

Australian Geoscience Council Inc.

The Council of Earth Science Societies in Australia



48 Hilma Street
Collaroy Plateau, NSW 2097
8 September 2004

The Hon. Peter McGauran,
Minister for Science
Member for Gippsland
P.O. Box 486
Sale, Vic., 3850

Dear Minister,

During this current election campaign, many Australians who are actively employed in the resource sector, or in directly related supply and service industries, will be very interested in the positions taken by the major parties on encouraging the long-term viability of the sector. On behalf of the Australian Geoscience Council, I am pleased to invite you (as well as representatives of the other parties - see page 2) to provide a brief statement of your party's policy for this election (perhaps three or four sentences, possibly with reference to more comprehensive policy statements posted on a web site) on the following two questions:

- 1. How will your party address the serious threat to the future of science and technology in Australia caused by the chronic shortage of science teachers and the consequent decline in science teaching in Australian schools?**
- 2. How will your party address the critical shortage of scientific and technical skills that is jeopardising the future viability of Australia's resource industries, and what will your party do to encourage ongoing innovation and sustainability in these industries?**

The Australian Geoscience Council is the Peak Council of geoscientists in Australia. It represents nine major Australian geoscientific societies and has a membership of over 7000 professionals. We believe that the geosciences are critical for Australia. The mineral and petroleum industries are the main export earners and underpin the nation's wealth creation. The geosciences are needed to discover, develop and manage these resources. Our future prosperity will depend on these industries remaining healthy, innovative and internationally competitive. Australia faces huge challenges in respect of sustainability of our life style, our environment and our capacity to contribute internationally. Issues of land degradation, water resources, energy supplies, climate change, urbanisation and natural hazards affect not just Australia but the whole Earth. All these matters require input from the geosciences

We would be happy to communicate your views to all of our members prior to election day.

Yours sincerely

Mike Smith
President

The same letter is being sent to the following representatives:

Senator the Hon. Kim Carr,
Shadow Minister for Science and Research
Electorate Office, 62 Lygon Street
Carlton South, Vic., 3053

Senator the Hon. Bob Brown
Senator for Tasmania
P.O. Box 404
Hobart, Tas., 7001

Senator the Hon. Andrew Bartlett
Senator for Queensland
Suite 14 B1
7/421 Brunswick Street
Fortitude Valley, Qld., 4006