

NSW Planning & Environment



Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue Presentation

14-15th October 2014

Presented by Scott Brooks, Team Leader, Compliance Singleton.

Background

- Oct 6 2010 – Singleton office officially opened to provide an “on the ground” compliance presence for coal mines in the Upper Hunter Valley.
- July 2014 – Formation of Northern Region Team to include Gunnedah, Mudgee and Gloucester regions and the recruitment of additional staff.
- Compliance Unit located in the Coal Services Building, 1 Civic Avenue, Singleton. Phone 6575 3405.

What are the Teams functions?

Compliance

Site inspections:

- **Announced:** Audits, Compliance Inspections
- **Unannounced:** Random Inspections, respond to alleged breaches of development consent

Strategic

- identifying strategic issues

Post Approval

- All post approval assessment

Address Community Concern

- Dust
- Blasting
- Noise
- Received 208 complaints in the 2103-14 year, 127 for noise.



Approval Conditions

Impact Criteria

- Measured with monitors to assess performance against established consent criteria

Operating Conditions

- Requirements to minimise , implement best practice, pro-active and reactive mitigation measures

Management Plans

- Comprehensive measures to manage potential issues created by mining.



Dust

- We are aware of community concern about mining dust, particularly from haul roads and dust generated in adverse conditions.
- In the 2013-2014 year the Singleton office conducted:
 - 60 surveillance trips for mine generated dust
 - 118 mine inspections, most for dust.



Dust

- Dust generation should not be above the height of the tray.
- Mining operations need to adapt to weather conditions.



Blast Fume







- In response to community concern regarding blast fume, in 2012 mines were required to provide the Department with a blast Fume Strategy.
- The purpose of this Strategy was to require the mines to better consider the risk and management of post blast fume in their blasting practices.



Blast Fume Statistics

2013 Blast data:

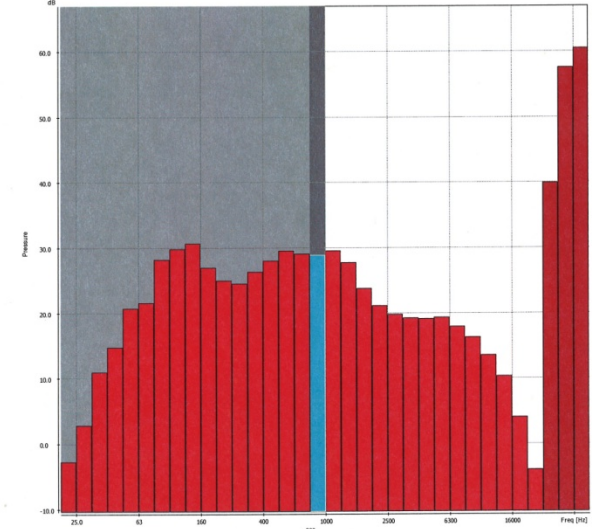
- 2652 blasts in Hunter Valley
- 73% of blasts – No fume
- 98% of blasts – Less than a level 2 (level 2 is relatively insignificant fume)
- Two blasts that rated 5 (highest fume level)

Level	Typical Appearance
Level 0 No NOx gas	
Level 1 Slight NOx gas	
1A Localised	
1B Medium	
1C Extensive	
Level 2 Minor yellow/orange gas	
2A Localised	
2B Medium	
2C Extensive	
Level 3 Orange gas	
3A Localised	
3B Medium	
3C Extensive	
Level 4 Orange/red gas	
4A Localised	
4B Medium	
4C Extensive	
Level 5 Red/purple gas	
5A Localised	
5B Medium	
5C Extensive	

Noise

- Largest source of complaint in the Hunter Valley
- Compliance assessment is conducted monthly by independent consultants
- It is assessed over a 15 minute period.
- For a breach of Approval the elevated level needs to be sustained.

12-6-2014: 1/3 Octave



Cursor: 20.0, 800, 1/3 Octave LEQ (ChL, A), Main cursor: 28.9 dB, In blocks: 38.9 dB

Main results for sound
Low pass, 630Hz, 38.4dB, 1000Hz 38.9dB

Day	Hour	Profile	Filter	Detector	Elapsed time	Units	LEQ
d/MM/yyyy	h:mm:ss	h:mm:ss	tt		hh:mm:ss	%	
12/06/2014	20:28:24	P1	A	Fast	00:15:00	dB	39.9
12/06/2014	20:28:24	P2	C	Fast	00:15:00	dB	57.5
12/06/2014	20:28:24	P3	Z	Fast	00:15:00	dB	60.5

Light cloud still night. No other noises.
One truck at 10 min and one car shortly after.

Noise

- Noise Management Plans require continual sound level assessment plus pro-active and reactive action.
- Should noise levels be elevated, as assessed by real time monitoring, the management plans require changes, usually in a nominated time frame.
- To assess a mines performance following community concern, it is usually assessed against management plan requirements.

Managing Complaints

DP&I Singleton Office 6575 3405

Phone calls to the office predominantly concern:

- Alleged non-compliance with Project Approvals
- Concern relating to a loss of amenity of the residence
- Whilst the investigations of most complaints indicate the mine to be compliant, complaints do provide an indication of the location and types of concern our community has.
- If we are not told, we do not always know about the problem.



Singleton Office Achievements

Key achievements to date include:

- Building community relations and providing a localised service
- Engaging with other key stakeholders such as Council's, the EPA, DRE and the NSW Minerals Council
- Contributing to community forums like the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue.
- Engaging with industry to resolve strategic issues
- Blast Fume Management Strategy
- Biodiversity Offset Review and Management Plan Guideline
- Reviewing management plans and other post approval requirements to address local concerns and to aim for continual improvement;
- Value adding to the assessment process

Key regulatory outcomes

- **Prosecutions -**
 - 3 prosecutions:
 - Vale - Integra Coal - Non compliance with dump height - \$84000 plus costs
 - Aston Coal No2 – Maules Creek - Failure to disclose political donations - \$10000 plus costs
 - Idemitsu – Boggabri Coal – Stockpiling outside of approved project boundary - \$82000 plus costs
- **Penalty Notices -**
 - 25 fines issued,
 - 7 – dust related, 6 - blast related, 3 - Aboriginal artefact disturbance, 2 - noise related, 2 - road use/construction; 1- conservation bond lodgement, 1 - hours of operation, 1 - surface water, 1 – train movements, 1- exceedance of production limit

Questions?

Any questions?