

# Application for EPA Development Licence Exemption – Surface Water Discharge fact sheet

## Introduction

EnergyAustralia Yallourn's existing EPA Operating Licence (OL000010961) allows for surface water discharges from the Yallourn Mine to the Morwell River providing strict water quality conditions are met. During normal weather conditions EnergyAustralia (EA) is able to meet these limits, however, during Morwell River flood events, excess water needs to be diverted to the mine and surface water discharges to Morwell River through the current licensed discharged point are required to be ceased.

In response to the June 2021 flood event, EnergyAustralia installed a series of flood diversion systems which allow for better control of water flow through the Morwell River Diversion (MRD) and achieve better stability for the Yallourn Mine. The siphon and spillway components of this system direct flood water from the Morwell River to the Yallourn Fire Service Pond, located in the Yallourn Mine, where it is temporarily stored before needing to be returned to the Latrobe River system.

EnergyAustralia is seeking EPA approval to include provisions for a Latrobe River emergency discharge point into Yallourn's Environment Protection Operating Licence. This is important to safeguard the Mine, the Morwell River Diversion and the river environment in the event of any future rare flood events.

## Permissions Pathway

EnergyAustralia made enquiries with EPA for licensing the Latrobe River emergency discharge point to determine the appropriate permissions pathway.

The EPA advised EnergyAustralia to apply for a development licence exemption.

## Benefits

The proposed discharge point is an important control for EnergyAustralia Yallourn's risk management of future regional flood events.

This additional discharge point will be beneficial in ensuring that:

- the risk of the Morwell River Diversion being compromised is reduced
- water removed from the river system is returned
- the mine assets are protected from possible flood inundation safety risks
- any potential risk to the National Electricity Market (NEM) is avoided.

Previous emergency discharges have been found by independent Environmental Risk Specialists to be a temporary and low risk to the receiving river environment.



Figure 1: Aerial photo of Spillway and Siphon Location which feed water from the Morwell River to the Mine

## Proposed Changes to Operating Licence

EnergyAustralia are seeking an EPA Development Licence Exemption for an additional discharge to the Latrobe River. This discharge point will be required only in the event flood waters from the Morwell River are diverted into the Yallourn Mine. EnergyAustralia will be working with the EPA to derive appropriate licence conditions for this discharge point and will further engage stakeholders on the outcome.

EnergyAustralia proposed licence conditions include:

- the same limits for pH and Electrical Conductivity as outlined in our existing discharge to water table
- limits on Turbidity and daily discharge volumes to be assessed during the licence amendment process
- an extensive water quality sampling and testing program to be conducted by an independent NATA authorised laboratory including three times per week during flood discharge operations covering a broad range of water quality parameters
- water quality to be tested upstream, downstream, and at the discharge source
- public reporting will be made available on the EnergyAustralia Yallourn website detailing the flood event and compliance with EPA conditions.

## Contact details

Should you require any further information on this matter, please contact us on **1800 574 947** OR email us on **[community.yallourn@energyaustralia.com.au](mailto:community.yallourn@energyaustralia.com.au)**



Figure 2: Fire Service Pump Infrastructure to Remove Water From the Mine to the Latrobe River

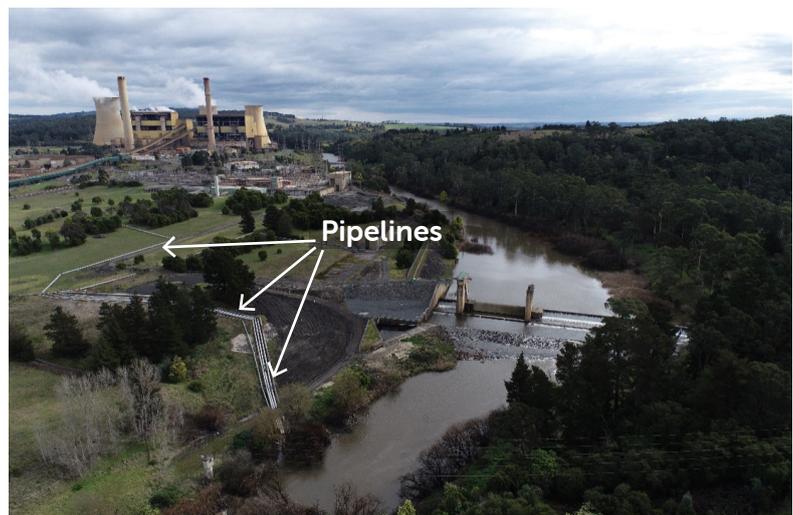


Figure 3: Discharge Pipelines from Mine to Latrobe River