

Monday 29th July 2019

Speech to the IPC re Rix's Creek South Continuation of Mining Project SSD 6300

Madam Chair, Commissioners, Ladies and Gentlemen

My name is Tony Mason and I have recently retired after more than 40 years spent mainly working in the mining industry, specifically from 1992 in the Coal Mining industry, based in Singleton.

The position I retired from last August was as Director of Finance for Glencore Coal Assets Australia.

My wife and I have recently moved to Nelson Bay but for the 26 years from 1992 to 2018 lived and raised three boys in Singleton, where two of the three boys (and their families) still reside.

Why am I speaking?

I am beneficiary of the Mining Industry. My family is also as, I believe, are most, if not all, of the people in this room. I do have an interest in that my three children are involved in the mining industry, directly or indirectly, and so continuing and continuous attacks on the Industry affect their lives. Really, we all owe a lot to mining, be it metals, light or power. Tonight when we sit down at the table to warm food in a well lit room.....with a knife and fork...maybe we should reflect on where it comes from?

Too often, it seems to me, the Industry is demonised by people who have their own agendas (whilst I acknowledge that some are not without their good intentions). This is exacerbated by an unequal reporting in the Press and in the media generally. There have been plenty of people willing to denounce mining, but I believe that supporters are in the majority. I also talk to people who increasingly resent lobby groups who often arrive at meetings with unsubstantiated (and often spurious) claims that further their own agendas and regard peoples' livelihoods as dispensable if their own ends are met.

In this context I think it important that those people who support mining should say so. And that's why I am here.

It is not a point of contention that the coal industry has brought serious economic benefits to Australia. The surrounding communities benefit from various programs and contributions made by the Companies as well as continuing employment.

I do not know a great deal about Bloomfield. They have a long history, over 75 years, which for a coal mining group is quite some time. As a participant in the coal industry, I know that over that time they have developed a reputation for integrity - they do what they say. They have a reputation as a good employer and as an excellent corporate citizen.

I am aware that the Commission has heard before, and during the course of today, a lot of what I have said, but I wish to reinforce the positives of the Coal Industry and the Bloomfield Group.

Thankyou for that opportunity.