



The Hon Anthony Roberts MP
Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy

MF16/1841

Father Claude Mostowik
PO Box 259
ROSEBERY NSW 1445

Dear Father Mostowik

Thank you for your email to the Premier, the Hon Mike Baird MP, concerning increased enforcement powers with respect to illegal protests. The Premier has requested I reply on his behalf.

The NSW Government remains committed to ensuring that all people in NSW are able to exercise their right to communicate their opinions and ideas on matters of concern through the means of peaceful protest. Peaceful protests have not been criminalised.

However, we live in a democratic society where the rights and interests of others, and the community as a whole, need to be considered and upheld.

Police have always had "move-along" powers. What the NSW Government has done is given police "move-along" powers for protests if protestors are causing a traffic obstruction or risking their health and safety or that of the public.

The legislation is also simply providing an updated definition of 'mine' to clarify that mine and gas project sites, as well as mine or gas construction sites, and recently decommissioned sites undergoing rehabilitation are covered.

The offence of interfering with a mine should be of no concern to peaceful protesters. Peaceful protesters do not destroy or sabotage mining equipment and infrastructure and put lives at risk. This is why the NSW Government recently passed legislation that ensures that the ongoing protection of the right to protest is balanced with the need to protect the safety of others and the conduct of lawful business activities.

Unlawful and dangerous activities have, on many occasions, put the safety and sometimes the lives of protesters, workers and Police officers at risk and have caused significant costs for both businesses and the NSW public. Local communities also suffer, with the deployment of Police resources to deal with unlawful protest activities reducing the capacity of Police officers to respond to critical incidents.

I trust that this information is of assistance and thank you again for raising these concerns.

Yours sincerely

Anthony Roberts MP
Minister for Industry, Resources and Energy