



MEDIA STATEMENT

XSTRATA COAL WELCOMES APPOINTMENT OF INDEPENDENT FACILITATOR FOR HUNTER VALLEY COAL CHAIN

Sydney, 4 January 2008 – Xstrata Coal Chief Executive, Peter Freyberg, today welcomed the appointment of Nick Greiner as an independent facilitator to assist the Hunter Valley coal chain.

Mr Freyberg congratulated Minister for Ports, Joe Tripodi, on the initiative, designed to address the long running issue of coal chain capacity in the Hunter.

"Mr Greiner's extensive commercial experience will greatly assist in finding a long term and sustainable solution for the coal industry to meet its coal export growth and efficiency aspirations for the Hunter Valley coal chain and Newcastle port," said Mr Freyberg.

"The development and general acceptance of a coordinated coal chain model is fundamental and urgent. It will take two to three years to implement coordinated capacity plans, inclusive of properly underwritten track and rail expansions, to match current planned mine and port expansions. The development of appropriate access protocols will assure that future new production can be appropriately accommodated.

"Xstrata Coal looks forward to working with Mr Greiner in his new role to develop coal chain systems which facilitates growth, rather than hinders it, as well as ensuring that the significant ship queuing and associated demurrage costs witnessed over the last few years is not repeated in the future."

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