

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

**Date:** 17/05/2011

**Time:** Commenced – 5 pm

**Location:** Metropolitan Coal Administration Office (Boardroom)

**Attendees:**

- Kerrie Belter – CCC Member
- Michelle Durant Chambers – CCC Member
- Patricia Gauci – CCC Member
- Lorraine Rodden – CCC Member
- Robert Scullion – CCC Member
- Robert Young – CCC Member
- Allan House – CCC Member
- Melody Innes – CCC Member
- Margaret MacDonald Hill - Independent Chairperson
- Ryan Pascoe - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Josh Daniel - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Damien Hodge - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- David Rankin - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Andrew Smith - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Russell (Tuss) Peluchette - Peabody Metropolitan Coal (attended/delivered presentation only)
- Gaspar Sich - Peabody Metropolitan Coal (attended/delivered presentation only)

**Apologies:**

- Amanda Reilly – CCC Member
- Peter Baker – Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- John Collins – Peabody Metropolitan Coal

**Welcome and Introduction of Committee Members**

Margaret MacDonald-Hill welcomed all to the CCC meeting and new Peabody Metropolitan Coal Environment and Community Department Staff (Damien Hodge and Josh Daniel) were introduced.

**Declarations of Interest**

Margaret declared her position as independent chair for the CCC, member of the Mine Subsidence Board and Minister's Arbitration Panel.

**Confirmation of Previous Minutes:**

The previous minutes were moved without amendment by Lorraine Rodden and seconded by Michelle Durant Chambers.

**Business Arising:**

- Kerrie Belter: The recent letter of complaint (Feb 2011) by a parent regarding Metropolitan Coal supporting the gardening and bush restoration program at Helensburgh Public School was discussed at the recent P&C meeting. The Principal had sought guidance from the Department of Education on Metropolitan Coal's assistance and it was determined that the assistance was consistent with all Department of Education and Training requirements. The Principal noted that the program was well supported by the majority of parents and all staff and that on these grounds it would resume.

**Action Items from Previous CCC:**

- Ryan Pascoe is to organise the collection and microscopic analysis of dust from a property on Oxley Place, Helensburgh. Sampling was conducted in another street adjacent to the Coal Mine (Parkes Street, Helensburgh) as Metropolitan Coal was not able to gain access to a residence in Oxley Place prior to the May 2011 CCC meeting.
- Margaret MacDonald-Hill has submitted a letter to Department of Planning and Infrastructure regarding Melody Innes joining the CCC.
- Kerrie Belter was profiled for the upcoming edition of the Helensburgh Community Newsletter.

**Correspondence Tabled:**

**In**  
Nil.

**Out**

29/03/2011 – Letter of notification submitted to Department of Planning and Infrastructure regarding Melody Innes joining the CCC.

27/04/2011 – The Metropolitan Coal Traffic Management Plan (TMP) was approved by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure. The TMP was distributed electronically to the CCC.

**Presentations:****Underground Coal-Wash Emplacement Project (Presentation by Gaspar Sich)**

Gaspar Sich: Rejected material from the coal mining process is ground and mixed into a paste. This is then injected underground into historical mine workings, therefore reducing the number of trucks required to otherwise transport the reject material offsite for disposal at Glenlee Washery.

Margaret MacDonald-Hill: Will this emplacement assist with mine subsidence?

Gaspar Sich: This project is still only at the pilot stage and further testing is required to determine the full scope of applications. This option will be fully evaluated as the project continues.

Allan House: Could compression tests be used to assess the suitability of the substance for subsidence control?

Tuss Peluchette: In the short term the primary aim of the underground emplacement project is to reduce the need to truck reject from Metropolitan Coal. Testing to date has confirmed the suitability of emplacing the material underground. When considering the suitability of the process for subsidence mitigation a full suite of geotechnical investigations would be required.

Michelle Chambers: Does the process of crushing reject to make the paste create additional dust?

Gaspar Sich: The high moisture levels of the material mean that dust production is minimal throughout the entire process.

Ryan Pascoe: There will be a net benefit in terms of dust mitigation due to the reduced trucking from site.

Kerrie Belter: Will this process mean that the stockpile will be reduced in size?

Gaspar Sich: The processing capacity of the emplacement plant is currently less than the reject creation levels of the mine. As the project develops we expect to have processing capabilities that can meet peak reject creation rates.

Robert Scullion: In the first week of operation, how many truck movements have been offset by the project?

Gaspar Sich: Over 40 less truck movements were required as a result of the underground emplacement project.

Ryan Pascoe: Around three quarters of all trucks carrying material from the site are moving reject. Further implementation of this project will result in a significant reduction in trucking to and from Metropolitan Coal.

Kerrie Belter: I have noticed a significant increase in volume of noise recently. Is this the case?

Ryan Pascoe: We have continued to improve our noise monitoring and undertaken external attended noise surveys. The results have indicated that there has been no significant increase in noise volume. There exists a possibility of a change in frequency or type of noise which, although not louder, may be perceived differently.

**Action:** an assessment of noise monitoring results is to be provided at the next CCC meeting.

Gaspar Sich: The emplacement plant was designed cognisant of Metropolitan Coal's noise envelope. Residential grade noise attenuation was placed on the diesel generators and ongoing monitoring of noise is conducted by a consulting firm.

Robert Scullion: Is the pilot reject emplacement program only operating eight hours per day and if so, will it increase?

Gaspar Sich: The operation is considering the feasibility of operating the underground emplacement plant over longer periods.

Tuss Peluchette: Throughout the pilot period, numerous changes to operating hours and operating process have occurred. If approval is granted for long term operation there will be a need to integrate it into on-site activities. Being a manually fed plant it will require use of a loader and operate around normal operations such as train movements. Any increases in the operation of the emplacement program will need to operate within these constraints.

Robert Scullion: How is the electrical upgrade progressing?

Russell Peluchette: We were required to implement a 'common earth' for its safe operation. Following testing, the results arrived in the past week and will now allow further progress.

Robert Scullion: Will the purchase of Integral Energy by Origin Energy cause any issues for the progress of the project?

Russell Peluchette: This should not be an issue to us. The Transformer is due in July, and we are hoping that the power lines along the street will be installed prior.

Robert Scullion: What about parking? There appears to be a reduction in available spots as a result of the power project. Will the parallel parking signs be removed once works are completed?

Ryan Pascoe: Parking is limited on-site and we are currently looking at a number of options including carpooling.

Robert Scullion: How is the new drift progressing?

Russell Peluchette: The drift has reached 115m. It is progressing more slowly than anticipated primarily due to unforeseen geological formations such as a sandstone band encountered at 85m depth as opposed to the 160m depth expected.

Ryan Pascoe: We have recently replaced the continuous miner with a road header.

## **Update on Environment and Community 2011 (Presentation by Ryan Pascoe)**

### **2011 Dust Monitoring Results**

Ryan Pascoe: Ongoing dust monitoring occurs as part of our Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan. There are a number of monitoring stations covering the residential areas in proximity to the Metropolitan Coal site as well as on-site monitoring. The first quarter of 2011 revealed isolated elevated readings, although these values were attributed to back burning in Helensburgh and earthworks occurring in close vicinity to a deposition gauge on-site. Overall, the average concentrations of dust appear to be declining.

Lorraine Rodden: Who decides the maximum value of dust permitted?

Ryan Pascoe: The government regulators derive the standards based on national reports. Primarily the National Environment Protection Council (NEPC) commissions National

Environment Protection Measures (NEPMs) for various activities which are then adopted as standards by the various government regulators including incorporation into our Part 3A requirements.

Kerrie Belter: Are these values reviewed?

Margaret MacDonald-Hill: Yes, these are reviewed regularly. A review is currently being conducted of various NEPMs.

Ryan Pascoe: It is important to note that dust levels remain low and that Metropolitan Coal would only contribute a fraction of the overall dust sample as there are always background levels present.

Lorraine Rodden: When peaks occur, is the dust analysed to see if it is mine related?

Ryan Pascoe: Dust is further analysed if an elevated reading is discovered. Some residents have requested that we complete comprehensive analysis of the contents in the dust deposited on their homes in the past. The outcome of laboratory analysis indicated coal and coke consistently constitutes a minor fraction of the samples.

## **2011 Complaints Update**

Ryan Pascoe: There have been four noise complaints registered so far this year. Three of these were related to noise, and one was associated with truck movements. The complaint associated with truck movements arose due to site operations on Good Friday. The complainant indicated this was inappropriate. Metropolitan Coal carefully considered truck movements ahead of the Easter / ANZAC Day long weekend. Given the circumstances of three consecutive public holidays with a weekend in between, it was not feasible to continue operating during this period without moving some reject material from site. Accordingly, truck movements were restricted to the lowest number possible, less than half the typical daily total on the Friday and Tuesday of the long weekend. Truck movements were suspended entirely on Anzac Day to minimise interference with activities in the township.

Margaret MacDonald-Hill: Does the consent differentiate between public holidays?

Ryan Pascoe: No it does not.

Kerrie Belter: I did not make a complaint however I was also disappointed that trucks were operational on Good Friday. In the past public holidays would have been very quiet in town and it was disappointing.

Ryan Pascoe: We considered this decision at length and given the unusual number of public holidays together, it was necessary to truck some reject material during the public holidays.

Margaret MacDonald-Hill: What are the restricted hours for truck movements to and from the site?

Kerrie Belter: Is this restriction on all trucks?

Ryan Pascoe: Metropolitan Coal is only permitted to load coal or reject onto trucks and transport it offsite by road between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday. The curfew is communicated widely but occasionally delivery trucks arrive outside of these hours without our consent. The curfew is however related to coal and reject trucking.

### **Road Safety Audit**

Ryan Pascoe: Draft plans for improvements to the intersection of Parkes St and the mine entry road (Colliery Road) have been submitted to Wollongong City Council's Traffic Safety Committee. Once feedback on the draft plans has been obtained from the Traffic Safety Committee final plans will be produced and provided for approval. The plans are based on a Road Safety Audit which was carried out in accordance with Metropolitan Coal's Project Approval. They propose modifications to Colliery Road, the footpath and signage to improve safety for road users and pedestrians alike at the aforementioned intersection.

### **Double Glazing**

Ryan Pascoe: The project of providing double glazing to the rear of residences abutting the mine property is progressing well. Those that requested the work have already had quotes and measurements taken, with works currently being scheduled. A second phase group of homes will be assessed in the coming weeks.

Robert Young: How many houses does this include?

Ryan Pascoe: Approximately 12

### **Community Website Development**

Ryan Pascoe: The first meeting of the Helensburgh Community Website Steering Committee took place on 4 April 2011. The meeting outlined the objectives of the proposed website, addressed initial design features and agreed upon a shortlist of potential domain names. General consensus appeared that [helensburghgateway.com](http://helensburghgateway.com) was the most suitable domain name. The Steering Committee also agreed on a feature article and Patricia Gauci was asked to explain.

Patricia Gauci: I am working on a feature article for the release of the website that places the spotlight on local women in home businesses. There are a number of women in the local community who work from home in order to continue looking after their children and generate income. These women form an important part of the social fabric and it is a great opportunity to recognise their contribution to Helensburgh.

Michelle Chambers: Recent implementing of a Facebook page by other local groups has proved problematic. This would require constant monitoring.

Ryan Pascoe: For these reasons, the Steering Committee has decided against this option.

### **Annual Environmental Management Review**

Ryan Pascoe: The Annual Environmental Management Report (AEMR) was approved in April 2011 following inspections of the site by key environmental regulators. The regulators noted the

quality of the report and continued improvements at the surface facilities area. They also noted that in most areas the site was well maintained and tidy. Copies of the AEMR can be provided on request (CCC members were requested to place their names on a list to request a copy of the AEMR at this point).

Robert Young: Who approved the AEMR?

Ryan Pascoe: The Department of Industry and Investment.

Margaret MacDonald-Hill: Is the AEMR on the Metropolitan Coal webpage?

Ryan Pascoe: The Annual Review is placed on the website but the AEMR is not. The Annual Review includes information provided in the AEMR and more. The AEMR is not provided on the website due to this duplication.

### **General Business:**

- Robert Scullion: The current level of security used on this site appears inadequate in light of recent robberies in the area.
- Ryan Pascoe: Metropolitan Coal is currently undergoing a complete review of its security provisions. A multipronged approach including security guards, boom gate access control, security card access to designated areas and CCTV monitoring is considered most suitable. Capital funding will be sought to implement the security upgrades. The local police Sergeant has also agreed to conduct additional patrols of the site.
- Patricia Gauci: Stalls providing information about coal seam gas mining in the area have been set up in front of Bi-Lo in Helensburgh. These have been met with some negative responses from locals who appear poorly informed about the companies involved. There have been some comments from people passing by that Peabody has not permitted them to talk to us.
- Ryan Pascoe: As with any large organisation there are communication protocols that should be observed by employees. This includes the nomination of spokespeople for certain topics related to a company's activities. These spokespeople have been given authority by the organisation to express the company's views with respect to particular matters. They are typically selected as they are subject matter experts and this facilitates clear communication around potentially complicated issues. This communication protocol is communicated to all employees and there has been no specific instructions provided with regard to the coal seam gas stall.
- Lorraine Rodden / Damien Hodge: Many people do not differentiate between coal mining and coal seam gas activities.
- Ryan Pascoe: We are aware of the concerns regarding coal seam gas activities and confirm that we are solely a coal mining company.

- Kerrie Belter: Mine entry gates located across the road from the Helensburgh Historical Society premises on Parkes St appear to allow sediment movement across the footpath and road during heavy rainfall.
- Ryan Pascoe: We designed the area to drain away from Parkes Street but will investigate the matter and resolve the issue.
- Michelle Durant-Chambers: The grounds keeper that operates for Metropolitan Coal still appears to be using grass cutting equipment at the front of site during times when school children and heavy traffic are moving past frequently. Could this be stopped?
- Ryan Pascoe: I have addressed this matter with the individual involved on a previous occasion and will again reinforce the need for these activities to occur outside of school start and finish times.

**Meeting closed (Date/Time):** 17/05/2011 at 7:03 pm

**Next meeting (Date/Time):** Tuesday, 2/08/2011 at 5:00 pm