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## **PILOT PROGRAM TO CHANGE SAFETY CULTURE IN NSW MINING INDUSTRY**

The Minister for Mineral Resources, Ian Macdonald, today announced the start of a pilot program to develop a more mature Occupational Health and Safety culture in the NSW mining industry at the NSW Minerals Council OH&S Conference in the Hunter Valley.

“The Keneally Government is fully engaged in working towards our goal of a zero fatality, zero harm industry through a number of measures,” he said.

“We have a simple approach to safety – it is the number one priority. This commitment can be seen through programs such as the Mine Safety Advisory Council OHS Culture Project.

“Nine mine sites in NSW will have the opportunity to help create the NSW mining industry of the future.”

The push for world-leading safety culture and performance came from the CEO Safety Culture Summit in November 2008 where industry, unions and Government looked ahead to achieving world-leading performance in health and safety in 10 years time.

“The industry has realised that if it is to reduce safety incidents and fatalities it must tackle the culture. A mature culture supports systems which anticipate problems and controls them before they eventuate. An immature culture only reacts after an event,” Mr Macdonald said.

The Mine Safety Advisory Council, the body which represents mining industry employers, workers and Government and advises the Minister on mine safety issues, has appointed consultant Shaw Idea P/L to develop and conduct the program and work with these sites.

The program will enable mines to assess their own OHS culture and identify where change is needed.

Measures identified as contributing to a positive health and safety culture include:

- clear roles and responsibilities
- risk management
- effective co operation between industry, union and government
- effective enforcement policy

“While the industry has shown constant improvement in safety performance during the past five years, continuing incidents are a stark reminder that we must work together to achieve our common goal of a zero harm industry,” he said.

“It is now a reality to expect the industry to be fatality free. In many respects we have an enviable record when it comes to mine safety, but the Government expects the industry, which directly employs around 30,000 people in NSW, to maintain its efforts to strive for further improvement in this area. We can and must do better. “

The Mine Safety Levy, which has been set at \$23.7m for the current financial year, funds the regulation of health and safety, ensuring the health and safety function of the regulator is carried out effectively.