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**MINUTES OF THE ASHTON COAL PROJECT  
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE  
Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> September 2013  
2.00PM - ASHTON COAL PROJECT SITE OFFICE**

**ATTENDEES:**

John McInerney	(JMcl)	Community Representative
Michael Bestic	(MB)	Community Representative
Steve Ernst	(SE)	Community Representative
Debbie Richards	(DR)	Visitor – Community Representative
Godfrey Adamthwaite	(GA)	Singleton Shire Council (SSC)
Brian Wesley	(BW)	Company Rep (General Manager)
Julie McNaughton	(JMcN)	Company Rep (Acting Environmental & Community Relations Manager)
Scotney Moore	(SM)	Company Rep (Environmental Coordinator) / Minute Taker
Alan Tight	(AT)	Company Rep (Environmental Coordinator)
James Barben	(JB)	Company Rep (Approvals Coordinator)
Scott Brooks	(SB)	Department of Planning and Infrastructure (DoP&I)– Singleton Compliance Team Leader

**1. OPENING OF THE MEETING BY THE CHAIRPERSON**

The Chairperson opened the meeting at 2:17pm.

Mrs Debbie Richards was introduced to the CCC; DR had applied for the vacant community representative and been nominated by Ashton Coal Operations Limited (ACOL) for SSC to endorse and DoP&I's approval. ACOL are waiting on SSC to endorse. DR was invited along as a visitor for this meeting. GA indicated he would action the endorsement of the proposed CCC member at the next SSC meeting.

James Barben was introduced to the CCC; JB is ACOL's Approval Coordinator who started yesterday, 23/09/13. JB joins us from one of our neighbouring mines; he has been working for the past six years at various mines in NSW.

**2. APOLOGIES**

Nil

**3. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY INTEREST BY COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVES**

Nil

#### 4. MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

Minutes from the meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2013 were accepted as a true and accurate record:

**Moved:** John McInerney      **Seconded:** Scotney Moore

#### 5. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

JMcI asked where the signs were up to with the addition of "EST 1885" to the Camberwell town signage.

SM indicated the signs were meant to have been finished last week, upon speaking to SSC they indicated the signs had been added to another couple of signage jobs in the Local Government Area (LGA) and will be completed within the next few weeks.

#### 6. ACTION ITEMS FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

ITEM	RESPONSIBILITY	PROGRESS COMMENTS
CCC member to be appointed once applications have been received	JMcN Sept-13	Discussed in 1. Opening of Meeting by Chairperson- Waiting on endorsement from SSC
SM to waiting on response from Richard Upston at Singleton Council with final costs and design of establishment signs for Camberwell Village signs	SM Aug-13	Discussed in 5. Business arising from Previous Minutes
For next presentation to contain extra statistical information such as production data; employment figures; other things that have an impact on the community; positive contributions that mining is making in the community; money into the community; rehabilitation status; and safety figures.	SM Sept-13	Added into this meeting's CCC presentation
Investigate on reinstatement of Newsletter	JMcN Sept-13	* See below
Can the AQ plan be updated in the presentation	SM Sept-13	Added into this meeting's CCC presentation
Once applications have been received, a preferred applicant will be put forward to Department of Planning for confirmation.	JMcN Sept-13	Waiting on endorsement from SSC
Present to CCC the SHEC policy	SM Sept-13	Added into this meeting's CCC presentation
Tree Screen at New England Hwy - Optic fibre to be located and the area archeologically cleared to allow for the tree screens to commence.	SM/AT Sept-13	** See below

\*JMcN asked the community members their thoughts on what they would like to be included in the newsletter.

JMcI stated ACOL has been generous in their donation to Singleton's Cancer Council Relay for Life so an article on the donations given to the community for 2013 to be included.

MB suggested Year-to-date production figures and rehabilitation photos including environmental staff.

BW indicated summaries on the South East Open Cut (SEOC) appeal and underground (UG) infrastructure projects to be included.

\*\* JMcN indicated once SEOC Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Management Plan (ACHMP) is approved by DoP&I, works can commence, firstly with the archaeological clearance; issuing disturbance permit – including utilities checks; ripping of tree lines and then planting of trees.

SB indicated by the time the SEOC ACHMP was approved and with summer approaching an autumn planting would be most sensible.

## **7. REPORTS AND OVERVIEW OF ACTIVITIES**

### **7.1 OVERVIEW OF OPERATIONS**

The ACOL production, safety and employment figures for the past three months were presented to the CCC. Longwall 6B (LW6B) will be soon mining under Lemington Road with worst case of 300mm subsidence predicted. Electronic signage and speed restrictions are in place. Daily inspections are currently in place, no subsidence has occurred as yet. The longwall move from LW6B to LW102 will occur during October and November, with bolt up of LW6B starting around the first week of October.

MB asked why the large difference in monthly coal tonne figures?

BW indicated in June there was a longwall move resulting in low production.

MB asked why the large difference in ROM coal to Product coal in June?

BW indicated it was due to the poor yield with development panels resulting around 38% yield.

SE asked about the strip ratio for the SEOC?

BW stated off hand he didn't know the individual seam's strip ratio, however for the total SEOC the strip ratio is approximately 5.7 to 1.

SE asked what the capacity of the CHPP?

BW indicated ACOL are currently only operating Module 2 five days a week processing about 88,000t. ACOL have the capability to also operate Module 1 which processes about half of that of Module 2 and up to seven days a week for both modules.

JMcN asked the community members if there were any other statistics or figures they would like to see in the presentation.

MB keep these production in next presentation as well to see the rolling monthly figures; all donations and contributions to the community during the period; and the multiplier effect provided on the number of extra local jobs the mine creates.

JMcI would like print outs of the statistics for each meeting.

The SEOC appeal hearing finished last Wednesday after two and a half weeks of hearings, which included a two day site visit by the Judge, Commissioner and all legal parties (ACOL, DoP&I and Environmental Defenders Office (EDO)) speaking to local landowners, visiting the SEOC site and archaeological sites. Now waiting for the determination which may take anywhere from three to six months.

MB asked about the EPA's dust report and what its conclusions meant.

SB gave details the PM2.5 study indicating the majority of PM2.5 emissions were from wood smoke, during winter 60% of the emissions at the Muswellbrook's PM2.5 monitor were the result of wood smoke and annually the smoke component was 40% which included bushfires. Only around 10% of the PM2.5 emissions were from soil, coal and mine fuel usage.

JMcN stated she would email the report link to the CCC members. (A copy of the summary report can be found at:

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/aqms/130722UHVPCSfact.pdf>)

The ACOL Health, Safety, Environment and Community (HSEC) Policy was presented to the CCC. A copy of the policy will be placed on the website and at next meeting will be discussed if the community members are happy with the community component of the policy.

## **7.2 ENVIRONMENTAL**

### **Dust Monitoring**

SM provided an overview of the dust monitoring sites and results for depositional dust gauges, High Volume Air Samplers and real time TEOM PM<sub>10</sub> monitors, showing the "Rolling Readings" for the past 12 months. The dust gauges which were trending above the compliance criteria in the previous reporting period are continuing to trend above compliance criteria for this reporting period. The TEOMs showed three days during the quarter which were above the 50ug/m<sup>3</sup> criteria. Upon investigations these results were not due to ACOL operations; two of the days were due to high winds and regionally dusty and the other was due to a grass fire in the village.

### **Water Monitoring**

SM presented the annual trends for the water monitoring sites. For the past six months the rainfall has been below average. The EC trends in Bowmans Creek are just starting to indicate the flow is becoming lower. The Hunter River and Glennies Creek are showing steady, regulated flows.

**Noise Monitoring**

Statutory quarterly noise monitoring was conducted in August 2013. The monitoring occurred while there was north westerly winds, at the time it was the nearly the best production ACOL has had from the underground and CHPP in a 24hr period in the last two years; dozers were on stockpiles and there were two trains loaded at 1615 and 2030 during the noise monitoring. ACOL was at full production and operation – basically the worst case scenario for the possibility of a noise exceedence.

There were no exceedences for the reporting period.

**Complaints**

There were seven complaints received during this quarter. There were two complaints received directly to Ashton. They were in regards to the school bus obscuring access to Dairy Lane. A larger area has been constructed for the bus to turn off the highway and turn around allowing access to Dairy Lane. The other five complaints were received via DoP&I's Singleton Compliance branch relating to excessive noise at Ashton Coal. Investigations were carried out upon each complaint and found no issues regarding Ashton.

**Environmentally-Related Operations Changes**

Nil environmental related operational changes were made during the reporting period.

**7.3 MANAGEMENT PLAN UPDATE**

The Subsidence Management Plan was approved on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2013 by the Department of Trade and Investment – Division of Resources and Energy (DRE). The Bushfire Management Plan is currently out for consultation with the Rural Fire Service and SSC. The Noise Management Plan and Air Quality Management Plan are in final review stages before submitting relevant to stakeholders. The Tailing Emplacement Operations Plan will be submitted to DRE before the 30<sup>th</sup> September 2013.

**8. UPPER HUNTER MINING DIALOGUE**

Minimal activity has occurred since the last CCC meeting.

**9. DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & INFRASTRUCTURE UPDATE**

SB spoke to the CCC on the role of the Singleton Compliance branch, that they were there to administer compliance of the development consents of each of the mines in the Hunter Valley. He then gave an update on the works they had been conducting over the past few months. They had completed two inspections at ACOL; the AEMR and Biodiversity reviews.

The AEMR inspection resulted in no major issues. The Air Quality monitoring system is very comprehensive for a site which no longer has an open cut mine and should be streamlined when the Air Quality Management Plan is reviewed and submitted to DoP&I; in the conservation area further weed works should be scheduled; the attended noise monitoring has been indicating ACOL inaudible – DoP&I would like ACOL to

target predicted noisy nights to see if ACOL is audible; and the slashing maintenance in the NEOC rehabilitation was looking good.

The Biodiversity reviews were a one-off review across the industry in the Hunter Valley. In general across the Hunter Valley, the management plans have a few holes in them, there is a poor understanding of what they entailed, and there were bushfire management issues.

In regards to ACOL's conservation area, the area was formally conserved in a conservation agreement three to four years ago. It was evident that the vegetation communities were coming back; the fencing, signage and bushfire management were good; weed control needed some more work and the UG infrastructure/workings – fans, roads, and subsidence repairs may compromise the conservation area. This is acknowledged in the conservation agreement.

There is going to be an industry meeting on the 30<sup>th</sup> October outlining the findings of their review.

#### **10. GENERAL BUSINESS**

JMcI asked when the roofing material will be removed from the side of the hill at 94 Glennies Creek Road.

BW asked for it to be added as an action item and indicated there had been attempts in removing the roofing material with limited success; once the franna crane is available another attempt will be undertaken.

JMcN stated ACOL's three yearly compliance audit will be conducted onsite during mid-October and the findings will be presented and discussed at the next CCC meeting.

#### **11. DATE FOR NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> December 2013:  
Meeting at 2pm

**MEETING CLOSED 16:20**

<b>ACTION ITEMS</b>	
<b>ITEM</b>	<b>RESPONSIBILITY</b>
Camberwell signage to be finalised with the additional signs of "EST 1885" installed	SM Oct-13
Newsletter to be drafted, published and distributed to community – including donations summary, SEOC appeal, UG infrastructure projects and rehabilitation photos	JMcN Dec-13
Action the endorsement of the proposed CCC member at the next SSC meeting	GA Next SSC meeting
Once nominated applicant has been endorsed by SSC, endorsed applicant will be put forward to Department of Planning for approval.	JMcN Once endorsement SSC is received
Tree Screen at New England Hwy – Optic fibre has been located and the area archeologically cleared to allow for the tree screens to commence.	SM/AT Once SEOC ACHMP is approved
During next meeting discuss and schedule CCC members visit of the underground mine.	JM Dec-13
SSC Mayoral Scholarship sponsorship, BW to follow up.	BW Oct-13
Roofing material on side of hill at 94 Glennies Creek Road to be removed.	BW Dec-13
Present and discuss audit findings from 3 yearly compliance audit at next meeting	JB Dec-13
HSEC Policy to be added onto the ACOL website. Discuss at next meeting to see if CCC members are happy with the community aspect.	AT Oct-13
Investigate YTD production figures	SM Dec-13
In the statistics presentation - rolling monthly production figures; and all donations and contributions to the community during the period.	SM Dec-13
Print outs of statistics to be supplied for next meeting	SM Dec-13
Email the EPA Dust Report link to the CCC members	JMcN Oct-13