

**MOOLARBEN COAL OPERATIONS - COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE
MEETING No. 44**

Date: Tuesday 13th March 2018
Time: 4:02pm
Location: Moolarben Coal Open Cut Administration Board Room, Ulan
Attendance: Independent Chairperson
Lisa Andrews (LA)

Community Members

Andrew Palmer (AP) [*arrived at 4.15pm*]
David Stokes (DS)
Cr Des Kennedy – Mayor MWRC (DK) [*left at 4.40pm*]
Helen Ungaro (HU)
Julia Imrie (JI)

Moolarben Coal Operations

Steve Archinal (SA)
Graham Chase (GC)
Trent Cini (TC)
Mathew Croake (MCR)

Apologies

Councillor O’Neil (Mid Western Regional Council)
Councillor Cavalier (Mid Western Regional Council)
Bev Smiles (Community Representative)
Aleshia Lonsdale (Mudgee Local Aboriginal Council)

A hard copy of the Agenda and Meeting 44 Presentation was provided to all meeting attendees.

1. Introduction and Welcome

Lisa Andrews (LA) opened the meeting and welcomed all attendees to the Moolarben Coal Operations (MCO) CCC.

2. Apologies

Councillor O'Neil and Councillor Cavalier (Mid-Western Regional Council), Bev Smiles.

3. Declarations

LA made her usual declaration; she is an approved Independent Chairperson with the Department of Planning & Environment and engaged by MCO to chair the CCC.

4. Business Arising from Finalised Minutes

Meeting 43 Action 1- *Include a slide in the Annual Review presentation on rehabilitation.* GC confirmed slide will be in the next Annual Review presentation.

Meeting 43 Action 2- *Advise CCC Chairperson once MCO receives notification from DP&E that a modification has been referred to the Independent Planning Commission (PAC).* GC to advise on PAC referral dates when available.

Meeting 43 Action 3- *GC to provide map of offset areas to LA.* Offset map issued to CCC by Chair.

Meeting 43 Action 4- *Moolarben Coal to contact Google Maps to support JI's representations regarding incorrect road directions (passing through Moolarben mine site).* GC confirmed MCO had contacted Google Maps. JI has also continued to contact Google Maps.

5. Correspondence

Correspondence to the CCC since meeting 43 included the following:

15/12/17 – Draft minutes from 5/12/17 sent to CCC members for review/comment

22/12/17 – Finalised minutes sent to CCC members

09/02/18 – Email from JI with questions regarding the Northern Bore Field, as well as some access issues

19/02/18 – Email forwarded to members from GC with action items from the 5th December 2017 (Q4) meeting

19/02/18 – Email to members with the meeting notice & agenda for this meeting as well as the Offset Areas Map

25/02/18 – Email from Bev Smiles with an apology for this meeting

7/03/18 – Email from JI requesting that information be provided at this CCC on the Northern Borefield extraction and UG1 water make. Move to General Business.

10/3/18 – Email to members with a reminder for this meeting.

LA moved the Correspondence. Seconded by TC.

6. CCC Update Presentation

GC provided an update on community, the CSP application opening dates, an overview on the Moolarben Coal Celebrity Classic, an operational update, drilling and exploration.

TC provided an update on environmental monitoring. JI asked the location of SW05, TC confirmed SW05 location under the bridge on Ulan Rd. TC provided an update on air quality, complaints, rehabilitation and Offset works. DS asked whether aerial seeding is effective. LA asked whether other sites use aerial seeding as well. TC explained that MCO use aerial seeding as it has proven effective from an operational and safety aspect. JI asked about the fencing completed on the Bobadeen Offset. TC confirmed the location of the fencing works.

GC provided an employment and recruitment update. JI asked for current employment numbers. AP asked about proportion of new employees from out of town. LA asked if MCO still has difficulty recruiting personnel. SA confirmed that most positions have been filled, yet MCO still has difficulty in recruiting workers to Mudgee. SA advised that recent trainee programs at MCO have been successful.

Meeting 44 Action 1: MCO to provide employee numbers

GC provided an update on the current MOD14 status. JI asked whether MCO will notify CCC when response to submissions will be available. It was confirmed that it will be available on the MCO website.

Meeting 44 Action 2: MCO to notify CCC when RTS submitted.

LA asked whether the CCC has any further questions from the CCC Update presentation. No other questions were raised.

7. General Business

LA explained that following an application process, the DP&E has developed a “talent pool” for Independent Chairpersons for CCC meetings and LA has been approved in the list of 27 successful chairs. JI asked if the talent pool list is available.

Meeting 44 Action 3: LA to provide link to DPE appointed Chairpersons with the draft CCC minutes.

JI referred to questions on notice previously sent to MCO. LA verbalised questions to CCC:

1. Provide the most recent/updated MCM Water Management Plan (Surface and Groundwater)
2. Time frame of when dewatering/extraction in the northern bore field will commence and the volume to be extracted.
3. Advise on MCO plans for monitoring any changes to water levels specifically groundwater levels with a hydraulic gradient towards the river and baseflow in the river (alluvial groundwater in river bed) including trigger levels, frequency of monitoring and reporting and the response plan if triggers exceeded.
4. Groundwater make and daily water take from UG1 over the last 12 months and water source of inflows

JI explained it is difficult to properly assess the potential impact of MOD 14 without the latest Water Management Plans –the old online versions she had been referred to had been compiled in 2015, contained errors such as incorrect details on bore heights (JI private bore), did not incorporate recent changes to the groundwater modelling, water make and current low water levels and lack of baseflow in the Goulburn. JI asked whether MCO had addressed the question in DPI Water submission on whether information in the groundwater model was used in the WMP. (Clarification: DPI Water’s request was for MCO to confirm whether additional drilling was used in the Groundwater Model.) 77777GC discussed the Surface Water and Groundwater Management Plans noting triggers for investigation

are not reliant on the model, and that MCO is waiting on DPE's approval of the Water Management Plan. GC advised the current approved WMP is available on the Moolarben website and that the WMP was resubmitted to the DP&E in December 2017. The revised WMP would be published once approved. JI suggested predicted changes to groundwater levels were relevant to WMPs and questioned whether more recent drilling programs are included in the Groundwater Management Plan. GC confirmed they have been included. LA offered to check with the Department regarding the status of the WMP approval.

JI asked about extraction of water from the northern borefield and monitoring of potential impacts. GC advised that northern borefields commissioning is in progress, with extraction to recommence following commissioning and confirmed MCO was currently taking water from UCML. Water volumes will be reported in the AR.

JI raised concerns about the loss of baseflows in the Goulburn River and the long-term effect mining is having on the regional water system, and once mining has finished with recovery of groundwater levels. JI believes that the current no flow in the Goulburn is not consistent with previous more severe drought events, including the early 1980s (pre-mining). JI suggested that in her analysis, minor tributaries are still flowing but the Goulburn is dry. JI raised the community concern regarding the lack of water flowing in the Goulburn River down to The Drip

JI asked where MCO is using UG1 water. GC confirmed MCO is using water in CHPP, dust suppression and operational needs. JI asked how much water UG1 is currently making. GC confirmed approximately 65L/s pump from UG1 including supply, groundwater and recirculation and confirmed groundwater take would be reported in the Annual Review.

JI questioned the timing of the Annual Review (AR) report. LA confirmed that MCO is currently working on the 2017 Annual Review. GC confirmed the AR is due to be published by 31 March and outlined the Annual Review process, including data review and analysis with consultant input where required. JI expressed concern that data in the AR can be more than 12 months old when published. TC outlined MCO's Project Approval and reporting requirements.

JI noted she had recently conducted field water quality readings near the DS Goulburn River gauging station and recorded electrical conductivity readings of approximately 2000µs/cm, while upstream salinity was 450 EC suggesting a source of salinity inputs to the river between the two gauges, which includes Bora creek. TC asked whether the water was flowing where JI conducted her testing. JI confirmed that water was flowing at an estimated 1-2 megalitres per day following a localised storm event upstream, but flow did not extend past the Drip car park.

TC asked what aspects of the 2017 Annual Review that the CCC would like to be focused on in the Annual Review Presentation. JI asked if she can receive a higher resolution quality copy of the AR for review due to the small font size in Tables. LA asked the CCC what sections of the 2017 Annual Review they would like discussed in the next CCC meeting.

JI asked GC about the progress of the Drip handover. GC confirmed that progress is being made and lots plans requiring registration. JI asked what area will the lots include. GC explained that registration is completed with OEH.

8. Next Meeting: 12th June 2018 – 4:00pm.

Meeting Closed at 4:45pm

Action Items:

Item	Issue	Responsibility
1	MCO to provide employee numbers	GC (next meeting)
2	MCO to advise CCC when RTS submitted to DP&E	GC/LA
3	Link to approved Independent Chairpersons (Talent Pool)	LA
4	Copy of Annual Review report to be provided to CCC members	GC (next meeting)
5	Write to DP&E seeking update on the WMP approval	LA

ADDENDUM TO MINUTES:

Responses to questions from JI on 7/3/18 and provided by MCO following the meeting:

1. Provide the most recent/updated MCM Water Management Plan (Surface and Groundwater)

The Approved Water Management Plan is available on the Moolarben Coal website. The Water Management Plan has been submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment for approval and will be independently reviewed. CCC members will be advised when it has been approved.

Note: A revised Water Management Plan was prepared in consultation with government agencies and approved by the Department of Planning and Environment on 28 March 2018 – prior to the finalisation of these minutes.

2. Time frame of when dewatering/extraction in the northern bore field will commence and the volume to be extracted.

The recent northern borefields works are being commissioned and extraction will recommence when completed. Extraction will be undertaken and reported in accordance with relevant water licences. Volumes to be extracted will be determined by bore yield and operational requirements.

3. Advise on MCO plans for monitoring any changes to water levels specifically groundwater levels with a hydraulic gradient towards the river and baseflow in the river (alluvial groundwater in river bed) including trigger levels, frequency of monitoring and reporting and the response plan if triggers exceeded.

Monitoring is undertaken in accordance with the Water Management Plan. The Water Management Plan also includes triggers for investigation, response protocols and reporting requirements. The Water Management Plan has been prepared in consultation with government agencies and approved by the Department of Planning and Environment.

4. Groundwater make and daily water take from UG1 over the last 12 months and water source of inflows

Groundwater take is reported in the Annual Review. Currently approximately 65lps being pumped out of the underground (including supply, recirculation and groundwater inflow).

Note: Groundwater inflows of 1,552ML were reported in the 2017 Annual Review.