

Minutes of the 19th Meeting of the Tarrawonga Coal Mine Community Consultative Committee

Meeting Held: 10th November 2010 at 10:00am

Venue: Tarrawonga Coal Mine, Training Room

1. Present and Apologies

Present: Cllr Ken Bates (Narrabri Shire Rep), Chairman
Mr Danny Young (Environmental Manager)
Mr Jason Conomos (Project Manager)
Miss Jill Scealy (Environmental Officer)
Mr Bob McGregor (Community Rep)
Mr Bart Crosby (Community Rep)
Mr Tim Muldoon (Community Liaison Officer)
Mr John Molloy (Visitor – Toll Resources)

Apologies: Mr Sandy Bull (Community Rep)
Mr Peter Laird (Community Rep)
Cllr Colleen Fuller (Gunnedah Shire Rep)
Mr Casper Dieben (General Manager – Operations)
Mr Brian Cullen (General Manager – Technical Services)

2. Business Arising

- 2.1.** John Molloy provided an update on the truck washing options. Toll trialled Typhoon but were charged \$750 for one truck so this option was not considered financially viable. Toll has now purchased a hot/cold high pressure washer that will be used at their new Vickery depot. It is anticipated that Toll employees will be utilised on Sundays to wash all trucks.

John also indicated that Toll were in discussions with Whitehaven regarding a possible upgrade of the wheel wash at the CHPP, including altering the spray system so it sprays the truck and not just the wheels.

- 2.2.** Danny Young advised that the Tarrawonga modification was approved in mid October with a new set of Project Approval conditions issued by Department of Planning. The Project Approval requires revision of the existing management plans as well as real time noise monitoring and air quality monitoring.

The real time noise monitor was delivered this week and has audio playback capabilities to allow identification of noise sources. The monitor also sounds an alarm when noise levels approach the consent criteria, thereby allowing the mine to adapt operations to reduce noise levels.

The real time air quality monitor will be in place by March 2011 with a data link back to site. The monitor will be positioned in a fixed location

which will be determined in consultation with DECCW during the development of the Air Quality Monitoring Program.

The consent requires Tarrawonga to look at the cumulative impacts with Boggabri Coal. DoP recently had discussions with senior management of Whitehaven Coal, Boggabri Coal and Aston Resources regarding cumulative impacts.

- 2.3.** Ken Bates believes that the State Government isn't really interested in discussing a return of royalties to regional areas. He also believes that the opposition would be unlikely to support a return of royalties to regional areas other than through the issue low interest loans.

The Mining Related Councils will meet on Friday to further discuss the options. They have looked at engaging a consultant to put a paper together however this will cost approximately \$150,000.

- 2.4.** John Molloy provided a response to the letter sent to Toll Resources by the CCC regarding separation distances. John believed that the majority of the issues noted in the letter had been resolved with the relocation of the depot to the former Vickery site. The position of the depot allows trucks to travel in various directions at the commencement of the shift rather than all trucks having to travel to Tarrawonga and Rocglen in the one direction along Bluevale Road. Some loaded trucks are parked overnight and travel directly to the CHPP at the start of shift.

John also tabled a printout from the RTA website noting the RTA specifies a 4 second crash avoidance space. John believes a 90 second gap is not necessary and Toll will enforce a gap of 2 B-doubles (approximately 60m).

Ken Bates advised that the depot relocation had made a tremendous difference to the issue of separation distances.

- 2.5.** John Molloy advised that the possible installation of hardstand bays along the haul route has been postponed due to ongoing wet weather and the priority to relocate the depot. John will discuss the hardstand bays with Council and provide an update at the next CCC meeting.

- 2.6.** Tim Muldoon advised that the Regional Resource and Energy Community Discussion Day had been cancelled following initial concerns from Council about poor publicity after discussions with key farming groups. Subsequent to that, BHP Caroon, Shenhua Watermark and Santos advised that they would no longer be participating. Whitehaven remained committed as we believed it was a beneficial event for the community, however, as all other stakeholders pulled out, the event was cancelled.

- 2.7.** Danny Young said that he had contacted Wayne Kerr at Gunnedah Shire Council regarding safety concerns associated with roadworks on Blue Vale Road and the Kamilaroi Highway. Mr Kerr identified that

he would address safety standards of roadworks on Blue Vale Road. He indicated Council's frustration with the management of the Kamilaroi Highway upgrade and that Council was unable to do anything about it as was managed by the RTA.

Bart Crosby asked why the concrete barriers hadn't been highlighted with bright paint or flashing lights and questioned whether there had been an inquiry following the accident which occurred.

John Molloy noted that Toll had also expressed concern to Council regarding the roadworks (including that fact that the southbound lane was not wide enough for a B-double) and they received the same comment from Council about it being controlled by the RTA.

- 2.8.** The sunken ramps have not been repaired. Danny Young advised that he had spoken with Wayne Parkes (Whitehaven's Project Development Manager) who advised that the ramps would be repaired in conjunction with other roadworks. This has not occurred and Danny will raise the issue again.

3. General Business

3.1. Mine Progress Report

The Project Manager, Jason Conomos, reported August – October 2010 production results as follows:

4.6 million BCM overburden removed
499,000 tonnes of coal recovered

Jason Conomos indicated that production had slipped from the target by approximately 51,000t due to wet weather.

Mr Conomos stated that rehabilitation undertaken to date had not changed since the last meeting as the mine has been waiting for the modification approval.

3.2. Environmental Monitoring Report

Danny Young presented the environmental monitoring results which are attached in the Environmental Monitoring Report.

Danny noted that we would still continue to conduct attended noise monitoring on a quarterly basis and the results from this monitoring will be compared to the real time noise monitor results.

Bart Crosby asked about the placement of the noise monitor. Danny Young stated that the soon to be updated Noise Management Plan will identify a placement procedure which will generally be related to weather conditions. The monitor has a weather station and we will be required to assess inversion conditions and their correlation with noise generation. We will approach the residents of the proposed noise

monitoring locations (once they have been determined) to obtain approval for placement of the monitor at their residence.

In relation to wet weather discharges, Bart Crosby commented that the TSS levels in some discharges were significantly higher than the threshold criteria of 50mg/L. Danny Young agreed and indicated that the 50mg/L limit is quite low as samples from the Namoi River and local creeks would return TSS levels greater than that. Danny also discussed the flocculant trials and advised the Committee that DECCW and DoP had been notified of all wet weather discharge results and the proposed measures to reduce occurrence of exceedances of thresholds. DoP have suggested that future exceedances could result in penalty infringement notices. The new Project Approval allows for construction of additional storages along the southern boundary.

Bob McGregor asked what was in the fume from blasts and whether it was toxic. Danny Young explained that the fume contains nitrous oxide which, if inhaled in significant quantities, could be detrimental to a person's health. He explained that Orica are investigating current procedures with a view to minimising the potential for post blast fume.

In reference to the complaint on the 14th October 2010, John Molloy advised that he had spoken to the driver who denied any wrong doing. Bart Crosby agreed that there had been an improvement with drivers staying in the appropriate lane but stated that any event of a truck crossing the centre lane is a potential disaster.

4. New Business

- 4.1.** Bart Crosby stated that he saw two trucks passing his property at approximately 10:20pm on the same night. He said one sounded like it had engine troubles and was travelling slower than normal but the other one was "flying". Bart said he was unable to see the truck numbers but was sure they were Toll trucks.

John Molloy said he was unsure why the trucks would still be on the road at that time and committed to reiterating the approved travel times via toolbox talks.

Ken Bates reiterated that anyone with concerns should contact Whitehaven or Toll at the time of the incident. Bart Crosby said he didn't want to disturb Danny Young but both Danny and John Molloy agreed that he could have called them at that time or the next morning.

- 4.2.** John Molloy advised that they were expecting approval for the Vickery workshop this week.
- 4.3.** Bart Crosby expressed concern about the road upgrade and believed that the new single-lane section will cause an accident as the slow

moving Toll trucks (travelling at ~50km/h) merge into a lane where other vehicles are driving at 100km/h.

Bob McGregor said the intersections were better before the upgrade. Danny Young said that Whitehaven were obliged to follow design rules as required by the RTA, and that the road design was in accordance with RTA requirements.

The Committee resolved to write a letter to Council requesting review of current traffic arrangements with consideration of the following options on that section of highway between Bluevale Road and the CHPP intersection:

- Reduced speed limit;
- Installation of signage indicating changed traffic conditions and slow vehicles merging (possibly including a diagram);
- Flashing lights; and
- Use of more permanent white paint as the paint currently used wears off.

4.4. Danny Young advised that a complainant had suggested that speed signs be installed on the gravel section of Manilla Road to advise drivers that the speed limit is 80km/h. Jill Scealy suggested that there should also be a sign advising of a rough road. The Committee resolved to write a letter to Narrabri Shire Council requesting consideration at the Traffic Committee meeting for installation of speed signs as well as consideration of sealing the road or at least adequately maintaining it.

4.5. Ken Bates tabled the DoP Guidelines for Establishing and Operating Community Consultative Committees for Mining Projects and requested that Committee members read them to allow for further discussion at the next meeting. Ken is concerned about any pecuniary interests that members might have and the perceived perceptions from other community members.

Bob McGregor advised that he has been approached by some members of the community who don't feel they are being appropriately represented by the Committee members and that some are considering starting their own committee, much like the Maules Creek committee which was initiated by community members.

Jill Scealy asked if these individuals would like to be on the Committee or whether they would just like to be better represented by the current members.

Bob McGregor said that some don't know how the committee is operated and they think the mine runs it.

Ken Bates suggested that people from Boggabri and Gunnedah should be included. Danny Young explained the process of advertising for expressions of interest with DoP deciding which

candidates are most appropriate. With the most recent CCC's at other sites, DoP has generally selected surrounding residents.

Bob McGregor said that people know there is something happening on each side of the valley (ie. Tarrawonga extension and Bluevale/Vickery) and there is so much gossip about what's going on in between as well as jealousy among landowners.

Bart Crosby agreed and said that people think that Committee members are getting payoffs from the mine.

Danny Young asked whether the Committee thought a regular newsletter to surrounding residents would be appropriate. The Committee agreed that this was a good idea. Jill Scealy also suggested that we better advertise the current Committee members so people know who they should approach with their concerns.

Ken Bates said one of this issues landowners are concerned about is the amount of land mining companies are buying and locking up for carbon or biodiversity offsets which is taking away potential future agricultural opportunities.

- 4.6. Jill Scealy tabled a letter from Gunnedah Shire Council (GSC) advising that Cllr Colleen Fuller has been re-appointed as the Council delegate.

5. Complaints

Complaints were discussed in the Environmental Monitoring Report.

6. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held at the Tarrawonga Coal Mine Training Room on Wednesday 9th February 2011 at 10:00am.

Meeting closed at 11:45 am.

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Ken Bates - Chairman