



26 March 2014

## Red tape 'Repeal Day'

### Statement by the Minerals Council of Australia and The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association

Australia's resources sector welcomes the Federal Government's efforts to curb the high costs and inefficiencies associated with project development in Australia and hopes the "Repeal Day" legislation marks the start of a concerted effort to boost the sector's global competitiveness.

Already the Government has committed to delivering a 'one stop shop' for environmental approvals to improve Australia's investment climate. This will simplify the approvals process for businesses and investors while maintaining high environmental standards.

Measures announced by the Government to date are a solid start and are sorely needed if the resource sector is to secure further investment amid growing global competition.

Industry has long argued that duplicative requirements both within and between jurisdictions can be streamlined while maintaining the highest of environmental standards.

Importantly, this Repeal Day marks the start of an ongoing reform process and the industry looks forward to further repeal initiatives.

For example the 'water trigger' introduced into the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act) prior to the last federal election addresses a political objective rather than an environmental one.

The law was developed without any regulatory impact statement. It covers only the activities of resources companies while ignoring the vast majority of water users. It duplicates existing state laws, requires new resource sector project proponents to pass both federal and state environmental assessments, while adding unnecessary layers to approvals processes that can increase project costs by millions of dollars.

Parliamentary Secretary to the Prime Minister, the Hon Josh Frydenberg MP, deserves acknowledgement for his work on Repeal Day legislation and we will be encouraging the Government to revisit legislative amendments like the 'water trigger', as recommended by the Productivity Commission, to remove roadblocks to further investment in resource projects.

Industry supports strong environmental standards and a world-class safety regime; two goals that can be achieved without onerous conditions that threaten performance and competitiveness."

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