

Hon Chris Bowen MP  
Minister for Minister for Climate Change and Energy

By email: [Minister.bowen@dcceew.gov.au](mailto:Minister.bowen@dcceew.gov.au)

CC: [Minister.husic@industry.gov.au](mailto:Minister.husic@industry.gov.au)

9 August 2024

Dear Minister,

**RE: Request for a Statement of Reasons for the allocation of funding to Kestrel Coal Pty Ltd under Powering the Regions Fund.**

We write in respect of the decision by you and the Hon Ed Husic MP, Minister for Industry and Science, to provide a \$37.2 million grant to Kestrel Coal Pty Ltd for the Kestrel Mine Ventilation Air Methane Abatement Project which was announced on 12 July 2024 **(the decision)**.<sup>1</sup>

More specifically, we seek a statement of reasons (**SOR**) for this Decision pursuant to s 13(1) the *Administrative Decisions (Judicial Review) Act 1977* namely:

*"a statement in writing setting out the findings on material questions of fact, referring to the evidence or other material on which those findings were based and giving reasons for the decision."*

By way of background, Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland (**EnvA**) is a volunteer-based Central Queensland association with an interest in ensuring that all land use is sustainable and does not significantly impact on the environment. We are particularly concerned about the risks associated with coal mining, coal seam gas and climate change.

EnvA has a "special interest" in the allocation of this funding as we recently made a submission on the referral of the Kestrel West Coal Mine Extension for assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)<sup>2</sup>. The referral application provided limited to no assessment of the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the extension of the Kestrel Coal Mine which we noted in our submission.

It is our understanding that:

- The 'Powering the Region Fund's' is a part of the Federal Government's plan for Australia to become a renewable energy superpower and meet our renewable energy targets,

<sup>1</sup> [Joint media release: \\$91 million to drive down emissions in heavy industry | Ministers \(dcceew.gov.au\)](#)

<sup>2</sup> [Kestrel West Mine Extension submission on the referral for EPBC assessment](#)



- The fund was designed to support owners or operators of industries and facilities covered by the safeguard mechanism to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions, and
- New or expanded coal or gas production facilities are specifically excluded from accessing the Powering the Regions Fund<sup>3</sup>.

Hence, we are requesting a SOR outlining why public funding is being provided to support a technological upgrade to an expanding coal mine rather than supporting industries that will be essential in a clearer, renewable energy economy. This is particularly of interest given that new and expanding coal mines were identified as being specifically excluded from the Powering the Regions Fund.

Please provide a copy of the statement of reasons for this funding decision by email to [enva.cq@outlook.com](mailto:enva.cq@outlook.com).

Kind regards,



Dr Coral Rowston  
Director  
Environmental Advocacy in Central Queensland Inc.

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<sup>3</sup> [Powering the Regions Fund - Safeguard Transformation Stream Round 1](#)