



# Media Release

## Senator Mathias Cormann

### *Shadow Assistant Treasurer*

### *Chair of the Senate Scrutiny of*

### *New Taxes Committee*

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#### **Government secrecy on mining tax continues**

#### **Information Commissioner to arbitrate**

The government has again refused to release information about its \$10.5 billion mining tax ignoring demands from the Senate made now for more than a month.

This latest refusal to provide that information now triggers (for the first time) a referral to the Information Commissioner in accordance with an agreement entered into between the government, the Greens and various Independents.

In three separate orders the Senate demanded details from the government about:

- Commodity price, production volume and other assumptions used to calculate its mining tax revenue estimates;
- Secret mining tax negotiations with BHP Biliton, Rio Tinto and Xstrata, which excluded the remainder of the mining industry;
- Where the \$10.5 billion in mining tax revenue is expected to come from.

Release of this information is in the public interest to ensure the impact of this new tax on our budget, our economy and an important industry like mining can be properly assessed.

This proposed new national tax on mining will also have serious implications for States like Western Australia and Queensland, which need to be scrutinised.

In its response today the government completely ignored two of the orders.

They related to the secret negotiations with the major mining companies and to the question of where the mining tax money is expected to come from. That question remains unanswered.

Why would people in Western Australia, Queensland and NSW in particular not be entitled to know how much of the mining tax revenue will come from their States?

Treasury told a Senate Committee in July that this information could easily be put together yet the government has again refused to provide it. What are they hiding?

Finally, the government again sought to hide behind commercial-in-confidence claims in relation to commodity price and production volume assumptions.

This claim lacks any credibility given the WA State government publishes this information in its budget papers as a matter of course. They also receive this information from mining companies.

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