

Narrabri Mine Community Consultative Committee Meeting Minutes

Meeting No: 30

Date: Wednesday 16th September 2015

Time: 4:00pm

Location: Narrabri Mine Site Office

Present: Russell Stewart (RS) – Independent Chairman
James Stieger (JS)
Geoff Hunter (GH) – Alternative for Sally Hunter
Rodney Dunlop (RD)
Peter Webb (PW)
Catherine Redding (CR) – Narrabri Shire Council Delegate
Steve Bow (SB) – Narrabri Mine General Manager
Dave Ellwood (DE) – Narrabri Mine Technical Services Superintendent
Steve Farrar (SF) – Narrabri Mine Environmental Officer

1. APOLOGIES

Mark Foster and Lexie Frankham

2. DECLARATION OF PECUNIARY OR OTHER INTERESTS

None.

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Moved: GH

Seconded: SB

3.1. BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Face Widening/Production Limit Increase Modification Update – SF gave an update on the modification. Submitted a draft document to Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E) for their review and they were satisfied with it. However, as the Stockpile Modification is still being processed the DP&E wanted this one sorted out before the new modification goes on public exhibition. RS asked if this was the increase [stockpiles] modification, which SF confirmed. SF stated that the stockpile modification was on the DP&E website and formal approval was expected the following Tuesday, i.e. 22nd September. Likely to be another week after the approval is received before the face widening/production limit increase modification would go on public exhibition. GH asked about the new watering system would be upgraded to keep the dust down and SF stated that the one that is in place is designed so we can add to it so when the stockpiles are expanded the spray system would also be expanded as part of the works program.

“Pineview” – SF stated that the mine had attempted to meet with the owners of “Pineview” and had contacted them a couple of times but have not been able to pin down a time to meet as yet but hopefully will be next week. GH asked if we had any ideas on it and if the PM₁₀ data was more relevant to dust on the rooftop and what the possible solutions may be? SF stated we could certainly look at things like the first-flush systems mentioned previously but not sure what the

owners of "Pineview" are thinking and what would satisfy them. GH said he wasn't sure either but this would come out in the meeting with them. GH said if there were exceedances on one particular day and then that lands on the roof this would then be flushed into the water tank after the next rain period, he could see how you can get dust in some houses but he is not sure how you do anything about this. SB said all we can do is engage with them and try and understand the issue and extent. RS summarised by saying the mine tried to contact him, which SF confirmed, and then asked if it was with the owners or the mine and SF stated the mine is to contact the owner again. RS asked GH if he is alright with this which GH confirmed and SF said that GH was also invited along as well.

4. GENERAL BUSINESS

4.1. OPERATIONS PROGRESS REPORT

The operations update was provided as follows:

Mine Progress Report (to 31 August 2015)

Coal produced (t):	August 2015	65,208
	FY-to-date	619,609
Coal Railed (t):	August 2015	500,009
	FY-to-date	1,165,749
Average workforce numbers (August 2015):		
	NCO	Waged – 170
		Salary – 104
		Total – 274
	Contractors	Total – 92
Safety Update (FY to August 2015):		
	Lost Time Injury (LTI)	0
	Days LTI Free:	373
	Total Recordable Injuries:	3
	Planned Task Observations:	1,425
	Take 5 Assessments:	19,675
	Work Hours (Aug-15):	98,716

SB stated that we had a good production year last FY but even though the coal market is sluggish we managed to pay our bills and make our contribution. GH asked what the budget was and SB said we managed to get above the target of ~7Mt. SB said for the year ahead we are just starting longwall 5 and our budget is 6.8Mt which is reduced due to another longwall move in the FY. SB said markets are still looking dim but the mine will keep things as tight as it can and try and make some money. SB stated that the mine doesn't have any plans in the coming year for employment and the mine is in a steady state which it has been for a couple of years and this not expected change anytime soon. SB said the things we are doing we have already talked about such as upgrading stockpiles and widening the longwall to get our productivity tuned up and our cost profile more secure. JS asked if this would be with the regular staff which SB confirmed. SB stated in terms of activity onsite this is minimal with no real construction phase. SB said safety is always a challenge and last year even though we didn't hit our targets we rank ourselves relative to our peers



in other underground coal mines in the state and we were certainly one of the better performers. SB then stated that the mine still had 22 injuries where people could not return to work on their next shift, which is a level of injury the mine does not regard as being reasonable. RS asked if that was up from the year before which SB said it was about the same but we were chasing improvement. SB said the only positive was that the mine didn't have any major disabling injuries. RS asked if the injuries were from a common area or common people at the mine? SB stated that most of the injuries are related to manual handling and are distributed around the pit. SB said there wasn't much more for operations apart from Maules Creek, although within Whitehaven, we share infrastructure and as it comes on line the railway will get more congested and this is an issue for the Narrabri Mine. JS asked what happens when Maules Creek gets properly going? SB said he can't imagine it getting any easier especially if we have a good wheat season like this one. RS said this has been raised before and it will be difficult. JS asked what we are doing is it around 100kt/mth and SB said no it is more likely 500kt/mth. RS said wait till mid-December when the wheat storage is running out of room. SB said it is a good problem to have. SF said there was a DA in for a new storage facility north of Narrabri. RS said it is linked in with the inland rail, as it is proposed to go close to that site. RS said the mine could send the coal north then. SB said it would be nice to have options as it currently costs ~\$25/t and it would be good to have some competition. JS said the grain can go to Port Kembla but the ports are all operated by GrainCorp, which makes it a little difficult.

RS said it was interesting that at the opening of Maules Creek it was stated that the coal from up here is sought after in Japan as it has 30% less emissions than the coal that they have been using and the coal from this area is part of their agreement to cut emissions. RD stated that acid rain is the problem with coal. SB said it is a good grade of coal and Japan build modern power stations that can get far better results. SB said it is good for the mining industry up here as it is a good blend of coal. RS said it is not something the average person would think about using a different standard of coal to cut emissions.

CR asked if there was anything in that [Modification 4] to increase the dust monitoring. SF stated that modelling was done as part of the process and it showed that increasing the stockpiles with the controls already in place was not going to make a significant difference compared to what we already have so we are not proposing to add any additional controls. SB said our approval conditions were being updated and SF confirmed this was to have the same standard conditions as more recent approvals and relates to the management plan and reporting. SF then said in terms of the face widening/production limit increase modification the mine has met with Stewart Todd (Narrabri Shire Council GM) and Tony Meppem the Monday just gone after previously meeting with Paul Wearne and Hamish McTaggart. The new GM was interested in a site tour and to get the Councillors involved.

4.2. ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW

The environmental monitoring report was provided to the CCC members and SF went through the report.

SF stated that attended noise monitoring was done in June/July/August with three exceedances in June. The mine made the necessary notifications. One of the properties is in negotiations with the mine for purchase. GH asked how far the property was from the mine, which JS said it is next to his place and SF said about 1.5km. SF said that one exceedance was recorded to the south, which was the first time we had recorded an exceedance with additional monitoring done and at this stage it seems to be a one-off. SF explained the noise monitoring requirements outlined in the EPL. SB explained that was an unusual one as it was in the morning at around 9am when they are usually in the middle of the night. RS asked what way the breeze was going and SF referred him to the table in the report. SF stated more monitoring was planned. July and August also had some exceedances however these were recorded under inversion conditions or during strong winds when the criteria do not apply.

SF went through the deposited dust levels and HVAS results all of which were compliant and daily HVAS criteria had not been exceeded since September 2009 due to a dust storm.



SF went through the groundwater monitoring results completed in June 2015 as it is done every 3 months. Monitoring well P15 had shown a steady decrease however during June it recovered to near background levels. This is located near LW105 which is about to start mining. When the longwall unit gets near P15 it would be expected to drop in level again. GH asked what happens there? SF said he would have to check how deep that one is to confirm where it is installed too as it is not likely in the coal seam otherwise it would have stayed down after development. SF said there is obviously some connectivity there as it dropped but then recovered.

SF went through the surface water monitoring results and noted that the EPL points did not discharge however the creeks around the mine were sampled since the last meeting. SF mentioned one of those was in relation to a storm in which we recorded 2 inches of rain with a peak of 12mm in 5 mins. JS said it was some of the heaviest rain he had seen.

SF went through the subsidence results. SF said updated subsidence results had been used in the face widening/production limit increase modification. GH asked about ponding. SF said we do get ponding but that was predicted to occur and the issues in the first two panels where the large trees died hasn't occurred since. SF said this was related to depth of cover and nowhere on the mine is the depth of cover as shallow as it was for the first two panels so this shouldn't happen again. CR asked if the longwall gets deeper which SB confirmed. GH asked if subsidence would be less but SF said it is predicted to remain the same at around 2.7m. SB said the tree deaths were also related to soils and the deeper you get the subsidence profile gets less savage with lower tilts/strains. GH asked if it will increase over time to which SF replied that once you were around 70m past a given point you will have 95% of the subsidence on the surface. DE added that you may get another 50mm when the next block is mined. RS suggested getting a time-lapse camera to record the fall which would be interesting.

SF went through the complaints. All four complaints received were for noise and all four were from the same complainant with three received in one weekend. SF stated that the complaints were followed up and actioned as required while noting that most complaints are received after the fact. The complaints on the weekend coincided with the longwall move so there was a lot more action on the surface. SF said the complainant is in negotiations with the mine for purchase and SB stated that the negotiations are protracted as the mines joint venture partners require approval from the foreign investment review board. CR asked if it was a 2km radius to the residences from the mine, which SB confirmed. JS stated that it is not noisy all the time but when it is noisy, it is very noisy. RS asked if we advise the neighbours and SB said we do not. RS said you may lead people to complain though and SF stated you would not stop the complaints but the complainant would know what the cause is. GH asked if we would lease the place back to them to manage and SB said it depends what the deal is and they have asked for that. GH stated it is an interesting issue that someone complains about noise but then is happy to stay there afterwards. RD said this is a problem for mining everywhere not just here and JS stated that he looks at it from the point of view of who was there first. SF stated that our development consent requires the mine to compensate for the inconvenience of it all and the negotiations usually sit around what that figure equates too on top of the independent valuer's report. JS stated that it is not a total loss to Whitehaven either as you are purchasing land to which SB replied while it is an asset it ties your money up and Whitehaven are not farmers.

SF went through an environmental event that occurred at the mine in June when a contractor accessed an area demarcated as an Aboriginal site. All relevant parties were notified and no regulatory action was taken as all controls were in place and an appropriate level of disciplinary action was taken with the contractor. SF stated the mine issued a TBT following the incident to remind everyone of their obligations in terms of cultural heritage sites. CR asked if we now had the sites fenced off to which SF replied the site was fenced with signs were on the fence restricting access. GH recalled another incident happening with a contractor recently, which SF confirmed had occurred in October 2014 [reported to the CCC in December 2014]. SB said most of the surface work is contractor based. RD asked if archaeology was part of the induction, which SF confirmed. DE stated that following the incident in October 2014 all the sites in the northern panels were fenced and signs put up. JS asked what he was doing and DE explained he was putting a pump in to pump water from a ponding area.

5. NEW BUSINESS

GH asked about a phone survey that rang him a couple of nights ago. SB asked if it was Newgate as this is the organisation Whitehaven use for public relations. GH said they did not identify themselves as mining related but it was obvious after a few questions that they were and confirmed it was Newgate. SB said they do work for Whitehaven but was not aware of a survey being done. RS said the University of Newcastle would be in the area next week to do a community study and some people may get calls.

CR stated that the three mines in the Maules Creek area have an annual community consultative meeting and one other Narrabri Councillor who attends thinks it would be a good idea for the Narrabri Mine CCC to be involved. CR then said she has since found out that it is part of those mines consents to have the meeting together and she did not think this CCC would be interested and it would require DP&E approval. RS stated that an interesting comment came from the Councillor, which was "you have a good CCC and you may not want to come". CR said she declined on behalf of the group to which the CCC agreed. SB said you would just get caught in matters that really do not apply to the Narrabri Mine.

SF asked RS how the independent chair meeting in Sydney went. RS replied that it appears that, while noting he was the only one there outside Hunter/Sydney/Wollongong, that the other independent chairs were paid. SF stated that the independent chair of the Maules Creek/Tarrawonga CCC's was paid to run the meetings. SB said he has been involved in a number of CCC's and some have paid chair persons and some don't, but usually the contentious mines are the ones that have a paid chair persons to run the CCC's. RS then asked the group at the meeting how is this not a conflict of interest. SB said in his experience it was done through the DP&E and they issue invoices which have to be paid. RS asked the people at the meeting how you make a decision on things that are controversial. RS also said that they spoke about the political aspirations of people on the committees and how this overflows into what goes on in the meetings, which may be why they need a paid person in there. JS said this committee started with a very good chairman in a house in a bare paddock and this has carried on to this day. JS also said the chairman would let people have their say but pull people up if needed and at the end of the meeting everyone would shake hands. RS said that this is the way it should be. JS said if you had a chair that says you have 2 mins then maybe you don't shake hands at the end. RS said that there was a key word in all this and it is 'community'. GH asked what the idea of the meeting was? RS replied that all chairs were invited to Sydney to discuss major issues. RS told them this CCC has no major issues and we have people who are farmers and some who are not happy with the resources industry on our CCC but they ask questions and they get answers with no attacks to which the other people responded we get attacked all of the time. RS then said the other chairs say it goes back to individual characters point scoring and they also have over the top environmentalists as well. RS told the other chairs that maybe you could learn from us. RS also said he is on two CCC's and this one was the most amiable. RS said the problem with the other committees seems to be where they start and who is involved. SB said the DP&E does the picking of the CCC and in the more populous areas you get more applications so DP&E will take a sample and you may get some people who are against mining in general and work hard to undermine the meeting. RS said that he has found that the person who says no, in the end nobody listens too. RS said the biggest issues in the other CCC's were personalities and the people who are there to further their own careers. SF asked if there was going to be a report or something issued after the meeting? RS said there is no report or minutes. SB asked if they were just seeking feedback, which RS confirmed. RS said if the meeting came up again that he would not bother going. RD said the population density is lower here than the Hunter Valley or Wollongong. JS said in the Hunter Valley it is also about aesthetics. RS said there was a comment from one of the staffers that Narrabri would be gearing up for some big stuff? RS said he asked about prices and if that would determine how it all goes. GH said he is concerned that Narrabri doesn't see the benefit from the production that goes in the shire. RS said he has sent some emails around about this as well on behalf of the business chamber. SB confirmed these emails were around the money spent in businesses in town as opposed to the royalties etc that come from mining.

6. NEXT MEETING

Wednesday 16th December 2015 at 4:00pm. Railway Hotel, Baan Baa.



7. CLOSURE OF MEETING

Meeting closed at 5:20pm.