

Minutes of Sunnyside Coal Mine Community Consultation Committee

Meeting Held: Wednesday 10th March 2010 at 3:30pm

Venue: The meeting was held in the Board Room at Namoi Valley Brickworks.

Commencement Time: 3:30pm

1. Present and Apologies

Present: Mr Michael Broekman (Chairman)
Mr Bruce Reid (Community Representative)
Mr Andrew Kennedy (Community Representative)
Mr Stephen Benham (Council Representative)
Mr Danny Young (Environmental Manager)
Miss Jill Scealy (Environmental Officer)
Mr Michael Clark (Project Manager)

Apologies: Mr Tony Jones
Mr Glenn Bailey

2. Previous Minutes

Moved that the minutes of the previous meeting were a true and accurate record by Michael Clark, seconded by Stephen Benham.

3. Business Arising from Previous Minutes

3.1 First Flush Diverters – “Woodlawn”

Whitehaven organised for first flush diverters to be installed at the “Woodlawn” property immediately following the request from Bruce Reid. Bruce Reid indicated that he was unsure whether they were working or how to use them as the plumber had not provided any documentation. Whitehaven committed to providing Bruce Reid with a manual for the diverters (if available).

3.2 Water Testing – “Woodlawn”

Bruce Reid confirmed that Whitehaven had conducted water testing at the “Woodlawn” property, however he expressed

concern that a number of parameters did not have guideline levels.

Danny Young explained that the water was analysed for a number of parameters and compared to the thresholds specified in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2004. The laboratory results and a copy of the relevant table from the Guidelines were provided to Bruce Reid by Whitehaven. Danny Young indicated that the Guidelines often only specify aesthetic thresholds (as health thresholds are not available).

Bruce Reid stated that even though the results did not indicate that dust from the Sunnyside operation had an impact on the water quality, he would still be seeking compensation for the expense of pumping out the tanks.

Danny Young indicated that Tony Jones (Whitehaven Community Liaison Officer) was investigating the situation.

3.3 CASA Correspondence

A copy of the correspondence from the Civil Aviation Safety Authority (CASA) regarding separation distances of aircraft from open cut blasting activities has been provided to Bruce Reid, as requested.

Andrew Kennedy made reference to the Notice to Airmen (NOTAM) system used in the Hunter Valley but confirmed that Whitehaven's current notification system is working effectively.

Michael Clark confirmed that the blasting flyrock limit is 500m (horizontally and vertically). Andrew Kennedy indicated that the exclusion zone for aircraft is separate to the flyrock zone and depends on the class of aircraft.

4. Mine Progress

An update was provided on mine progress by Project Manager, Michael Clark, with 353,520 bcm of overburden moved, 48,552 tonnes coal mined and 43,134 tonnes of coal hauled in the last three months.

The mine now has 8 full time operators (an addition of 2 operators since the last CCC meeting) and 3 contract operators (an addition of 2), operating on day shift until 5pm and afternoon shift until 10pm, 5.5 days per week.

Bruce Reid asked who the additional employees and contracts were. Michael Clark stated that the two employees are from Whitehaven's

Rocglen Mine and the two contractors are local people employed through TESA.

The Oxley Highway bus stops have been approved by Gunnedah Shire Council.

Andrew Kennedy questioned the process for selecting the location of bus stops. Danny Young indicated he believed the positioning of the bus stops would have been in consultation with Gunnedah Shire Council as part of the initial approval process and that Whitehaven has met the requirements of the condition within the Development Consent.

Andrew Kennedy stated that he had spoken with Tony Jones (Whitehaven Community Liaison Officer) and Wayne Kerr (Director Infrastructure Services – Gunnedah Shire Council) approximately 18 months ago, and at that stage it was indicated that additional bus stops would be constructed.

Michael Clark confirmed that Whitehaven does not have any further requirement to construct additional bus stops under the current Consent.

Danny Young stated that he would discuss the matter further with Tony Jones and/or Wayne Kerr to determine which bus stops they were referring to and whether any additional bus stops have been planned.

Stephen Benham suggested that RTA would likely need to be consulted on the positioning of bus stops on the Oxley Highway.

Andrew Kennedy stated that the bus stop is already signed as a bus stop and it would be a goodwill gesture from Whitehaven to upgrade the bus stop as well as the entrance to the Waterways Wildlife Park, even though the Company is not required to do so under any approval.

Andrew Kennedy noted that the recently completed intersections are working effectively.

5. Environmental Report

Danny Young provided the Environmental Monitoring Results, a copy of which is attached to these minutes.

Bruce Reid referred to the previous discussion regarding impacts from mine dust on his water supply and indicated that he believed that a similar event to that of late last year, whereby strong winds allegedly created dust lift off from the coal stockpiles at Sunnyside Mine and contaminated his water supply, may occur in the future. Bruce suggested that the wind just had to be right (“it could happen in a month or it could happen in a couple of years”) and he is wondering

whether he should request that his tanks be cleaned out periodically (annually) at Whitehaven's expense.

Bruce Reid referred to the NSW Health *Mine Dust and You* and *Rainwater Tanks* brochures that he had tabled at the previous CCC meeting and stated that he believes that mining companies had been involved in the development of the brochures. Bruce referred to the impact of mining within Australia and the local community and stated that "Gunnedah has been bought by the mines". The Committee concurred that these comments are Bruce Reid's view and are out of the control of Sunnyside Mine.

6. Complaints

No complaints have been received since the previous CCC meeting.

7. General Business

- 7.1 Michael Broekman raised concern about the impact of mining on the local business community. Michael noted that local mines (not necessarily Whitehaven owned mines) have been employing apprentices that are half way through their apprenticeship or recently finished (often in non-skilled positions). Michael believes that a community policy is needed to enable small business to continue to train apprentices with the assurance that mining companies could not lure the apprentices with lucrative wages.

Michael noted that the local TAFE had recently ceased night welding courses, thereby restricting the opportunities for local youth. He is concerned that the TAFE is not catering towards the needs of the community.

Michael suggested that advertisements for mining positions could be worded to say "tradesperson + 2 years experience" to ensure the apprentices remain at their place of employment beyond the term of their apprenticeship.

The Committee concurred that some form of action must be taken but agreed that any sort of community policy would be hard to enforce (ie. you can't prevent an individual from applying for, or being offered, a position).

Danny Young committed to discussing the issue with Whitehaven management.

8. Date for next meeting

Wednesday 9th June 2010 – 3:30pm, Namoi Valley Brickworks.
Meeting closed 4:30pm



Michael Broekman - Chairman

