

## RIXS CREEK MINE COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

**MEETING:** 22/05/2024

**PRESENT:** Chair - Lisa Andrews

Community Representatives – Sue George (SG), Reg Eveleigh (RE), Deidre Olofsson (DO)\*via Zoom, Patricia Bestic (PB),

Company Representatives – Chris Knight (CK), Damien Butler (DB - minutes), Chris Quinn (CQ), Geoff Moore (GM), Brendon Clements (BC), Julius Harris-Payne (JP)

**APOLOGIES:** Michelle Higgins (MH),

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- **Welcome**

- The meeting was held on-site at Rix's Creek South.
- The Chair formally opened the meeting at 9:01 and welcomed attendees.
- JP, an Environmental Graduate at Rix's Creek Mine, was welcomed to the CCC.
- DO joined at 9:03 via Zoom, and the Chair provided an overview of attendees.
- The Chair provided an Acknowledgment of Country.

- **Apologies**

- Apologies - MH.

- **Declaration of Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

- The Chair covered the required declarations. There were no changes to the declarations. The Chair noted the revised CCC guidelines and advised that the draft Terms of Reference had been prepared for ratification. The Chair also advised that members have new governance forms to sign.

- **Business Arising from Previous Minutes (responses to issues raised or provision of information)**

- The Chair noted the timing of the previous CCC, the actions that arose, and the status of those actions. The last meeting was held on 18 October 2023, and the minutes were finalised on 2 November 2023.
- There were six actions from the previous meeting. The first action was to provide a copy of the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue presentation, which was complete. Action items two through six would be covered in the meeting's presentation:

2	Provide presentation at next CCC on water trading
3	Investigate recycling workwear for use as rags.
4	Provide information on biodiversity offset areas at the next CCC.
5	Provide a presentation on land ownership, including farming operations, at the next CCC.
6	Provide presentation on Rehabilitation Reforms, including areas signed off by the Regulator (Carried over from October 2023)

- **Correspondence (as sent out with the meeting notice on 7/5/24 with one additional item:**
  - 24/10/23 - Email to members with the draft minutes
  - 2/11/23 – Email to members with finalised minutes, presentation, historic workings map & UHMD slides.
  - 8/10/23 – Email from IEA consultant advising of upcoming audit and requesting feedback from CCC members. Emailed to members on 10/10/23 with information from IEA requesting feedback by 16/11/23.
  - 14/11/23 - Email from MH seeking documentation to assist with providing feedback. Forwarded to IEA consultant for response.
  - 15/11/23 – Email to MH with information provided by auditor.
  - 16/11/23 – Email from MH seeking clarification regarding audit criteria/compliance. Forwarded to consultant, who provided a response the same day.
  - 17/11/23 – Email from CK with the Rix's Creek North Continuation Project Newsletter #2. Forwarded on to members that day.
  - 19/2/24 – Email to members with invitation to participate in the SIA for the continuation project. (Newsletter included.)
  - 15/3/24 – Email to resident with nomination form to apply to join the CCC.
  - 27/3/24 – Email to potential CCC nominee with a follow-up.
  - 7/5/24 – Email to members with the meeting notice, agenda and correspondence report for this meeting.
  - 7/5/24 – Letter to RE with meeting notice & agenda.
  - 10/5/24 – Email to potential CCC community rep, inviting to attend as an observer.
  - 16/5/24 – Email from CK with the video-link for this meeting.
  - 21/5/24 – [Email to members with the link for today's meeting.](#)
- **Proponents Reports and Overview of Activities:**

**Progress of the project:**

- CQ provided an overview of the project's progress, noting that Stage three clearing was underway at the western out of pit dump.

**Environmental Monitoring and Performance:**

- CQ advised of the environment monitoring locations and noted no changes to them since the previous meeting.
- CQ covered the YEM24 Meteorological Data, noting the dry periods.
- CQ covered the operational noise update. He advised that there were zero externally reportable noise-related incidents in YEM24. CQ noted that the sound power level testing on fleet equipment was conducted. CQ advised that Rix's Creek Mine received five noise complaints during the reporting period. PB enquired whether these were all from an individual, and CQ advised that these were from various complainants.
- PB asked if an inversion was involved in the noise complaints. CQ confirmed they were for night time noise. PB asked if the noise complaints were related to blasting. CQ noted that any noise complaints in regard to blasting would be logged as a blast complaint and not specifically noise. BC talked through the predictive modelling that occurs for inversions.
- CQ provided an overview of blasting for the period. Two complaints were received in relation to blasting at Rix's Creek Mine. One exceedance occurred due to blasting during the reporting period. On 12 September, a blast was released in West Pit operations, resulting in an air blast overpressure result of 124.9dB at the Wrights monitor, southwest of the operation. No other monitors recorded elevated levels and there were no complaints associated with this exceedance. CQ gave an overview of the fume ratings.

- CQ provided an overview of air quality monitoring. Seven complaints were received regarding air quality during the period.
- CQ covered waste management. He compared the year-on-year results.
- Surface water was covered. There were no reportable incidents, and one complaint was received.
- EPL water surface locations were covered by CQ.
- CQ noted that rainfall levels in the reporting period were below average. Electrical conductivity and salinity results were covered. CQ advised that these had increased due to dry conditions and stagnant waters.
- Total rehabilitation figures were covered. CQ noted the challenges of the wet. He noted that the Annual Rehabilitation Report and Forward program were due on 30 May 2024. PB noted the mine's early adoption of biosolids and that there had been media reporting about small amounts of plastic in biosolids. CQ advised that detailed analysis and testing were undertaken and that strict protocols were followed before the material is allowed to be delivered to site.
- Weed management was covered. PB asked if the business is getting on top of green cestrum and CQ described the ongoing challenges. PB asked if the mine had a tiger pear problem. CQ said it is limited and addressed quickly. CQ described dog baiting and new pig baiting but advised that more pigs have been spotted. SG asked if the mine has people coming on-site to shoot pigs to sell. CQ said no. CK noted that pigs have only become an issue recently. SG said other operations have problems with people coming on-site to shoot. PB noted that the site only had one main entrance, and CK described various access points.

#### **Community Complaints and Response to these Complaints:**

- 18 complaints were received in the reporting period. The complaints and responses to each were covered. On complaint two, CQ noted the rotation of spigot lines on RCN tailing dam to reduce dust. PB noted the dust from the earthworks being done on site near Singleton Toyota and if our dust gauges are impacted. CQ said upstream sources are challenging, but downstream sources are easily distinguished. BC noted the design of tailings dams and the limited ability to store water. He said efforts are made to keep it damp, but it can't be covered entirely in water. CK noted the installation of evaporation fans. Complaint six was discussed, and it was noted that no further action from EPA was required. PB asked about the kind of noise people complain about. CQ described the types. PB asked if our machines beep and CQ said the horns were silent. On complaint 12, CQ noted positive one-on-one engagement with the neighbour. The Chair asked if CQ had explained the CCC's opportunities, and CQ confirmed that he had done so but the individual had declined to be involved in the CCC.
- PB asked if we receive extra complaints because we are close to homes or if it is new people. CQ noted the example of complaint 12 who was new to the area.

#### **Information provided to community and Feedback**

- Community support initiatives were covered. SG said the women's wellness event was very good. PB asked about the trailer, and it was confirmed it would have a pod and pump set up on the trailer as a first response for fires.
- DO asked to go back to complaints, noting she had made a complaint on 15 December 2023 but never received a response. DO said she believed this was unusual. Action was taken to review this.

#### **General Business**

##### **RCN Continuation Project update**

- CK gave an update on the Rix's Creek North Continuation Project, including the Social Impact Assessment (SIA). He noted James Bailey Consulting had been

conducting the work. CK outlined the stakeholder engagement DB had been leading. CK noted the Registered Aboriginal Parties meeting. CK noted the archaeological survey had been undertaken and that the assessment report is being completed. CK gave an overview of the next steps.

- CK advised that the business is still in the assessment phase and undertaking studies in line with the SEARs. DO asked how long SIA takes, and CK explained the EIS process. DO says she has questions about the SIA and stated that she does not like the questions in the survey and would like to talk to CK. DO says she believed that the questions were too 'Pro'. DB noted interviews were available. CK suggested emailing all of DOs concerns through. SG advised that she did an interview at the James Bailey offices that went for 1.5 hours, and it included a lot more information and discussion.

#### RCN Mod 10 Update

- CK provided an update on Modification 10. CK gave an overview of the CHPP conceptual layout. He noted the project included installing Solid Bowl Centrifuges (SBC) and noted that there was no extra disturbance associated with Mod 10. DO ask if the paste produced (from SBC's) can go to a landfill and if it has chemicals. CK said its flocculants are no different from those used in agriculture. BC said it's very fine soil and explained the process. He explained it goes back into the pit instead of into tailings dams. CK said the technology removes the need for tailings dams. DO asked if the tailings dam could go back through the SBC, and CK confirmed it could not. DO asked if we crush tyres before they go into the hole. CK explained the strict requirements for disposal of earthmoving tyres. He said if they are shredded and crushed, it expands their surface area. DO asked for information on tyre requirements to be provided to the CCC. BC explained the governance and recording measures. DO asked if the CAT793 trucks are electric. BC said they are diesel, but the business is looking at various options, including future battery-powered trucks. CK gave an overview of ROM pad extensions over the already disturbed land. DO asked if the stacker reclaimer will be decommissioned. It was confirmed it has been decommissioned and that the increase in recycled metal was from this source. BC said a new tailings dam would have much more emissions than a Solid Bowl Centrifuge with construction and capping considerations. DO asked if the South wash plant was not used. BC noted once Integra shuts, the mine is looking to move to the North plant. SG said Integra is expected to close by the end of the year. BC said the business would then move to decommission the South plant and move to the North. DO asked if the crushers are noisy and how they will be insulated. CK explained the sound attenuation process. BC explained the net benefits of using less energy in the process.

#### Uniform Recycling

- Uniform Recycling was covered. CK explained the proposed process and rag reuse for some types of uniforms and noted that high-vis shirts can't be recycled locally. He said that they could be shipped to India, but flagged potential modern slavery issues. MH was thanked for raising the initiative.

#### Biodiversity Offsets

- CK provided a presentation on Biodiversity Offsets. He explained the background and gave an overview of the offset requirements for Rix's Creek North. CK noted the offset areas surrounding RCN Mine as well as an area transferred to NPWS in 2019 and no further offset areas required for RCN. PB asked if there were management costs once the land was transferred to a national park, and CK said there were not. PB asked about other smaller areas being returned to National Parks. CK noted that at the end of mining, someone could purchase them and build a house, but they would have the environmental commitment. PB said there were challenges with

selling those properties. CK advised that all required Rix's Creek South SSD 6300 credits were retired in 2024. He also noted the purchase of credits through the market and through the Biodiversity Conservation Fund. CK advised that RCS had no further offset requirements. CK went through the current biodiversity stewardship sites. He gave a detailed overview of Berewin. PB asked about checking and inspection of the area. CK said there were three monthly inspections, dog baiting, pig management, weed management, and an annual audit process. CK also gave an overview of Pinkerton. PB asked about Pinkerton's background, and CK said it was a grazing property. DO asked for a copy of the biodiversity presentation, and CK noted that sections were commercially sensitive. PB said you could use drones over the offsets. CK said they had examined them for weed spraying.

#### Land Ownership and farming operations

- CK covered land ownership and farming operations around Rix's Creek Mine. CK went over a land ownership map, including old Cheetam properties. PB asked if the business was grazing and cropping, and CK confirmed this was the case. CK advised that some agistment areas have been reclaimed and that there has been an increase in the number of employees managing the properties. He said all rural goods and services were procured locally. PB asked if we were selling hay. GM said that some of it is used internally, but also selling through an agent.

#### Rehabilitation Reforms

- CK provided a presentation on the regulatory system of rehabilitation. The Chair asked if it's signed off and if we get credit. CK said the security deposit could come down based on the work completed. CK went through the detailed requirements. PB asked if we are part of the Hunter-wildlife plan like other sites. CK said we aren't, but there are wildlife corridors. CK noted that the rehabilitation objectives were submitted and that the business is awaiting approval to then submit completion criteria. The Chair asked about modelling being conducted. CK said he wasn't aware of that happening. CK described the process being undertaken at Bloomfield Mine. CK noted an area at Bloomfield which had previously been relinquished. He said section 240 would still apply. DO asked if it had been certified, and CK said it had been under the old process. DO noted the 2023 guidelines, pointed out that the final void was in the criteria, and said it would be 5-15 years before anything could be signed off. CK noted the age of the Bloomfield site. DO noted the guidelines were extensive. DO asked to send out the Rehabilitation Objectives and Completion Criteria guidelines to the CCC. DO asked about the timeframe in which the government could come back (under section 240). CK said the government could come back whenever they like. DO asked what happens if a company folds. CK said that would be a question for the Resources Regulator. DO said she would write to them. CK said the focus is on ensuring the residual risk was returned to a very low level where the Regulator is satisfied. CK noted the proposed void changes as part of the Rix's Creek North Continuation with no highwalls in the final landform.

#### Water Licencing

- CK provided a presentation on Water Licencing. Describing that Rix's Creek Mine does not actively take any water from Glennies Creek or the Hunter River for mining purposes. CK noted that the agricultural licenses have the same entitlements as any other farm. PB asked if the business buys, sells, or leases with water trading. GM said it has previously sold temporary allocation. DO asked what industrial water covers. CK noted these licenses came with the purchase of RCN. CK said those licenses aren't used. DO asked what happens to high security water when the mine closes and whether it goes back to the pool.
- DO said it was a great presentation and thanked CK and CQ, as did SG.

## Next Meeting

- The meeting schedule was confirmed. The next meeting will occur on Wednesday, 23 October 2024, at 9am.
- The meeting was declared closed at 11:00am.

## Action items

Item	Action	Responsibility
1	Review complaint made by DO	CQ
2	Provide information on tyre requirements to CCC	CK
3	Distribute Rehabilitation Objectives and Completion Criteria guidelines to the CCC.	CK