



PARLIAMENT OF AUSTRALIA  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

**TONY WINDSOR MP**  
**INDEPENDENT**  
**FEDERAL MEMBER FOR NEW ENGLAND**

Shop 5  
259 Peel Street  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**All Mail:** PO Box 963  
TAMWORTH NSW 2340

**Ph:** (02) 6761 3080  
**Toll Free:** 1300 301 839  
**Fax:** (02) 6761 3380  
**e-mail:** [Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au](mailto:Tony.Windsor.MP@aph.gov.au)  
**Web Page:** [www.tonywindsor.com.au](http://www.tonywindsor.com.au)

## Media Release

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### Windsor happy to accept briefing from Minerals Council but wants Board to come to the coal face

An invitation from the NSW Minerals Council to give the Independent Member for New England, Tony Windsor “a briefing on exploration and mining processes” has been accepted however Mr Windsor wants the Board of the Council to give him the briefing at the “coalface” not in a Sydney Office.

Mr Windsor believes that the briefing should take place on the ground where the impact of the exploration and mining may be felt.

“It’s fine for the NSW Minerals Council to offer me a briefing on exploration and mining processes but the NSW Minerals Council Board needs a briefing on farming practices and the need for water not only on a particular site but downstream.

“The attitude of their CEO Dr Nicole Williams in making outlandish statements about the mining industry virtually shutting down as a result of my amendment to the Water Act is nothing short of farcical and for her to state in her media release ‘To make sensible public comment on an issue that could have ramifications on business across the State, then it’s appropriate to be properly briefed’ is quite condescending.

“Dr Williams needs to be briefed on what my amendment really means too.

“**No where** in my amendment does it mention the requirement of mining companies to conduct a water study before being granted an exploration licence as Dr Williams asserts.

“In fact the water studies should be independently done and I would support the call by Minerals Council of Australia Director of Environmental and Social Policy, Melanie Stutsel who told a Senate Inquiry in 2008, “*If we were to be more strategic and invest those resources either into the scientific work or into the **strategic regional assessment** to make sure we’re looking at the landscape as a whole, we’d get better outcomes from conservation as well as making sure development is located appropriately.*”

“That would mean assessing areas such as the Liverpool Plains as to resources available and risks associated with the removal of those resources.

“This would impact on six valleys in NSW and mining companies would then be left in no doubt as to where they can explore and potentially mine.

“Australia is a big country with vast mineral resources that I’m sure can be accessed without impacting on highly productive agricultural land,” Mr Windsor said.

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**For further information contact Tony Windsor, Ph (02) 6761 3080 or 0427 66 8868**

Mr Windsor also points to another Senate Inquiry that recommends an independent study of water resources be undertaken prior to mining exploration licences being issued.

“The Senate Select Committee on Agricultural and Related Industries’ Inquiry into Food production in Australia recognised the need for an independent water study in point 2.104 in the Interim Report which states:

*“The Committee considers that an independent water study should be an essential prerequisite before exploratory drilling commences in an area where mining exploration is to be undertaken.”*

“It appears that the NSW Minerals Council is out of step with the Minerals Council of Australia and the Australian Senate Select Committee so I therefore look forward to a two way briefing with the Board of the NSW Minerals Council and proving that rather than being anti-mining as they perceive me to be, I am actually just wanting to provide both the mining companies and farmers with the certainty that they both need,” Mr Windsor said.