

**METROPOLITAN COAL
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday 30 July 2024

Time: Commenced 3:00 pm

Location: Metropolitan Coal Mine Meeting Room, Upper Administration, Helensburgh

Attendees:

- Michael Ulph (MU) – Independent Chairperson
- Stephen Love (SL) – Environment & Community Superintendent - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Kane Organ (KO) – Environment & Community Coordinator - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Nicolas Tucker (NT) – Technical Services Manager - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Allan House (AH) – CCC Member - Helensburgh Landcare
- Kerrie Belter (KB) – CCC Member - Neighbour to the mine
- Keith Hawkins (KH) – CCC Member - Lions & Probus Clubs
- Vicki Christie (VC) – CCC Member - Community member
- Peter Turner (PT) – CCC Member - National Parks Association
- Ron Zwicker (RZ) – CCC Member - Town Planning Manager, Wollongong City Council (WCC)

Apologies:

- Robert Scullion (RS) - CCC Member
- Patricia Gauci (PG) - CCC Member
- James Hannigan (JH) - Peabody Metropolitan Coal

Welcome and introductions:

- MU acknowledged the Dharawal people as traditional custodians of the land and welcomed all members to the meeting and thanked members for attending. MU formally introduced himself to the CCC as the new Independent Chairperson of the Metropolitan CCC having been appointed by DPHI after Lisa Andrews stood down as chair.

- MU noted that he was recording the meeting to maintain an accurate record until the minutes were ratified.

Declarations of interest:

- MU declared his position as Independent Chair for the CCC approved by the Director General of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and engaged by Peabody.
- MU reinforced the need for CCC members to disclose conflicts of interest such as owning shares in Peabody or family members employed by Peabody. Conflict of interest disclosure forms will be updated yearly as part of the CCC Terms of Reference.

Action items from previous meeting:

- MU declared CCC meeting minutes 10 April 2024 were finalised and sent to members.

Correspondence:

- PT had requested a copy of the 2023 Six Monthly Review. SL confirmed he would request confirmation from DPHI if Six Monthly Review was approved for release. Given Annual Review has since been submitted, will look to provide reports for entirety of 2023 once approved.
- 4/5 – Email from AH to LA re alters to the minutes
- 14/5 Email from LA providing finalised minutes and CCC Presentation from April meeting
- 31/5 - 3/6 Emails between Peabody and MU to organise vendor arrangements
- 7/6 Email from LA to SL enquiring about new Chair and advising of email to Dept re KH and VC appointment
- 8/7 - Email SL to MU to provide CCC member contact details
- 8/7 - Email SL to MU to provide CCC member contact details
- 8/7 - Introductory email MU to CCC members
- 8/7 - Meeting invitation MU to CCC members
- 8/7 - Email SL to MU – providing CCC Terms of Reference
- 9/7 - Email exchange CCC member / MU - requesting BCC be used
- 16/7 - Email exchange SL / MU – re meeting invitations and agenda
- 22/7 - Email MU to CCC members - meeting reminder with previous minutes.

Metropolitan Coal operations update – Stephen Love, Environment & Community Superintendent

SL provided a presentation to the CCC regarding:

- Mining Update
- Longwall 311-316 Extraction Plan Update
 - submitted March this year, further comments expected and perhaps a site visit
- Longwall 317-318 Modification & Exploration Update
 - Mod continuing with baseline data collection including seasonal biodiversity monitoring, exploration continuing with four exploration boreholes completed and seismic data collection undertaken – results expected Q4.
- Annual Review submitted to Dept Planning on 31 March.
 - Awaiting approval. Includes two complaints in 2023 – for loading a train in the evening and one dust complaint.
- Independent Environmental Audit Compliance Summary.
 - Review of 395 conditions of compliance. Generally high level of compliance across various approvals.
- Metropolitan partnership with Symbio Wildlife Park in a Southern Stuttering Frog Conservation Partnership.
 - Offer to have Symbio Wildlife Park speak at a future meeting.

Questions/Comments/Feedback from CCC members in relation to the Presentation:

- SL welcomed MU to the Metropolitan CCC as new Independent Chairperson and looked forward to bringing MU up to speed with how Metropolitan operates along with the other recent new members to the CCC.
- MU asked if there were restrictions on Metropolitan regarding train loading times. SL confirmed that the project approval requires Metropolitan to minimise night-time train loading. Metropolitan prioritises daytime loading but night-time loading is sometime unavoidable due to rail network delays and availability of slots. Where night-time loading is required, Metropolitan will usually load one of the finer grained coal products which are much quieter when loading into train wagons.
- KB enquired about the name of the Southern Stuttering Frog which SL explained is a reference to the characteristics of its mating call. AH asked if any other species of frog were being considered for the breeding program such as the Red-Crowned Toadlet. SL

suggested that these and other questions would be good to put to a representative from Symbio who will be invited to the next meeting.

- MU inquired further on 2023 Annual Review dust complaint and asked for an overview of Metropolitan's dust monitoring. SL explained that dust from Metropolitan predominantly emanates from the product coal stockpile which are suppressed by a network of water sprays and a watercart. Dust monitoring includes a network of ten dust deposition gauges (DDGs) (tested in a lab), and a real time monitoring system that uses *tapered element oscillating microbalances* (TEOM) technology to measure 10-micron particles, located at Robertson Street. All data is reviewed daily and/monthly by Metropolitan personnel, before review by an air quality specialist as part of the Annual Review. High rainfall assists with dust management and air quality is quite good here.
- KB asked if the dust monitoring data had decreased since trucking had ceased through Helensburgh. SL explained that it is difficult to attribute trends in dust data to particular events due to level of variables in the dataset. While dust levels appear to have reduced somewhat, the timing of cessation of trucking also roughly coincided with an increase in average rainfall. Anecdotally, property owners on Parkes Street have commented that they saw a reduction in dust once trucking ceased. Where a significant improvement was detected however was in the real time noise data collected from site.
- MU asked for background on truck vs train transportation of product from site. SL explained Coal Wash Reject (CWR) had historically been used as a fill material for housing and road projects which required transport by truck but has increasingly been sold as a coal product that is transported via train to Port Kembla Coal Terminal (PKCT).
- VC asked if depositional dust samples are analysed. SL explained that Metropolitan had undertaken a long-term study to characterise the dust falling on neighboring properties which found that on average approximately 20% of the dust is coal-based, with the other 80% made up of soil and organic matter. SL added that the dust monitoring program is extensive and long-term and is happy to meet with any community member to discuss dust in Helensburgh.

General business:

- AH asked about the capping of the old Helensburgh landfill by Wollongong City Council (WCC) and if Metropolitan was still going to supply CWR. SL confirmed that this remained Metropolitan's intent, but that WCC had indicated it was still a long process to receive final

approvals to proceed with capping. **Action:** RZ confirmed he would enquire within WCC the status of the capping project for the CCC. AH further added that there are significant impacts to water quality from water leeching out of the old landfill, referring to testing conducted in the 90's.

- AH updated the CCC on the re-introduction of platypus into the Royal National Park (RNP) stating that the population is doing well. SL confirmed that population has handled recent heavy rainfall and flows well, though some of the monitoring equipment used to monitor the platypus movements had been washed away.
- MU asked how Metropolitan's real-time water quality monitoring equipment has fared with all the recent rainfall events. SL stated that it has been a challenge to keep all monitoring equipment operational with one instrument being washed away during the flooding in April. Fortunately, it was able to be recovered and reinstalled within a couple of days.
- AH added that there was now discussion of re-introducing the koala to the RNP.
- KB asked about recent media regarding South32 and mine closure. SL explained that the story was in regard to a disused mine shaft at North Cliff coal mine within the Dharawal National Park which continues to emit methane. SL stated he was unsure why South32 had not already sealed the shaft and that similarly, Metropolitan would be required to seal all shafts and openings at mine closure, which will eliminate the release of residual gases from the mine. Mine rehabilitation and closure can span ~20 years governed by the Resources Regulator (RR) driving a standard to achieve a stable final landform and stakeholder consultation.
- AH highlighted need to consider historical buildings as part of closure. MU added that there are 17 mine closures planned for the Hunter region in the next 10 years.
- SL flagged that a mine tour (surface and/or underground) may be warranted to assist new CCC members and chair in becoming familiar with the mine site and its operations. Metropolitan would consider options ahead of the next CCC meeting. It would take 20-30 minutes to travel distance to get to 450 metres underground.
- MU suggested the timing of next CCC meeting could be flexible to consider mine tour and/or underground visit. MU also added that the CCC Terms of Reference may need to be revisited at the next meeting – to be confirmed.

Meeting closed: 3:55 pm

Proposed next meeting: 19 November 2024