Good morning Commissioners and the Djarkenjung people attending today.

I wish to reiterate a bit of history and introduce a few truths.

My history is in mining which has kept myself and my family fed for over 45 years mostly in developing counties. New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Indonesia, Malaysia and Peru. As the manager I was responsible for the resources at my disposal. The most challenging being the human resources. In most of these countries corruption was the standard measure of success in gaining exploration and mining licences. So great was this corruption the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank were forced to introduce strict terms to combat the loss of approved funds being syphoned off by “the privileged” leaving those at village level the most affected, surviving on their own merits without any form of assistance or forced from their lands, loaded onto boats and transmigrated to remote areas. Time after time I witnessed this.

These new rules, being conditional, gave equal consideration to the most disadvantage. With no approval at the village level, there would no funds made available. This became known as the “Social Licence to Operate”.

My last 12 years in Indonesia was spent introducing this system into an area in which a large Multi National Company was investing $2.5 billion on developing a copper/gold mine which was being targeted by the local people. No socialisation had been undertaken, by either the Government or the Company. The inhabitants lived in the jungle isolated from both the National and Provincial Governments. It became an impasse and the company was ready to walk away. I stayed the distance during which time I spent over $18 million in the provision of critical infrastructure, training and health. The Company and the local people now live in harmony. For this I was presented the
“Chairman’s Award for Excellence”. An award I was humbled to receive. This model has been adopted by the Indonesian Government for future medium to large scale mining ventures within that country. Nothing similar exists in our country on a relative level.

After 34 years offshore I returned to Australia settling in the Dooralong Valley. It was not long after this that I smelt a familiar stench.

There are many parallels to my overseas experiences found in NSW. The difference being that we are not yet of 3rd world status. We use strikingly similar tactics that result in corruption, threats, retrospective legislation etc to issue coal mine approvals which increasingly over-ride commonsense and the science of the matter. Historically longwall mining has caused huge devastation in this state. The science of the matter has been founded from research examining the causes of these tragedies. In this case here today and using information found within the recesses of the EIS the science of the matter has determined that the aquifers will be depleted by essentially the largest measure of subsidence yet to be found in NSW. Our valley floors will drop 2.0 to 2.6 meters, the water table will drop 100 meters. That the recharge time will be around 500 years and the water tables remain contaminated by acid and salts. That airborne dust will cause an increase in morbidity, that 245 houses will be directly effected by this subsidence of up to 2.6 meters, farm dams and sheds and rural livelihoods wiped out.

More importantly the major source of water for industry and the population of over 300,000 people (and growing) will be severely compromised or lost.

How did it come to this in our country? Why are we all here today?

We are here today because Kores did not do what was expected of them and the compliant or complacent State Planning Authority did
not enforce it. The gate is now open to allow a foreign national company to have its own way over the livelihoods of our own populations.

The essential water study to determine baseline parameters has not been addressed. Had this study been undertaken and the critical parameters realised in all likelihood none of us would be sitting here today.

In this the Proponent, the State Planning Authority, the PAC members, the Planning Minister are all in denial of the real truths, and have been so for a decade. So much for O'Farrell's overhaul of the system.

In 1997 BHP entered our valley and proved up a coal resource, they also determined that future mining would cause the aquifers to deplete. This at the time that the OK Tedi mine in Western Papua was being investigated for environmental devastation. As BHP said we could not fight this mine and the Dooralong mine as well. The lease was taken over by Kores being a junior partner in the original consortium. There is no doubt that Kores were aware of the main reason as to why BHP walked out........ Water.

Since that time Kores have steadfastly refused to debate the issue of water.

Mitchell McCotter, consultants to BHP were retained by Kores and confirmed at the Chikeroski Enquiry that mining would destroy the water table. It was not long after this that Mitchell McCotter were no longer working for Kores.

It should also be pointed out that BHP did involved the community.
Kores have never openly socialised the real facts of their operation. Hard questions are never answered, just spin.

The Australian Coal Alliance recruited Dr. Ray Evans to prepare a preliminary water study of the valleys. His findings are on record and state clearly that mining will destroy the aquifers, and that water has been transiting from surface to coal seam for millions of years through sandstone crushes and faults etc.

The State Planning Authority recruited Dr. Evans to address the concerns of the Local Community, Wyong Council and others in reference to water loss due to mining. Evans reiterated his stance that his conclusions remained unchanged and that the aquifers would disappear after mining. This statement was not expected nor what the State Planning Authority nor Kores wished to hear. Evans also stated that a 2 year water study should be undertaken by the proponent Kores and should re-establish well over 100 boreholes to determine the flow and migratory characteristics over the entire valley and mine footprint.

The Department of Primary Industries - department of water - also recommended a 2 year study including the re-establishment of all BHP boreholes.

No field work of this nature was ever undertaken by Kores and clearly the State Planning Authority did not push it. Kores were content to drill 5 closely spaced boreholes on their own small property in the valley. Hardly representative of the entire valley. The results of these bores taken over a 2 years period WERE NOT included in the second EIS. Why were they not included?

The proponent Kores refuses to accept in public that the science that has destroyed their own credibility is the same science that has determined that the water will fail in the valleys. Their EIS has been criticised for lacking scientific endeavour, rather it is stated by many
peers that their EIS rests on unfounded assumptions and theories. Over 15 Government Departments have refuted the EIS for the same lack of scientific endeavour.

It is clear that Kores knows the issue of water will sink them. Their hiring of 31 consultants to prepare the latest EIS still resulted in rejection on technical grounds by the peer review consultants and the 16 State Government Depts. The critical information necessary to form proper decisions in relation to the EIS was dredged from the recesses of the EIS by professionals with experience in these sorts of things. What else could Kores’s consultants do, the truth has to be found somewhere. And the truth is that this mine will destroy our drinking water. Kores still resort to spin with a growing list of organisations being given money. Not withstanding these facts Kores are exposed and vulnerable.

The critical water study recommended has never been done so the exact parameters have not been obtained to develop a model that fits the valley that supplied the raw data. The method used by Kores was a series of extrapolations from the northern and southern coalfields with a bit of fiddling to get a result. No matter how many latent conditions are attached to the mining recommendation there cannot be decision made to issue a mining licence without prejudice.

However what we do know is that the recommendation to approve a licence has already been made and further the final document containing stiff conditions has been prepared and awaits the Ministers approval.

Kores have been given every opportunity by the public to debate these issues in a public forum but they remain hidden behind a wall of silence, spin and outright lies. Their community updates lack
honesty, overstate financial benefits, employment numbers and social outcomes.

Should this mine go ahead it would be just another betrayal against the values in our society. Populations all over this state have little faith in the SPA, the PAC and the current state government for its own betrayal of a direct promise given to the people of the Wyong and Gosford Shires to stop mining here “No ifs, no buts, a guarantee.

The mine that Kores holds up as an example to demonstrate the integrity and reliability of long wall mining is the Mandelong mine just north of here. The geology of the Mandelong mine is significantly different to that found in our valleys, it has greater structural integrity yet even this fact was negated when a cave-in caused water loss from surface to the coal seam in 2012. In our valley this would have been catastrophic.

The “social licence to operate” has now reaches Australia. It is required in all new mining projects..... except coal. Just another easing in the process of getting coal to the stockpiles. Whilst Kores do not need to consider the social aspects it does have a moral responsibility. The SPA needs to tell Kores that it was not the job of the ACA to notify all of the residence living in the 245 houses that will be severely effected by 2.0-2.5 meter subsidence. A community meeting of all those affected and chaired by the ACA had several elderly people crying at being told that their houses are under threat from mining. That their drinking water will be lost along with their farm sheds, paddocks and dams and livelihoods.

Should Kores get their mining licence it will not be due to rigorous scientific endeavour and hard work or to due diligence or honesty from themselves, as this was never forthcoming, rather the licence will be given to them by the State Planning Authority through the PAC
and signed off by the Minister. In that way Premier O’Farrell will have no dirt on his hands. The science of the matter, as it was in the last PAC hearing will be left here in this auditorium.

The last PAC hearing was a disgrace resulting in 42 latent conditions and a recommendation to mine. The real science of the matter never considered.

Minister Tony Kelly did the only honourable thing and refused the application using the Precautionary Principle. The mine he wrote was not in the best interests of the Public. Nothing has changed.