

Bickham Coal Company

Media Release

28 January 2004

Bickham Coal has welcomed approval of the application for a 25,000-tonne bulk coal sample from its property 13 kilometres south of Murrurundi.

Minister for Mineral Resources, Kerry Hickey MP confirmed the approval.

Bickham director David Foster assured the people of Murrurundi and the Upper Hunter of the highest environmental standards and performance as the bulk sample is taken.

Studies have found that the extraction of the bulk sample will have negligible effect on water flow in the Pages River.

The hydrology studies, including extended pump-out trials, showed that the amount of ground water to be removed during the bulk sample excavation is less than 16 megalitres over six months.

The bulk sample will be shipped to Bickham's potential customers in Japan for trial combustion burning through their boilers.

The findings of the bulk sample will determine whether the mine proceeds and at what quantity, together with whether or not the coal will require beneficiation by washing.

More information?

Contact **Chris Ford** at FordComm anytime on **4929 2063**.