

## Balancing Mining, Coal Seam Gas and Irrigation

As the NSW Government closes in on a final structure for regulating mining and coal seam gas in the State, the New South Wales Irrigators Council has released a position paper that outlines the moves it says are necessary to ensure balance.

Council Chief Executive Officer Andrew Gregson says that they have been working at the detail level with industry and government for two years with significant gains being made, but that the time has come to set the bar on the big issues.

"We've consistently advocated a structure in which mining, coal seam gas and irrigation can coexist - where water resources are protected and mining and gas can develop.

"The level of detail and engagement over the past couple of years has been good. We've made some concessions, the government has made some concessions and so has the industry.

"As we now close in on the final structure, though, it is time to return to the headline issues. From our perspective, those are; detailed baseline data; making the aquifer interference policy a binding regulation giving control of water to the Water Minister; and extending critical industry cluster protection to all irrigation farms.

The three page position paper ([here](#)) notes that the Council has called on the Government to adopt all three requirements, but that it is prepared to accept any two.

"We recognise a need for the NSW Government to balance competing demands. We believe that our three requirements will provide a strong, sustainable and fair basis for agriculture, mining and gas to move forward. At the same time, we're prepared to accept any two of them as the basis for coexistence."

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