

WALLARAH 2 COAL PROJECT (Wednesday 5/4/17)

Good Morning

My name is Martin Hodgson, I am the owner of Hodgson Quarries and Plant, I am a local businessman who operates several quarries in the local area.

Thank you to the commission for allowing me to speak today in support of the Wallarah 2 Project.

I have had a business relationship with Kores Australia and Sojitz Resources for more than 10 years. Those two companies are part of the Wyong Areas Coal Venture behind this project. In that time I can assure you that they have always been fair, reasonable, professional and responsible companies to deal with.

I am a believer in this project, and I know that the spin off effects to the greater community cannot be under estimated and that's why I am speaking to you this morning. I am aware that the joint venture partners to this point have spent over \$100 million and initiated many great community based initiatives including:

- **24 sponsored apprentices, and over 50 community grants given to local organisations like;**
 - **The Lakes Lifesavings Club**
 - **Central Coast Cross Country, and**
 - **Mannering Park – Tidy Town Program**

Walarah 2 has also entered into an agreement with the Guringai Aboriginal Tribal Link Corporation supporting apprentices, university scholarships and a 10% target for indigenous employment at the mine. That's on top of the 70% commitment for other locals.

In terms of employment and business opportunities they have been swamped with interested from potential employees and business interests including;

- 400 individuals who have sought employment, many of those locals**
- Approximately 200 businesses, again with many being local**

The Wallarah Coal Project has been clear in its commitment to locals for both employment and business opportunities.

It's estimated once the mine is up and running hundreds of millions per year will be injected into the region, with around \$69million in household income from around 853 direct and indirect jobs.

There has been nothing anywhere close to the magnitude of this project on the Coast ever, and we should not let this opportunity pass us by.

I do understand that some people have reservations about the Wallarah Coal project; however it's important to remember that two previous PACs have recommended the project for approval based on its merits.

I therefore believe that it's time to take this project forward, and provide those opportunities that the Central Coast so badly needs.

Thank you for your time.