

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF BICKHAM COAL BULK SAMPLE

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (BCCC)

MEETING NUMBER 2 - WEDNESDAY 28th JULY 2004 HELD AT UPPER HUNTER SHIRE
COUNCIL CHAMBERS AT 4.15PM

PRESENT:	WARREN COOK	Chairperson
	NAT DOONAN	Community Representative
	LLOYD ROSSINGTON	Community Representative
	MICHAEL SATARA	Community Representative
	NEVILLE MOXON	Community Representative
	JOCELYN ROBERTS	Community Representative
	GREG SUMMERHAYES	Dept. Mineral Resources
	DARYL DUTTON	Upper Hunter Shire Council
	DAVID CASSON	Upper Hunter Shire Council
	JOHN RICHARDS	Bickham Coal Company
	JOHN HINDMARSH	Bickham Coal Company
	DAVID FOSTER	Bickham Coal Company

APOLOGIES: NONE

*** Note: D.Casson excused from the meeting at 5:10pm ***

CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING.

- Confirmed that all committee members received a copy of minutes from previous meeting.
- It was noted that some of the wording in the minutes was not a true and accurate interpretation of some of the comments made by members. Minutes to be revised accordingly and re-circulated to committee.
- It was decided that no comments would be personally attributed to committee members.
- Note: Scone Shire Council should be referred to as Upper Hunter Shire Council. Corrections to be made accordingly.
- Chairman raised the issue of Sarah Foster taking the minutes for the meeting – no concerns were expressed by the committee.
- With the exception of amendments the minutes were accepted as a true and correct record of the first meeting.

BUSINESS MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES.

- It was confirmed that committee members had received a copy of the contact details and Special Consent Conditions.
- Noted that minutes should table matters that need to be actioned e.g. item number and the person to action this item.
- The issue of the change in time and venue of the meeting was raised; W.Cook confirmed that this was due to a change in his work roster. Apology extended to committee.

1. REPORT FROM ENVIRONMENTAL OFFICER J.HINDMARSH ON THE PRELIMINARY MONITORING DATA AND METHODS USED TO ASSESS DATA.

- Committee viewed slide presentation of the monitoring methods used by Bickham Coal Company to assess vibration, overpressure, air quality and water levels and quality (ground and surface) during the Bulk Sample period.
- Various photos and maps were viewed to identify where these monitors/indicators are positioned onsite and how they operate.
- It was noted that various analysis methods were being utilised by Bickham Coal e.g. laboratory testing and onsite monitoring during this period.
- A number of safety concerns were expressed by the committee in relation to blasting. J.Hindmarsh stated that a 500metre exclusion zone was in place and that a physical inspection would be carried out by a supervisor before on-site shots were fired. Extensive signage is also in place to warn the public.
- Vibration/blast, air and water quality results would be provided by Bickham Coal Company in summary format at the next meeting to enable a comparison to be drawn between pre bulk and post bulk sampling.
- It was pointed out by J.Hindmarsh that no significant changes to previous data had been noted overall.
- A welcome was extended to public attendees by Chairman. Noted that the last meeting's minutes would be tabled on the Upper Hunter Council website once revised.

2. COMMENCEMENT OF EIS PRELIMINARY WORK.

- Some concern was expressed about Bickham Coal Company proceeding with preliminary EIS work. Bickham Coal Company said that preliminary work had commenced for a number of reasons:-
 1. It was considered a sensible time to start gathering the background data for an EIS as the process required a very long lead time.
 2. Current staff and resources were available on site during the Bulk Sample Process and they could be utilised to carry out surveys and assist with the monitoring which was needed for the preparation of an EIS.
 3. Completion of an EIS would be dependent upon a favourable response from the Bulk Sample coal customers in Japan.
- Bickham Coal Company confirmed that it had commissioned Parsons Brinkerhoff a company with offices in Singleton but based in Sydney to get preliminary EIS work underway.
- Concern was raised about way in which the announcement of preliminary EIS work was handled. It was suggested that the matter should have been discussed at the previous meeting as it had caused some distress within the community.
- It was noted that the Chairperson was informed of the announcement prior to its release to the media. However he did not make any comment on behalf of the committee because it had not been tabled at the last meeting. He also felt that it was important to focus on the matter of the Bulk Sample rather than the EIS.
- An apology was extended by Bickham Coal Company to committee members for the lack of notice of the announcement.
- It was suggested that a process could be implemented to inform the committee about major announcements before a media release was distributed; the Chairman would undertake to circulate a copy to all committee members.
- The Chairman requested that a copy of a flow sheet outlining the steps in the REF process be made available at the next meeting. This will be presented by G.Summerhayes and elaborated on by Bickham Coal Company.

GENERAL BUSINESS MATTERS.

- The question of the first burn of coal was raised by the committee. J.Richards confirmed that this would occur later this year.
- A number of concerns were expressed about the timeframe in which the development of an EIS and subsequent coal mine would occur.
- Bickham Coal Company responded by stating that they are at least 4 months behind schedule with the extraction of the Bulk Sample since being granted approval in January 2004. The company is yet to complete an intersection onto the Highway in accordance with RTA requirements that would allow coal haulage to take place.
- In addition to this, the first seam of coal had not been reached at the time of the meeting.
- The question was raised about how the quality of the coal is determined. Bickham Coal Company stated that the coal had low sulphur and ash levels and was a thermal coal only with no coking properties.

MISCELLANEOUS.

- Contact list to be updated with correct details – to be re-circulated with the next copy of the meeting minutes.
- Noted that Bickham Coal Company had re-instated the chain wire fence around the Flint Clay void.
- The question about fencing the Bulk Sample site was raised however it was pointed out that the site would be difficult to fence at the present time due to the level of activity in that area. The whole perimeter of the bulk sample area is fenced with gates and clearly displays warning signs to the public.
- The issue of alterations to the Operations Plan since the release of the REF was raised. G.Summerhayes said that this process evolves in refinement, design and management detail. J.Richards also said that Bickham Coal Company was currently implementing a far more detailed plan than was outlined in the REF.
- There were a number of concerns expressed about the recent rainfall and possible runoff into the Pages River. The Environmental Officer advised that the system was operating as per the design and that the recent rain fall was a good test of the system.
- Bickham Coal Company confirmed that it would keep the committee posted about water quality issues when and if they arise. Results would be made available for the next committee meeting.
- The Chairman proposed a two-month timeframe for each committee meeting. Agreed to by all present.
- The Chairman confirmed that the next BCCC meeting would be held on Wednesday 22nd September 2004 at 4:15pm at the Upper Hunter Council Chambers. There would also be the opportunity for visitors to attend.

MEETING CONCLUDED AT 6:20PM.