

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

For Immediate Release

Sunday, 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2010

### **Mid-Western Regional Council “all talk, no strategy” when it comes to new mine development**

The Bylong Valley Protection Alliance (BVPA) has criticised the Mid-Western Regional Council as “apparently all talk and no strategy” when it comes to new mine development, after learning of the “rubber stamping” of seismic exploration activity in the Valley.

Singleton company, Hansen Bailey, have begun 6 weeks of seismic exploration work on public roads in the Bylong Valley area, on behalf of Anglo Coal.

Interim Secretary of the BVPA, Craig Shaw, said that the BVPA had written to General Manager, Warwick Bennett and Mayor, Des Kennedy, over a week ago, asking whether it had a policy or strategy with respect to such exploration, but had as yet not received any response. “They haven’t even shown us the courtesy of acknowledging receipt of our correspondence,” Mr Shaw said.

“Council have made a point of calling for a moratorium on new mine development, but have done nothing other than rubber stamp precursory exploration activities on public land, where their approval is required. If landholders across the country are being encouraged to not be such ‘pushovers’ when it comes to access for mining exploration, it seems only reasonable that Council should do what it can to also not be a ‘pushover’ in matters such as this – especially when they are whingeing publicly about the rum deal they’re getting from mining companies,” he said.

Mr Shaw conceded that MWRC may actually have a strategy that it was following that might explain its apparent inaction. “But if they do, they’re not telling anyone about it,” he said.

Mr Shaw also explained that there was nothing in the signage and traffic control measures put in place for the seismic work that indicated the activity was related in any way to mining exploration. “The signage just says ‘roadworks’ and everyone driving through thinks it’s the council doing something - Hansen Bailey are ‘flying under the radar’, so to speak. It’s very cheeky,” he said.

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#### **Notes:**

Copies of the letters to Warwick Bennett and Des Kennedy – asking for an explanation of Council strategy/policy with respect to seismic studies - are attached.

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