



# MEDIA STATEMENT

## MINERALS COUNCIL OF AUSTRALIA

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14 December 2007

### MINERALS INDUSTRY - WORLD FIRST IN POSTGRADUATE SOCIAL COMPETENCIES PROGRAM

The Minerals Council of Australia, in partnership with the University of Queensland, has established a world first postgraduate program aimed at improving the skills of community relations practitioners in the minerals industry. The program will offer courses in community engagement, community development, corporate social responsibility and cultural awareness for practitioners in the minerals industry.

The program, to be offered for the first time in 2008, is aimed at assisting the minerals industry to continue to build the knowledge and skills to identify and analyse issues in relation to the industry's operations and its commitment to the communities in which it operates.

Announcing the program, the Chief Executive of the Minerals Council of Australia, Mr Mitchell H Hooke said: "Today, the success of the minerals industry in contributing to Australia's wealth and prosperity for both current and future generations is measured in terms of the triple bottom line – social and environmental dividends as well as financial returns."

"To meet the needs of the modern minerals industry, it is important to have qualified professionals across a breadth of disciplines – in economics, geology, metallurgy, engineering, environmental sciences and community relations".

"Just as the minerals industry has focused for the past decade on the need for attracting and retaining qualified environmental practitioners in the industry, the challenge for this decade is professionalising community relations practitioners to ensure the minerals sector is better able to meet its commitment to the effective implementation of sustainable development".

Accordingly, the Minerals Council of Australia is resourcing the development of an education and training program for the professional development of community relations practitioners currently working in the minerals industry and to establish a professional pool of future industry specialists.

Although initially offered as a Graduate Certificate, the program may be expanded over time to include a Graduate Diploma and Masters degree, subject to sufficient student enrolments.

The Graduate Certificate comprises four courses specifically targeted at the minerals industry:

- community aspects of minerals resource development;
- community development for the mining industry;
- community engagement for the mining industry;
- mining projects and Indigenous Peoples.

The course will consider a range of strategies for participation and engagement with communities from the perspective of the unique characteristics of resource development projects and will be primarily delivered online to accommodate the needs of students currently employed in the industry and living in remote and regional parts of Australia.

The Graduate Certificate will draw upon expertise across the University of Queensland's Faculty of Social and Behavioural Sciences and the Sustainable Minerals Institute as well as the Australian National University's resource management in Asia Pacific program in the Research School of Asia and Pacific Studies and Indigenous expertise from across the ANU campus.

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