah Coal Project has been hailed as a welcome development by project director, Mr Dave Thomas.

The Taroborah Coal Project is being developed by Shenhua International Group Pty Ltd. Expected to produce up to 5 million tonnes of coal per year, and employ up to 350 people, the Taroborah Coal Project will be a substantial mining project.

“This is certainly a welcome development for the project, and something we have been working towards for some years now. It is also good news for the Central Highlands,” Mr Thomas said.

The State government accepted that the EIS meets the requirements of the Terms of Reference and the Environmental Protection Act, and that it adequately describes the project, the environmental issues, and proposed strategies to deal with them. A final approval by the Federal Environment Minister is now awaited.

The State government also issued draft environmental conditions for the project as part of their EIS assessment report.

“This has been a very painstaking process to get this project right, but something we have been very committed to doing properly,” Mr Thomas said.

Mr Thomas said the number of draft conditions contained in the assessment report was relatively modest compared to some projects, and reflected the care taken in developing the project over the past few years.

“We have certainly taken the environmental approval process seriously. In a number of cases, we have looked at potential problems several times over, and adjusted the final EIS accordingly, to make sure we had the right solutions,” Mr Thomas said.

The final EIS included significant additional groundwater modelling to assure the authorities, and local landowners, that there would be minor drawdown of water bores outside of the project boundary and little long term impairment to groundwater resources. Additional work was also undertaken on landform subsidence, water balance issues, and road and rail traffic, amongst other things.

Mr Thomas said Shenhua has proceeded differently than some mining companies have in the past by being willing to accept comments and suggestions from the community, not just in preparing the final EIS, but all the way along the process.

“A lot of our planning for the project was based on talking to local people and listening to what they recommended, then seeing if that could be achieved. This was especially so when looking at transport solutions to get coal out of the mine, as well as supporting and developing the local community,” he said.

With the final environmental approval for the project secured, the proponents will move towards undertaking the final economic feasibility assessment for the project before an investment decision is made.

ENDS

13th March, 2015.

For further information, please contact Mr Dave Thomas on 0407 745 318.