

**METROPOLITAN COAL
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday 15 July 2025
Time: Commenced 3:03pm
Location: Metropolitan Coal Mine Meeting Room, Upper Administration, Helensburgh

Attendees:

- Michael Ulph (MU) - Independent Chairperson
- Stephen Love (SL) - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Kane Organ (KO) - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Patricia Gauci (PG) - CCC Member
- Ron Zwicker (RZ) - Wollongong City Council (WCC)
- Kerrie Belter (KB) - CCC Member
- Keith Hawkins (KH) - CCC Member
- James Hannigan (JH) - Peabody Metropolitan Coal

Apologies:

- Nicolas Tucker (NT) - Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Allan House (AH) - CCC Member
- Peter Turner (PT) - CCC Member
- Vicki Christie (VC) – CCC Member

Welcome and introductions:

- MU welcomed and thanked members for attending and acknowledged the Traditional Owners.

Declarations of interest:

- MU declared his position as Independent Chair for the CCC approved by the Director General of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and engaged by Peabody.

Action items from previous meeting:

- MU provided CCC meeting minutes to members on 18 March 2025, there was no feedback or requests for alterations.

Correspondence:

- Minutes of the previous meeting, and emails to arrange this meeting.

Metropolitan Coal operations update – Stephen Love, Environment & Community Superintendent

A presentation was provided to the CCC regarding:

Mining Update

- Longwall 311 completed June 2025
- In June 2025 DPHI approved the LW312-316 Extraction Plan on the condition that development of an additional Biodiversity TARP be completed prior to approaching Swamp 77
- Longwall 312 is currently on standby for commencement of mining.
- KB asked what species DPHI were focusing on in the LW311-316 Extraction Plan. SL explained that the Giant Dragonfly had been detected in Swamps 77 and 92, however Swamp 92 will not be undermined.

Workforce Enterprise Agreement Update

- Peabody has been in negotiations with the Mining and Energy Union and employee delegates since November 2024, with genuine efforts to work collaboratively and in good faith from both sides (Expired May 2025).
- While progress has been made on several fronts, remuneration and job security remains the key areas of difference.
- On 10 June the mine received notification from MEU of protected industrial action in various forms including restrictions and stoppages.
- As these disruptions pose a threat to safety and being able to provide a controlled work environment, mine management made the decision to lawfully respond to action in the form of lockouts.
- Peabody have made a revised offer to the workforce which addresses most outstanding concerns, it is hoped the offer can be put to a vote this week.

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- The need to consider the surrounding community (parking, noise etc) has been reinforced to union members.
- JH gave an update on Metropolitan Enterprise Agreement (EA) negotiations with the underground workforce. During negotiations the workforce has undertaken Protected Industrial Action (PIA) and Peabody in turn has enforced lockouts, both of which are legal actions under Australian labour law. JH apologised for any disruption to the community due to the picket line at the mine entrance such as parking issues.
- KB queried if there were more contractors onsite and how this compared to the permanent workforce. JH explained that permanent workers to contractors was approximately 60/40 depending on production levels and coal price cycles, but that total numbers of both have grown due to higher production rate of the mine.
- KB asked how long the EA lasts, JH indicated that EAs generally last 3 years.

2024 Annual Review

- The 2024 Annual Review was approved by DPHI in June 2025
- The main text has been published on the Metropolitan website, download link to the appendices will be arranged for CCC members
- No new non-compliances identified during 2024
- Swamp 20 continues to show no adverse impacts to the vegetation community since changes to groundwater behaviour were first identified in 2012
- Metropolitan continues to make upgrades and improvements to site infrastructure and equipment to reduce noise levels as opportunities arise.

Noise Monitoring Results

- Site infrastructure is upgraded where feasible, but with some exceedances from time to time
- Lower levels in 2020-21 were due to covid, and in the longer term, general noise levels (and exceedances) have reduced.
- KB asked if the train alarm noise had been attended to. SL confirmed that one of the rail crossing alarms had been replaced without consideration of its volume. Site took the opportunity to review all crossing alarms along the rail corridor, with others also reduced to lowest safe level. Metropolitan continues to undertake attended and real-time noise monitoring programs onsite.
- MU asked how many of the noise measurements were undertaken per annum.

- SL answered that for the attended measurements, 8 per annum.

Modification Longwalls 317-318

In June Metropolitan submitted its Longwalls 317-18 Modification Report to DPHI.

In summary the modification includes:

- Extension of the approved Longwall 317 to the north and addition of Longwall 318
- Extension of the approved 300-series mains to the west
- Extraction of an additional 3.2 million tonnes (Mt) of 'Run of Mine' (ROM) coal
- Relinquishment of 14Mt of approved ROM coal
- Relocation of the approved (but not yet constructed) Ventilation Shaft 4
- An access track within the approved surface facilities area to reinstate rock-armouring along a section of the embankment toe near Camp Gully Creek
- Continued employment of existing 400-strong Metropolitan workforce for a further two years
- Importantly, no change to mining intensity at surface facilities area
- KB asked about mine subsidence
- SL explained that the longwalls were narrow enough and deep enough that connective cracking didn't occur to the surface
- RZ asked what the longwall widths were
- JH answered they have had 130m but currently 150 metres.

Camp Creek Monitoring Results

See presentation slide 8.

- Helensburgh Creek has higher EC and Camp Creek lower, where they join, the EC increases at Camp Creek
- MU asked what electrical conductivity (EC) measured. SL explained that EC was a measure of all dissolved substances in that water, including salts such as sodium, calcium and potassium as well as metals such as iron, aluminium and manganese. A higher EC indicates higher dissolved substance content. These elements are naturally occurring and necessary for a healthy river system.

EPA Prosecution

- In March 2025 the NSW Land and Environment Court handed down its sentence for the water pollution offences Metropolitan had pled guilty to in November 2024, with fines totalling \$501,366.
- \$150,000 will go towards environmental management initiatives in the Royal National Park and \$304,806 to cover EPA's legal costs.
- MU asked for clarification on the Land and Environment Court (LEC) matter. SL explained that the charges pertained to two discharges from the site's Turkey's Nest dam as a result of failure to maintain sediment levels in the dams, to which Peabody had pled guilty. SL understands that the value of LEC fines are calculated using guidance formula based on a number of inputs such as mitigating circumstances, actual and potential environmental harm, remorse of the offender etc.

Platypus Conservation Initiative Funding

- Metropolitan recently announced funding to support the Platypus Conservation Initiative's current project (with University of NSW) to reintroduce the platypus to the Royal National Park
- Initial release of 10 individuals in 2023 has exceeded expectations with breeding confirmed in 2024
- The 3-year, \$630,000 grant will support the addition of 10 more platypuses to the RNP to improve genetic diversity of the population, as well as supporting research and monitoring
- Two more females and another male have recently been released
- Monitoring will continue to look for offspring (puggles) and check the health of the group
- MU asked where they come from
- SL advised they come from around the state, this time from Tidbinbilla near Canberra, Bargo and elsewhere. They are only taken from stable and genetically diverse large populations
- The three new platypuses are doing well
- MU asked about predators
- SL advised that not historically, but introduced foxes are a predator. There is a focus on suppressing pest species in Royal National Park, including deer, fox etc.

General business:

- KH thanked SL and JD for attending a Probus meeting and giving 70+ members a presentation regarding Metropolitan. JD provided a good overview of future mine plans

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including the LW317-318 Modification and recent exploration activities. SL thanked KH for the opportunity to speak to the broader community.

- KH raised that an opinion piece had been written in the Illawarra Flame magazine on the recent prosecution of Metropolitan in the LEC. This highlighted the varied views and reaction to fines imposed on Metropolitan. SL summarized the article for the CCC but highlighted a couple of misleading aspects:
 - the discharges in question occurred in 2022; platypuses were not reintroduced to the Royal National Park until 2023
 - the author selectively quoted the low rainfall total in September 2022, ignoring the ~2500mm of rainfall onsite earlier in 2022 which led to significant sediment accumulation in the site dams and was the underlying cause for the discharges, as documented by the prosecution brief.
- SL confirmed that he would discuss with MU an invitation to Gilad Bino – head of the Platypus Conservation Initiative – to present at the next CCC meeting in November.

Meeting closed: 4:02pm

Proposed next meeting: 18 November 2025