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## Austar Coal Mine

### Community Consultative Committee Meeting Minutes

Location: LTCC Meeting Room, Austar CHPP  
 Time: 9:30am – 10:32am  
 Date: 12 August 2015

Name	Representative
Margaret MacDonald-Hill (MMH)	Independent Chairperson
Peter Sturrock (PS)	Community Representative
David Holmes (DH)	Community Representative
Greg Pawley (GP)	Austar Coal Mine
Gary Mulhearn (GM)	Austar Coal Mine
Jack Potter (JP)	Austar Coal Mine
Scott Fittler (SF)	Yancoal Australia
Apologies	
Alan Smith (AS)	Community Representative
Councillor Cordelia Troy (CT)	Cessnock City Council Representative
Copy of minutes	
Councillor Bob Pynsent	Mayor of Cessnock City Council
Mr Joel Fitzgibbon MP	Federal Member for Hunter
Mr Clayton Barr	State Member for Cessnock
Mr Howard Reed	NSW Department of Planning & Environment
Ms Valerie Phillips	Librarian, Cessnock City Council

Item	Issue	Action	Date
1	<b>Welcome</b>		
	MMH – Welcomed the Committee and opened the meeting.		
2	<b>Declaration of Interests</b>		
	MMH <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Member of the Mine Subsidence Board</li> <li>• Independent Chair of numerous Community Consultative Committee's</li> </ul>		
3	<b>Confirmation of Previous Minutes</b>		
	The minutes of the previous meeting were considered representative of that meeting. DH moved, GM seconded.		
4	<b>Business Arising from Previous Minutes</b>		
	<p>DH noted that he had received the final report for the Independent Environmental Audit.</p> <p>GM advised that the final report for the Independent Environmental Audit had been provided to all CCC members, and has been submitted to Department of Planning and Environment and other relevant agencies, and to Cessnock's relevant State and Federal members of Parliament, together with a response to recommendations of the audit. An update on the outcomes of the audit will be provided in today's CCC presentation</p> <p>PS enquired about the progress of the installation of a guard rail on Quorrobolong Road. GM stated that Council has approved the installation and was in the process of designing a guard rail for the site.</p> <p>DH asked if a CCC surface inspection would be conducted in 2015.</p> <p>It was agreed that a surface inspection of the Austar Mine Site would be held prior to the Q4 2015 CCC meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> November 2015 and the normal meeting would be held following the inspection.</p>	Austar to arrange site inspection on the morning of the next scheduled CCC meeting.	
5	<b>Correspondence</b>		
	<p>Outgoing</p> <p>13/7/15 - Letter of condolence on behalf of the CCC to the family of Councillor Jeff Maybury, following his sad passing.</p> <p>22/7/15 – Email to Cessnock City Council to enquire about an alternate Council representative for the Austar CCC, following the passing of Councillor Jeff Maybury.</p> <p>Incoming</p> <p>24/7/15 – Email reply from Cessnock City Council advising that the</p>		

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	<p>council representative on the Austar CCC would be Councillor Cordelia Troy.</p> <p>4/8/15 – Email from GM provided pdf copies of the Independent Environmental Audit final report to all CCC members. Hard copy followed up by mail.</p>		
6	<p><b>Current Operations, Environmental Monitoring Update, Complaints</b></p>		
	<p>GM &amp; GP – provided an update on current and proposed underground operations.</p> <p><b><u>Current Operations</u></b></p> <p><b>Underground</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Longwall A8 was completed on 24 June 2015 (commenced 16 June 2014)</li> <li>• Minor development mining was completed in 400 mains area in May 2015.</li> <li>• Since the completion of Longwall A8, Austar faces discontinuity to longwall operations.</li> <li>• Austar has made a business decision to relocate development mining operations to the Bellbird South Area as permitted under existing consent (DA29/95 and DA74/75/79). Development commenced in June 2015.</li> <li>• The next longwall panels are proposed to be extracted in the Bellbird South Area. Longwall extraction is proposed to commence in Q3 2016, this is dependent on approval of a modification application to an existing consent, and of an Extraction Plan for the proposed longwall panels.</li> </ul> <p><b>Bellbird South Mining Area</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Environmental Assessment to support the modification application is in preparation.</li> <li>• Environmental field studies (ecology, cultural heritage, historic heritage) have been completed early August 2015 to support the environmental assessment with landholder permission.</li> <li>• Specialist assessments in preparation also (subsidence, flooding and drainage, groundwater, ecology, heritage, greenhouse gas &amp; energy).</li> <li>• Landholders overlying the mining area have been advised.</li> <li>• Consultation planned in lead up to application lodgement with the affected landholders, infrastructure owners, and relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Planned MOD lodgement to DPE in September 2015.</li> </ul>		

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	<p>GM – provided an update on current surface operations.</p> <p><b>CHPP</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Normal operations occurring, albeit at reduced levels since completion of Longwall A8. Operations will ramp up when longwall extraction recommences at Austar.</li> </ul> <p><b>Workforce Changes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Since the underground incident of April 2014, Austar &amp; Yancoal have been working to try and develop new production options and retain or redeploy as many of our people as possible. Unfortunately, the continued downturn has made the mine’s current situation unsustainable.</li> <li>• As a result, in July 2015 Yancoal have announced up to 55 redundancies across the Austar operation and will be moving the mine to a two Continuous Miner, seven days a week operation. The mine will continue to operate with 185 employees.</li> <li>• Austar’s management team have been speaking with employees and ensuring they have access to the necessary external employment, redundancy and counselling services required to assist them throughout the process.</li> </ul> <p><b>Exploration</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nil additional boreholes commenced since last CCC meeting.</li> <li>• A seismic line in the Bellbird South area has been approved by DRE after landholder access was granted, to commence in August 2015.</li> <li>• Exploration program is planned to continue in 2015 to 2016. Austar will be consulting with landholders regarding access for exploration.</li> </ul> <p>GM presented diagrams of the exploration licence area, and proposed boreholes, and the upcoming seismic line.</p> <p><b>Environmental Incidents 29 April 2015 to 11 August 2015</b></p> <p>GM gave summary of environmental incidents since previous meeting.</p> <p><b>4 May 2015 – Kitchener SIS – Sediment Basin Discharge</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The incident involved the Eastern Sediment Basin discharging over its spillway due to higher than design rainfall.</li> <li>• A total of 45.4mm fell over the period 30 April 2015 to 3</li> </ul>		

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	<p>May 2015 prior to the incident. The approved 90th percentile, 5 day rainfall design for the Eastern Sediment Basin is 42.8mm.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Actions taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Reported to EPA</li> <li>○ Water pumping of sediment basin and storage dams to make ready for future rain events</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>DH – noted that 43mm of rainfall is not a large amount, and that at times we receive more than this amount in our area.</p> <p>GM – agreed that at times we receive more than that amount of rainfall over 5 days. GM noted that in the original Environmental Assessment for Stage 3 which included the Kitchener SIS, the design rainfall was 80<sup>th</sup> percentile, 5 day rainfall of about 16mm – the EA was approved at this level.</p> <p>GM noted that during construction management plan preparation, the Department of Planning and Environment recommended that a higher design rainfall standard be used (90<sup>th</sup> percentile, 5 day rainfall 42.8mm), which Austar complied with. The basins will only hold back up to their design size. The Blue Book notes that the 90<sup>th</sup> percentile 5 day rainfall will be exceeded about 5-6 times per year, and that is what we have seen with the sediment basin overtopping on occasion. It is however, performing as approved. 90 percent of the 5 day rainfall events will be less than that amount and will be contained. Austar reports events that overtop the basins to the EPA.</p> <p><b>11<sup>th</sup> August 2015 – 2 Shaft Pipeline – Pipeline Leak</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The incident involved a potential minor leak from the 2 Shaft Pipeline identified as a wet area along the pipeline route in a section of Crown Road to the north of the Q14 private access road.</li> <li>• Actions taken: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 2 Shaft Pipeline turned off and isolated to stop flow</li> <li>○ Investigation works commencing to confirm if a leak is present, and repair if confirmed. Investigation ongoing at the time of the meeting.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>GM – provided update on environmental monitoring</p> <p><b><u>Environmental Monitoring Update</u></b></p> <p><b>Subsidence</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recent monitoring survey undertaken in October 2014, March 2015 and July 2015. Graphs of subsidence</li> </ul>		

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	<p>measurement presented. Approx 0.55m of subsidence has been measured.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measured subsidence for LWA7 and LWA8 has been less than predicted subsidence.</li> </ul> <p><b>Air Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual average PM<sub>10</sub> was well below Annual Average Maximum Criteria at all locations to date in 2015, with the exception of one anomalous result at HVA3 on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015.</li> <li>Annual average deposited dust was below Annual Maximum Criteria for all locations to date in 2015.</li> <li>Graphs of air quality monitoring data were presented.</li> </ul> <p>JP - A high result (49µg/m<sup>3</sup>) was recorded at HVA3 on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015, which is less than but close to the 24 hour limit. An investigation was conducted into this high result. This involved analysing weather data, investigating mine activities on the day and investigating the potential activities of neighbouring land managers (Cessnock City Council and NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service). A specific cause of the high result could not be determined and subsequent monitoring results returned to lower historic levels, as such the high result has been deemed an anomaly.</p> <p><b>Water Quality</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>pH and EC graphs were presented.</li> <li>pH and EC monitoring within Environment Protection Licence limits.</li> <li>General trends in Bellbird Creek, Quorrobolong Creek and Coney Creek presented.</li> </ul> <p><b>Groundwater Monitoring</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Groundwater levels were presented on graphs.</li> <li>A graph of the groundwater level at the recently installed MB01 piezometer was presented.</li> <li>Groundwater levels in alluvium and fractured rock increased as a result of the heavy rainfall received in the area during April 2015 and are gradually stabilising back to historic levels. With the exception of the monitored groundwater level in MB01, which was only installed in January 2015, and did not increase as a result of the rainfall. Trends for MB01 will continue to be monitored.</li> </ul> <p>DH asked about an audit recommendation about installing monitoring wells in advance of mining to get baseline data. GM noted that access for monitoring bore installation at MB01 was only received late 2014, and installed in January 2015. It is the intention to install monitoring wells well in advance of mining, pending landholder agreements.</p>		

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	<p><b>Noise</b></p> <p><b>Since last CCC meeting (28 April 2015 to 11 August 2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Measured noise was compliant with noise limits from 28 April 2015 to 11 August 2015.</li> </ul> <p><b>Vibration</b></p> <p><b>Since last CCC meeting (10 April 2015 to 7 August 2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Monitor V7 – 345 Quorrobolong Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>14 events &gt;1mm/sec <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 9 events &lt;3mm/sec</li> <li>○ 2 events &gt;3mm/sec, &lt;6mm/sec</li> <li>○ 3 events &gt;6mm/sec (2 events at approx 12mm/sec)</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>• Monitor V8 – 159 Coney Creek Lane <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>11 events &gt;1mm/sec <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ 7 events &lt;3mm/sec</li> <li>○ 2 events &gt;3mm/sec, &lt;6mm/sec</li> <li>○ 2 events &gt;6mm/sec</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>GM - Noted all events were below the level where cosmetic structural damage may occur of 15mm/sec. Vibration events should now reduce with the completion of LWA8 until longwall operations recommence in that area. Potential that vibration monitors will be relocated over the Bellbird South area, should that area be approved for extraction.</p> <p><b><u>Community Complaints</u></b></p> <p><b>Since last CCC meeting (28 April 2015 to 11 August 2015)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 26/06/2015 - complaint via the EPA relating to road condition after repairs were made to an Austar Coal Mine pipeline beneath Q14 Private Access Road in March 2015. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Austar inspected the road in question, and scheduled road maintenance to occur on 2 July 2015. ECM contacted the affected resident to advise of the scheduled works, and responded to the EPA on 2 July 2015 with the response to this complaint.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>		
7	<b>General Business</b>		
	<p><b>Acknowledgement for late Councillor Jeff Maybury</b></p> <p>The Austar Community Consultative Committee collectively acknowledged Councillor Jeff Maybury, who sadly passed away on Monday 6 July 2015. Jeff had been Cessnock City Council's representative on the Austar CCC since its establishment in 2007. Jeff's contributions as a community leader in the Weston,</p>		

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	<p>Abermain and wider Cessnock areas were acknowledged and appreciated. Jeff will be remembered for his significant contribution to the Austar CCC and the wider Cessnock community, and will be sadly missed.</p> <p><b>Independent Environmental Audit 2014</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Audit is required by Project Approval 08_0111, and Development consent DA29/95. Audit commenced on 10 November 2014 for compliance with conditions of:</li> <li>• Project Approval 08_0111, Development Consent DA29/95</li> <li>• Environment Protection Licence 416, Mining Leases.</li> <li>• Audit report completed 16 July 2015 and was submitted to the Department of Planning and Environment. Response to recommendations of the audit was also provided to DPE. Audit report and response also distributed to relevant agencies and CCC members.</li> <li>• Austar Coal generally demonstrated a high level of compliance with conditions.</li> </ul> <p>MMH noted that the summary of audit recommendations and Austar’s response was very useful.</p> <p>GM noted that the same response to recommendations of the audit has been sent to the Department of Planning and Environment, and other government agencies. The audit will be placed on the Austar Coal Mine website shortly.</p> <p><b>Community Sponsorships</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Alex Lambert Fund “Let’s Fight the Fight for Alex”</li> </ul> <p><b>Other</b></p> <p>DH asked if “Sharing the Benefits” agreements would be offered to residents in the Bellbird South project area.</p> <p>GM stated that agreements to date in the Bellbird South area have been simply about agreeing to access for environmental studies and a seismic line, as we are presently seeking a modification application, and do not have all approvals for longwall mining. GP stated that a decision had not yet been made on this issue, but is subject to review.</p> <p>PS asked whether it would be pertinent to invite a resident from the Bellbird South project area to become a community representative on the CCC.</p> <p>GM stated that Austar is open to that. GM noted that he was aware that a landholder in the Bellbird South area had contacted</p>		



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	one of the community representatives about Austar, which is a positive thing that the community is aware of our CCC.		
<b>8</b>	<b>Next Meetings</b>		
	Next Meeting: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>18 November 2015 – 9:30am LTCC Office, Austar CHPP for site tour to be followed by the meeting.</li> </ul>		
<b>10</b>	<b>Meeting Closed</b>		
	MMH – Declared the meeting closed at 10:32am and thanked all for attending.		

Recorded: Jack Potter 12/08/2015

Confirmed: To be confirmed at next meeting

Chairperson – Margaret MacDonald-Hill