



## Media Release

2 July 2009

### **Tarong Energy and Thiess boost job prospects for the South Burnett**

Tarong Energy today launched a ground-breaking training initiative that aims to throw open the doors to a career in the mining industry for regional Queenslanders.

The Tarong Energy Mining Operations Training Centre - located at Meandu Mine, 150km north-west of Brisbane - will take on eight recruits each year and equip them with the skills needed for a career in the mining industry.

"I am proud that Tarong Energy has been able to make this commitment to creating the mining jobs of the future at a time when the mining industry in Queensland is feeling the full effects of the global financial crisis," Chair Graham Carpenter said today.

"This training centre is all about on-the-job training – providing the practical skills that will arm jobseekers with the experience they need to secure jobs in an industry of vital importance to Queensland."

The Training Centre will train recruits in all aspects of open-cut coal mining such as working on the dragline, in the drill and blast team, truck and excavator operation, working in a coal handling and preparation plant and training in a fully equipped workshop.

Mr Carpenter said the Training Centre was an initiative of Tarong Energy, the owner of Meandu Mine, and Thiess, the mine operator. It will accept two trainees every three months, with a maximum of eight trainees enrolled in the course at any one time throughout the year.

"One of the great things about this Training Centre is that it will create opportunities for anyone who has the passion to work in the mining industry, with a particular focus on encouraging indigenous Australians, women and others to enter this exciting and challenging industry," Mr Carpenter said.

"After completing the traineeship, graduates will be in a position to transfer their skills to an operational role at the Meandu Mine or any other mining operation in Australia."

Mr Carpenter said the Corporation was proud to be opening the training centre at a time when Queensland's resources sector had suffered at the hands of the global financial crisis.

"The easy option for Tarong Energy and Thiess would have been not to open the centre during a time when there are an increasing number of people with the necessary mining skills throughout the state," Mr Carpenter said.

"However, that would not have been the right decision for the community in which we have successfully operated in for the past 25 years – nor would it have been in the long-term interests of Tarong Energy.

“Times are tough and we intend to stand by our local community by offering job seekers not only employment for a year, but more importantly the opportunity to learn the skills that should lay the foundation for a long and successful career in the mining industry.

“With the Tarong power stations anticipated to be operational for at least another 25 years, the training centre has the capacity to provide the South Burnett and Queensland with more than 200 skilled individuals.”

Mr Carpenter thanked mine operator Thiess for its support in helping to establish the training centre.

“Since appointing Thiess to operate the Meandu Mine just over one year ago, the company has been first-class in every aspect of their operations,” he said.

“Thiess’ safety culture is second to none and we expect the trainees will reap the benefits under their expert guidance.”

“We take pride in making a difference now and into the future and this extends to our partnering with such a forward thinking organisation as Tarong Energy,” said Thiess General Manager Australian Mining Michael Rosengren.

“With them, we look forward to providing opportunities for people to be part of an industry that is very important to Queensland’s prosperity,” Mr Rosengren said.

Meandu Mine annually provides up to seven million tonnes of coal to the adjacent Tarong power stations.

When all the economic coal is exhausted at Meandu Mine, the training course will transfer to the nearby Kunioon Mine which will continue to provide coal to the Tarong power stations.

**ENDS**

## **Background**

Tarong Energy is one of Queensland’s most significant power generators, with the capacity to deliver up to 25 per cent of the State’s power needs.

Established in July 1997 and owned by the Queensland Government, Tarong Energy is the owner and operator of Tarong Power Station (coal fired), Tarong North Power Station (coal-fired) and Wivenhoe Power Station. The Corporation also owns Meandu Mine which supplies up to seven million tonnes of coal a year to the adjacent Tarong power stations.

The Corporation is an active competitor in the National Electricity Market (NEM). The Corporation sells electricity into the NEM spot market pool and provides ancillary services to the National Electricity Market Management Company (NEMMCO) through Tarong and Wivenhoe Power Stations to ensure the secure and reliable supply of electricity throughout Queensland.

Tarong Energy employs more than 400 people at its generating sites at Nanango and Wivenhoe Dam, Meandu Mine and in its Brisbane office.

For more information please contact Jay Merritt on 0437 830 578.