



MEDIA RELEASE

The Hon Peter Garrett MP

Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts

PG /127

28 August 2008

BEVERLEY URANIUM MINE EXPANSION

Using my powers under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, I have today approved the expansion of the Heathgate Resources Beverley Uranium Mine in South Australia.

Operations at the Beverley processing plant will be largely unchanged by this decision and production output will remain within the existing approved level of 1500 tonnes per year of uranium oxide.

A comprehensive, scientifically robust and transparent process has been undertaken in the assessment of the potential environmental impacts of this mine expansion, and I have given these matters thorough consideration before making my decision

Based on the advice and information that I have made my decision on, including reports from the CSIRO and Geosciences Australia, and further independent advice from the Chief Scientist, I am satisfied that the tough conditions attached to this approval will ensure the highest standards of environmental management by the mine operator.

One of those conditions is the requirement that Heathgate Resources implements a rigorous monitoring program to demonstrate they are meeting the agreed environmental outcomes.

My decision demonstrates the Government's commitment to ensuring worlds best practice environmental standards for uranium mining in this country.

In making my assessment, I have been particularly concerned that the mine does not adversely affect groundwater values.

The current comprehensive monitoring program will continue and Heathgate Resources will need to clearly demonstrate that they are having no impact on water quality within the Great Artesian Basin or on aquifers outside the mining lease.

The way in which Heathgate Resources manages mining fluids and the disposal of liquid wastes has been confirmed by the CSIRO and Geoscience Australia as world's best practice and endorsed by the Chief Scientist.

The Australian Government has worked closely with the South Australian Government to ensure the assessment process was coordinated and minimised duplication between governments.

The approval conditions recognise the important oversight role of the Australian Government but ensure that day to day regulation of the Beverley mine remains the responsibility of the South Australian Government. Importantly, both governments have agreed on the stringent environmental outcomes that the mine should achieve.