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## **Wilpinjong mine injects \$80 million and 160 jobs into State's Central West**

More than 160 jobs will be created following approval of an \$80 million investment in the Wilpinjong coal mine near Mudgee.

The Department of Planning's Deputy Director-General, Richard Pearson said 110 construction jobs and 50 ongoing jobs would be generated as a result of the approval which will allow extraction of up to 15 million tonnes of coal a year to be transported to Newcastle by rail.

Located 40 kilometres northeast of Mudgee, near Wollar, the mine is operated by Wilpinjong Coal Pty Ltd, a subsidiary of Peabody Energy Australia Ltd.

"This approval will allow the mine to extract and process up to 20 percent more coal a year, up from 13 million tonnes a year. This will be achieved all within the same mining footprint approved in 2006 when the mine was opened.

"There will also be no change to the mining methods and no increase in maximum train movements from the site," he said.

Mr Pearson said the approval would provide economic and social benefits for the region and to New South Wales as a whole.

"Annual business turnover in the region is expected to increase by about \$179 million as a result of the mine's increased production. There will also be a flow on effect of about 137 additional direct and indirect jobs created in the region during the mine operations," he said.

The approval was granted by the NSW Department of Planning following a thorough assessment of key issues such as impacts on noise, air quality and transport, as well as water supply and flora and fauna.

Mr Pearson said the Department's assessment found that any potential impacts could be appropriately managed.

The Department's approval includes conditions requiring Wilpinjong to:

- contribute more than \$700,000 to Mid-Western Regional Council for the upgrading of the Ulan-Wollar Road;
- prepare and implement a strategy for the upgrade of Ulan Road, to be undertaken in conjunction with the nearby Ulan and Moolarben coal mines;
- undertake real time monitoring of noise impacts so noise levels are minimised;
- implement an updated Air Quality Management Plan to minimise dust generated at the mine; and
- publicly report on environmental management plans and monitoring results.

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