

# Meeting Minutes

## EnergyAustralia Lithgow CCC



**Date** 02 October 2018

**Chair** Brendan Blakeley

**Time** 5:00pm – 7:00pm

**Attendees** Jamie Giokaris, CCC member  
Robert Cluff, CCC member  
James (Jim) Whitty, CCC member  
Alex Preema, CCC member  
Aunty Helen Riley, CCC member  
Clr Joe Smith, Lithgow Council Representative  
Lauren Stevens, Lithgow Council  
Ben Eastwood, EnergyAustralia  
Peter Gray, EnergyAustralia  
Mick Hanly, EnergyAustralia  
Michelle Blackley, EnergyAustralia  
Dale Hogarth, EnergyAustralia

**Recorder** Alexandra Krautil, Elton Consulting

**Apologies** Clr Ray Thompson, Lithgow Council CCC Representative

Julie Favell, CCC member

Jill Cusack, CCC member

Item	Discussion Point
1.	<b>Welcome and Introductions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» The meeting commenced at 5:15pm.</li><li>» Aunty Helen Riley opened the meeting with a welcome to country.</li><li>» Brendan Blakeley the Chair welcomed attendees and noted apologies.</li></ul>
2.	<b>Review of notes from Meeting One</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Brendan called for comments on previous notes.</li><li>» The notes were accepted as an accurate reflection of the previous meeting and will be placed on the EnergyAustralia Lithgow website.</li></ul>
3.	<b>Site Update from EnergyAustralia</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Dale Hogarth provided a general update on the station covering a range of issues. He explained he was presently acting in the station manager role and would be assisted by other members of the EnergyAustralia team when necessary.</li></ul> <p><u>Answers to questions arising from meeting of 31/7/18 &amp; Previous CRG meetings</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>» Ben Eastwood provided answers to questions arising from the previous CCC meetings.</li><li>» Q: Provide a species list of plants to be used on Ash Repository Rehabilitation (March 2018 meeting)<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ben explained the closure and rehabilitation plan for the ash repository is still being developed and within this EnergyAustralia is determining the preferred species. The current preference is for deeper rooted species that can thrive in a rehabilitated environment.</li><li>&gt; Ben explained when the plan is finalised, it will be put out for public comment and will need to receive approval from Government regulators.</li></ul></li></ul> <p><i>A CCC member commented that EnergyAustralia should only use species relevant to that area.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>&gt; Ben agreed, noting that it is EnergyAustralia's plan to use species that are endemic to the</li></ul>

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area.

- » Q: Provide information regarding the quality of water in the Kerosene Vale Ash Repository
  - > Ben noted that the Sawyer's Swamp Ash Dam (SSCAD) and Kerosene Vale Ash Repository (KVAR) are both operated as zero discharge sites, and that the Springvale Mine discharge point is the key source of water for the Sawyers Swamp Creek catchment.
  - > Ben explained if water levels in the SSCAD need to be reduced, the water is released but first transferred back to the Wallerawang Power station to correct the PH before being discharged into Cox's River.
  - > Ben highlighted the primary reason for such a release to occur is flood control, but noted there is very low frequency of these occurring, with only one minor release of water occurring in 2017, and no releases as of yet in 2018.
  - > Ben also noted EnergyAustralia is in discussion with regulators to determine how to de-water Swamp Creek. This is a challenge due to the large amount of water, approximately 1500 ML, that needs to be treated. He explained this is in the works, but is one of the key challenges happening as part of the closure of the site.
- » Q: Could Oberon Dam reach a level that prevented it from being used as a source of water?
  - > Ben noted he assumes the question refers to using Oberon Dam as a source of water for Mt Piper.
  - > Ben explained it is possible this could occur, as when affected by drought and the dam capacity reaches below 50%, access to water is restricted based on the capacity – as it decreases, so does license allocation.
  - > Ben continued saying Oberon Dam would need to reach a capacity of 8% or below for Mt Piper to have zero allocation. Peter noted traditionally the station stopped taking water at 10%, and that despite currently being in drought trigger, it is unlikely to impact the station going forward as the new water treatment plant will mitigate any capacity changes.
  - > Ben confirmed that the water treatment plant will reduce reliance on the dam in the future, also noting that the dam is no longer servicing two plants.
- » **ACTION:** Elton to upload these answers into the question tracker.

#### Site Safety

- » Dale displayed the safety performance statistics for the month of August and year to date, the specifics of which are available on p. 10 of the attached presentation.
- » Dale noted the station just completed a 4-week outage of unit 1, with significant itinerate labour on site, so the low injury and treatment numbers indicate a successful safety performance.
- » Michelle added that the 1 lost time injury was a broken ankle from walking on uneven coal, and Dale confirmed that the employee is now back at work but in restrictive duties.

#### Update – Water Management

- » Dale noted specific capacity numbers are available on p. 12 of the attached presentation. He highlighted although levels are dropping in some areas, with Oberon Dam decreasing to 53.87%, the majority are at a sustainable level, with total active storage at 85.3% and Lake Wallace still overflowing.
- » He explained these levels are relatively high, and that the area is not yet seeing adverse effects from drought.

*A CCC member asked about the algae alerts noted in the presentation and if algae was prevalent?*

- » Ben replied they are green alerts which is the first level and merely notifies that there is some algae present and that the situation needs to be monitored. He confirmed there is currently no issue with algae in any of the dams and levels are steady from the last time they were reported.

#### Dam Update

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- » Thompson's Creek Dam
    - > Ben noted there is work coming up on the dam in January next year to manage the erosion on the eastern foreshore caused by wave action during high winds. This will involve transporting a large amount of rock, meaning there will be increased trucks making trips to the foreshore.
    - > Ben explained community consultation will occur in relation to this, and that the current expectation of works will be approximately 15 loads of rock per day over a 9 to 10-week period travelling on Willowdale Way. This will occur on traditional work days only from 7am to 5pm.
    - > Ben reiterated when the work program is finalised the community will be informed, at the moment he expects works are likely to begin on January 22.

*A CCC member raised his concern about ensuring access to water for fishermen during and after these works. He noted the dam was a very popular and nationally renowned place for trout fishing.*

- » **ACTION:** Michelle to confirm impact of works on access to water and provide response.  
*A CCC member noted if the rocks are too big they could cause problems for anglers, and wanted to confirm what size they will be.*
- » **ACTION:** Michelle to get clarification on the rocks expected size and provide response.  
*A CCC member asked whether the rock will be locally sourced, and if not where it will be coming from?*
  - > Michelle responded she has raised this question but has not yet received an answer, she thinks they will not be from the local quarry but waiting for confirmation.
- » **ACTION:** Michelle to get clarification on source of the rocks and provide response.  
*A CCC member asked for information relating to the process of stabilising the eastern creek bed.*
- » **ACTION:** Michelle to get clarification on this and provide response.

#### Market Update

- » Dale noted the market has moved a bit over the last period and that there has been penetration with renewables having some impacts.
- » He also highlighted with energy policy in the future currently unclear there is only so much that can be done, currently prices are healthy and EnergyAustralia are operating with whatever they have available.
- » The 12-month Rolling Average Demand graph can be viewed on p. 16 of the attached presentation.

#### Operations (Site) Update

- » Mt Piper Operations
    - > Dale highlighted as previously mentioned Unit 1 has been on outage for a period, and this was extended slightly to allow additional works. EnergyAustralia has been overcoming these quality issues over the last couple of days, and subject to these the Unit should be back in operation tomorrow.
    - > Dale noted Unit 2 has been operating well during this time. Ben agreed and highlighted its operation has been quite exceptional in the entire period of the outage.
    - > Dale explained despite some previous issues, fuel handling and safety have been well managed since the Springfield Mine became operational after the longwall move.
    - > Dale also noted some planning is underway for future works on upgrades to ensure the flexibility of units in the fleet is maintained. These will optimise the value of the asset.
- A CCC member asked where the longwall has moved to?*
- > Ben responded it has moved to the next panel, back towards the entrance to the mine.
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*A CCC member asked if the Government offered a policy with low-emission coal, would EnergyAustralia be interested?*

- > Ben answered the current issue with low-emission coal is the lack of security in investing – if there is no guarantee on investment they will not be interested. However, if government policy changed, EnergyAustralia would review generation options. Anything that delivers certainty in energy policy would be positive.
- » Pinedale Mine Update
  - > Ben noted Yarraboldy is currently still in care and maintenance, and is undergoing assessments in regards to mining and future activities with the asset. He explained there is still uncertainty surrounding it's future and EnergyAustralia is looking at different options – there is nothing in immediate planning.
  - > Ben also highlighted there has been progress since the last meeting with results being received from the firm looking after rehabilitating the area. After setting criteria to meet for various components and monitoring these over the last 5 years, the soil has achieved benchmark levels. Although naturally deficient in some elements, by applying manure, fertilisers etc. these targets for rehabilitation have been achieved.
  - > Ben mentioned there is a move to relinquish some of the rehabilitation areas, and EnergyAustralia is meeting with the resource regulators to begin exploring options for retiring some of these areas.
  - > Ben also noted they are looking to extend the term of Exploration Lease 7621.

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#### 4. **Project updates from EnergyAustralia – existing and planned**

##### Wallerawang DDR – General Update

- » Wallerawang Re-Purposing
  - > Ben noted there has been much discussion surrounding options for the re-purposing, and that the work in determining the best route forward will take time and is commercial in confidence.
  - > Michelle confirmed staff who had been working on salvaging the power station equipment had been released from the site and moved back to Mt Piper due to health risks.
  - > Michelle highlighted there is some concern surrounding lead contamination in the dust, but that there are ongoing contamination checks and ongoing monitoring happening at all times. Some of the materials and tools have now been decontaminated and moved to Mt Piper.
  - > Michelle noted that she understands EnergyAustralia is not continuing with the full salvaging, and instead moving to destruction of the site. This will not include all buildings, and she expects the outside buildings are likely to stay. There are ongoing DA's and other applications needed prior to any further destruction.
  - > These applications will go through public comment and receive community input, and some could be expected to go on display early in the new year.
  - > Michelle confirmed the whole site is not contaminated, only certain sections. The contamination is building specific and involves small deposits of pulverised coal dust and is not distributed broadly across the site. It is therefore not a land environmental contamination issue, but is internalised within a few buildings.

*A CCC member asked how many years it has been since the site was decommissioned?*

- > Michelle responded the site ceased operation in February 2014. It is understood the contamination accumulated in certain spots due to wind and trace elements have been detected. This is similar for the lead, which has been detected but is under assessment as to whether it is a problem.
- > She explained people who have been tested are not above guidelines but EnergyAustralia is taking a precautionary approach.

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*A CCC member asked to clarify whether all permanent staff have been removed, or if it was only staff actively working on contaminated parts of the site?*

> Michelle answered there are very few people left on the site. There is probably only a few people left with the salvage operation, who are working away from the contamination area.

*A CCC member asked if there have been community updates on these issues?*

> Peter responded that there have not been broad community updates. EnergyAustralia is currently liaising with unions and if any issues that may impact the broader public becomes known, they would immediately communicate it.

*A CCC member noted he hopes something productive comes from the site in relation to the generation of work in the area. With the length of time elapsed since decommissioning, many people ask him what is happening at the site, and many view it as an asset that they want to see utilised. He noted some community members are beginning to become concerned with a lack of progress on future reuse of the site.*

> Ben agreed that the site has potential to be productive and provide jobs for community members. He stated he understands the irritability, and hopes EnergyAustralia will soon be in position to outline some possible future uses for Wallerawang.

» Wallerawang DDR

> Ben noted asbestos within buildings and plant is an ongoing issue to be dealt with through appropriate planning and regulatory procedures.

> He explained power systems need to be disconnected and supplied to the correct areas, and that these alternative power systems have been designed.

> Ben mentioned security at the site is important and upgrades are planned. This is mostly a public safety issue, as people do not understand the risks they can be exposed to by entering the site.

*Clr Joe Smith asked what the plan for community facilities nearby is, particularly the sports hall?*

> Ben responded EnergyAustralia is aware of community interest in the sports hall, and they are looking into options and determining the future of the hall. He noted it is part of the power station site and NSW Treasury have interest in it, so the process is somewhat complicated.

*Clr Joe Smith noted people would like the sports hall to be donated to the community and named after Trevor Purcivell, a well-liked and respected worker from the power station.*

> Michelle answered this is along the lines of what EnergyAustralia is hoping to do with the hall, but at this time they are unable to make any firm statements about the hall's future commitment.

Wallerawang DDR – Ash Dams Area Rehabilitation

» Importation of Capping Material to SSCAD & KVAR

> Ben noted they have received approval for modification to the KVAR project, and it now incorporates SSCAD meaning the whole site is covered under one planning approval. This also means the Department of Planning is now the primary consent unit for the whole ash dam, with Council remaining a key stakeholder but not the consent authority.

> He highlighted the 2-year project of importing capping material has not yet commenced. The restrictions state there will be a limit of 100 trucks per day, and they are limited to using the Great Western Highway and Castlereagh Highway to reach the site. They are not able to use local roads in the Lithgow LGA.

> Prior to commencing, EnergyAustralia need to update the management plan for the site. This process is underway and will need the regular government review and approval.

> Ben also noted they are preparing a traffic management plan, in consultation with RMS and Council. This will hopefully be sent through this week.

*Clr Joe Smith noted the route using only highways is logical.*

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- > Michelle agreed, stating the plan tried to stay on highways and power station land due to concern from Council about local road use. The portion of roads off the highways is owned solely by EnergyAustralia, and they have completed the requirement to change the intersection to turn off the highway.
  - > Ben explained subject to the updates of plans being completed, EnergyAustralia has approval for the project. The anticipated start date is by late October, pending plan approvals. He stated he definitely expects works to have commenced by the end of the year.

*A CCC member raised concerns about the 100 trucks per day needing to right-turn across the highway, and the impact on local traffic – he asked if there is a plan to handle this?*

- > Ben confirmed RMS have looked into this and the turn is designed as a heavy vehicle turning point. The project team have also requested additional signage on the 100m before the turn.

*A CCC member asked how many hours the 100 trucks will be spaced over?*

- > Michelle confirmed controls will be implemented to manage this timing. There will be limitations on how the trucks are loaded, some at night and some in the morning, with leaving times being managed on a daily basis.
- > She also highlighted the trucks are not allowed to move 24/7, they only have approval up to 10pm.

*A CCC member highlighted the project is a win-win.*

- > EnergyAustralia agreed, as the ash repository will give access to material free-of-charge and access is very useful both for them and the local community.

#### » Wallerawang Ash Repositories – Closure & Rehabilitation

- > Ben explained they are at the stage of developing a plan for the closure and rehabilitation. This is being drafted in discussion with the EPA and NSW Department of Planning.
- > It is likely the plan will not include the de-watering of SSCAD due to the challenges involved. To achieve better water quality and their aims for this site, there will need to be a whole separate engineering piece of work around this. Overall, the material cost and time delays of executing the de-watering means it will be better as a separate project.

*A CCC member asked if once the dam has been de-watered it will then be de-classified?*

- > Ben confirmed that the main criteria for a de-classified dam is that it needs to no longer hold water. Once this is achieved the Dam Safety Committee will administer the de-classification.

*A CCC member asked about the time-frames for the next steps and stakeholder consultation, particularly if the project is now likely to be in two parts?*

- > Ben highlighted there is a range of steps that need to be undertaken. The next step is the water management assessments which do not need additional planning approvals and the draft is under review. Details are expected on this before the end of the year.
- > In addition, he noted the timeframe for the de-watering of the dam as a separate project is unknown at this stage.

#### » Ash Area: Environmental Site Management

- > Ben explained an Environmental Impact Statement for asbestos disposal is being finalised – this is expected to be submitted in October.
- > This will be assessed by Council and a public exhibition will be held.
- > Similarly, the DA for demolition of station buildings and scope of works in the station area is being finalised, and is also expected to be submitted in October at a similar time to the asbestos plan.

#### Update: Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

- » Dale explained this regular update on Lamberts North is provided as it is a requirement EnergyAustralia communicates the current volumes of ash.
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- » He continued stating in the July to August period 141,000 tonnes of ash were placed on repository and this will continue with no plans for cessation.
  - » There have been no complaints received, incidents recorded or non-compliances.
  - » Dale noted EnergyAustralia has submitted the Annual Environmental Management Report to the Department of Planning, and it is [available on the EnergyAustralia website.](#)

#### Update: Water Treatment Project

- » Michelle noted community members should expect an increase in activity in the not too distant future, and more traffic will be coming on site.
- » Work is now being undertaken in all areas including the pipeline route and main facility, and the mechanical construction phase has commenced with the installation of some of the larger mechanical equipment.
- » Further work includes minor footing concrete pours and more equipment is arriving daily. Michelle explained newsletters have been sent to affected residents in relation to works.
- » Michelle also explained the work for the Walera Lane area to Mt Piper pipeline is progressing well, although at Mt Piper EnergyAustralia is working with the contractor /operator to ensure an increased focus to complete work on time.
- » Michelle noted that she is looking forward to updating the group on this project in more detail at the December CCC.
- » There are some challenges with having a site visit as the site is operated by Veolia so instead the group may be better off viewing the project from level 10 of Mt Piper.
- » **ACTION:** Michelle to determine the best option for a site visit or viewing at the next meeting and include in the agenda.

*A CCC member asked where they could access the newsletters that have been sent out to residents?*

- » **ACTION:** Michelle to provide link to newsletters to CCC members.

#### Community Engagement Program

- » Michelle began by giving an introduction for Mick Hanly, the new Community Relations Lead at Mt Piper. She explained he reports to Corporate and is the person on the ground to help with issues raised by the community regarding projects and operations.
- » Michelle continued by giving an overview of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Round of Community Grants. 25 applications were received which have now been reviewed.
- » EnergyAustralia determined 7 applications did not meet the selection criteria and were removed from consideration. A further 10 applications met the criteria well, while 8 applications may have met the criteria.
- » Michelle asked for input from CCC members about which applications EnergyAustralia should move forward with, but stressed any dollars mentioned in summaries are strictly confidential.
- » The Community Grants Selection criteria can be viewed on p. 36-37 of the attached presentation. Michelle summarised the criteria as improving education outputs for the broader community, whilst offering social inclusion through the event or funding.
- » Michelle also noted to be successful applications needed to clearly state what the organisation is about, the social issue involved, the exact amount of funding required, and what the funding will achieve. She encouraged CCC members to pass on to the community that ensuring these questions are answered will increase the likelihood of funding being granted.
- » Michelle ran through the exclusions within the selection criteria, which she noted are fairly common for such grant programs. These can be viewed on p. 38 of the attached presentation.

*A CCC member agreed these were common-sense exclusions.*

- » **ACTION:** Michelle to provide detailed application information to CCC members.
  - » **ACTION:** CCC members to provide feedback which Elton will consolidate for Energy Australia's
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consideration.

#### Mt Piper Energy Recovery Project

- » Ben noted there has not been a large amount of change on the project since the last meeting.
- » He explained EnergyAustralia is currently in the process of reviewing technology and classification of the facility. As previously communicated to the group, some assessments have been done but they remain in a holding pattern until the technology and capacity has been finalised and agreed upon.
- » He noted the EIS would be undertaken over the next year and the group would be involved and kept up to date about work being done within the EIS. The EIS would also go on public exhibition.
- » Energy Australia recognises there is significant interest in tis project. Over the next year CCC meetings will have a strong focus on the proposal and EnergyAustralia will have relevant consultants present to the CCC.

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#### 5. **Project in focus – Rail Unloader**

- » Peter outlined progress since the last meeting. This included the modification to the original planning document being sent to DPE, reviewed and put on public exhibition from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> of September. During this time, EnergyAustralia spoke to residents and will meet with those residents to provide further detail over the next week.
- » Peter noted that Government agencies visited Piper's Flat two weeks ago to inspect the site. They will now be submitting comments to the Department, and once this feedback is received from individual government agencies EnergyAustralia will prepare detailed responses to the issues they have raised.
- » Only one community submission was received during the exhibition. As there was less than 25 submissions, the application will be determined by the Department and not the PAC.
- » Peter outlined the following:
  - > EnergyAustralia could have implemented the original plan, but determined there was a better solution creating less impact on the corridor.
  - > There have been some key modifications from the previous design including reducing the amount of imported soil to create the rail embankment and reduced impacts on heritage areas.
  - > The building for working on locomotives in the original proposal has been removed. This will now be achieved through mobile fuelling and servicing vehicles rather than requiring a permanent facility.
  - > The conveyer and tower near the stockpile area has been removed so coal can be blended more efficiently,
  - > The amount of coal the plant can handle is also reduced as there is no full stockpile associated with it. The rating of the conveyer will be only 2000 tonnes per hour rather than keeping a massive stockpile of coal.
  - > The intent going forward is to supplement the current coal in the district and allow for a facility to blend the coal. It is not being considered as a replacement for the Springvale Coal Mine.
- » Brendan asked the group if there were any questions around layout, operation, or issues previously raised in relation to the Rail Unloader?

*A CCC member asked what arrangements the company has made on getting the coal to the*

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*unloader with the train network?*

- » Peter noted the proposal does not include that many trains as it is only a supplement to the existing supply. He confirmed that despite this it has been discussed with Transport for NSW, and EnergyAustralia has suggested there could be a business case now for upgrading the line on which the trains will run. This upgrade is still open for discussion.

*A CCC member raised concern about the ability of current structures, including old trestle bridges and timber structures, to bear loaded trains.*

- » Peter answered that the rail operator would not put trains on a bridge that will not hold them.
- » Michelle confirmed any issues in relation to this are being talked through and considered with Transport for NSW.

*A CCC member noted the Unloader could give opportunity for Airlie and Clarence coal to come into the area as previously there was no way to unload.*

- » Peter confirmed this could be a possibility depending on demand.

*Brendan raised a question asked by an absent CCC member – will the unloader only be used for coal, or can other materials also be loaded/unloaded?*

- » Peter explained that:
  - > The proposal as consulted on and if approved, is only for coal.
  - > If any other materials were to be unloaded, such as garbage, they would have to seek new approvals.
  - > This is only a facility for unloading.
  - > There is no facility for loading.

*A CCC member asked about the timeframes for delivery of the project.*

- » Peter noted that at this point there is not a project timeframe while they wait for the responses from Government agencies. An update will be provided in December.
- » **ACTION:** Confirm timeframes and provide update on rail unloader in next meeting.

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## 6. Discussion of Late Questions:

- » Brendan noted some late questions had been received from members the Lithgow Environment Group for discussion.
- » Q: Will EnergyAustralia follow suit with [Centennial Coal](#) in transitioning to a renewable source in our area and equally support training for current workers and future younger persons?
  - > Ben provided a slide showing the diversity of EnergyAustralia's portfolio and the percentage of the differing sources of energy utilised by the company across South Australia and the Eastern Seaboard and the capacity available from these.
  - > Coal is the largest energy source, making up 54% of the mix and offering 2880 MW capacity.
  - > The wind and solar portions are being increased over the next few years.
  - > EnergyAustralia is an industry leader and in generation from renewables within the Australian market.

*A CCC member suggested it is unlikely solar, wind or gas generation will occur locally due to a lack of resources.*

- > Ben noted that such sources are not locally planned at this time as wind generation. Investigations have shown the Lithgow area isn't ideal for these forms of renewables compared to other places in NSW.

*A CCC member asked if there is any gas fire generation planned in the area?*

- > Ben responded the closest is Tallawarra. He continued explaining there are infrastructure

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limitations for this based on the location of the gas mains. There are not the available pipelines to provide the necessary amount of gas to make this an economically viable option.

*A CCC member agreed that wind is a challenge in the area, stating it can be difficult to get the appropriate capacity. He also noted concerns with the cost of turbine manufacture, maintenance and installation.*

- > Ben reiterated overall the portfolio provided a mix of energy sources, which is what is required to provide a secure supply of energy to the country.
- > **ACTION:** Ben to provide portfolio mix slide to Elton for inclusion in the minutes.
- » Q: Could EnergyAustralia advise on the monitoring system and licence requirements for emissions on the Mt Piper Station stack (recently in media release that emissions will be monitored as of Dec 2018), and will this be 24/7 monitoring? (Noted LEGs preferred option is that all emissions be monitored 24/7.)
  - > Ben noted:
    - > The media release was from a month ago and was in response to a review the EPA completed on power stations in NSW. This identified Mt Piper was the only station in NSW without continuous monitoring, as there is a different system in place.
    - > The EPA has modified the station's license since the last meeting, and now requires a continuous system be installed by the 28<sup>th</sup> of February 2019.
    - > EnergyAustralia has a proposal and are currently working with the supplier to have the unit installed prior to that date. This will be a continual emission monitoring system that is essentially 24/7.
    - > **ACTION:** Michelle to provide media release to Elton for inclusion in the minutes. Determined this information came from a [Lithgow Mercury article](#) with EnergyAustralia quotes rather than a media release. Please refer to the attached article titled 'Up To Sniff.'
  - » Q: Will EnergyAustralia in the near future or at any time intend to pursue to open cut any of the mine leases currently held at Pinedale Open Cut Mine?
    - > Ben responded that these assets will continue to be considered for mining purposes.
    - > Ben noted there is currently no final position on this, and that EnergyAustralia is continually looking at a range of options to determine the best utilisation of the available resources.

*A CCC member raised a new question.*

- » Q: Relating to the [recent media release](#) around salinity and chlorides. Is chloride the only subject of that particular release, or are there other chemicals and elements involved in that leeching?
  - > Ben provided an overview of the media release, explaining the issue stemmed from brine within an area at the top of the repository.
  - > There are a series of ground-water bores to monitor quality around the ash dam, and chlorides have been detected in them. This indicates transfer of salts through the ash repository into the surrounding ground water within the immediate vicinity of the dam.
  - > This levels are at a point where further investigation is required. EnergyAustralia has engaged external consultants EAM to identify the source of the leeching and why it is occurring and what remedial steps could be implemented.

*A CCC member asked for clarification of what chlorides are included in this.*

- > Ben responded the chloride is sodium, with the source being primarily the brine dam.
- > He reiterated that this is only an indicator warning at this point which is a very early warning.

*A CCC member asked to confirm that EnergyAustralia do not believe there are any other materials of concern besides chloride salts?*

- > Ben confirmed sodium chlorides is looked at as an indicator elements.
  - > Michelle noted there is other elements such as boron and nickel which are being looked at as
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well as there have been trace levels indicated. There are no results on these yet.

- > Ben also highlighted such metals are elevated in the natural background water within the area. Current investigations are trying to distinguish what may be deriving from the ash repository, and what comes from the existing background water.

*A CCC member noted a past issue with selenium. He asked if this is still a problem?*

- > Michelle noted the program to reduce the amount of discharge, and explained selenium is not a problem now.

*A CCC member stated he believes there is a possibility for problematic elements to leech out of ash and that this is something that needs to be looked at.*

- > Ben agreed they are investigating the source of chlorides. He also noted that EnergyAustralia is doing all it can to look at ways to reuse ash and minimise the amount going to the repository.
- > Ben further highlighted the issue is within the ground water on site not the surface water. He explained EnergyAustralia is focused on early detection, to proactively address the issue so that it doesn't go off site or into surface water.
- > **ACTION:** Michelle to provide a copy of the media release to Elton for inclusion in the minutes. Please refer to the attached release titled 'Energy Australia invests \$2m in Mt Piper groundwater management.'
- > **ACTION:** EnergyAustralia to include an update on the progress of these investigations in the December CCC meeting.
- » Michelle noted she had been contacted by a community member concerned that water was not being released from Lake Wallace dam on Tuesday. There is a requirement to continually release 0.7 ML per day. EnergyAustralia have since investigated.
  - > Michelle explained the investigation showed assets are completing maintenance work on the valves of the dam wall. They had been removed and the holes temporarily plugged so were unavailable to release the water.
  - > Michelle noted Lake Wallace usually also has water spilling over the dam wall as it mostly operates over capacity. At the same time Centennial Coal also temporarily stopped their discharging regime when this happened the dam level dropped. For a 24 to 48-hour period, flow from the dam stopped.
  - > Michelle confirmed the valves are being reinstalled within the month, and should definitely be in place by the end of October.
  - > EnergyAustralia is looking to improve communication between Centennial Coal and Energy Australia on any changes to discharges into the Dam.

*A CCC member asked whether EnergyAustralia is looking at any changes to their discharge while the valves are out of action?*

- > Michelle responded they are looking into options for this – there is a possibility to transfer water from an alternate dam to ensure the levels continue. EnergyAustralia is now in the process of determining the best move forward.
- > Michelle noted that this was a short-term issue that can definitely be managed.
- » Brendan called for any further notes of questions.

*CCC members provided no further notes or questions.*

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## 7. Meeting Close

- » The CCC members were thanked for their contributions.
- » Brendan confirmed actions will be undertaken as specified throughout the meeting.
- » Brendan noted that the next meeting will focus in part on the water treatment plant

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- » Brendan asked for any questions that arise to be sent through to [ealithgowccc@elton.com.au](mailto:ealithgowccc@elton.com.au) to be added to the agenda for the next meeting, and noted he welcomes any feedback surrounding his role as the chair.
  - » Brendan encouraged members to take the information provided during the meeting back to their various communities, and if any questions or issues are raised to let us know, and a response will be provided via this meeting or more urgently through Michelle and Mick.
  - » Michelle confirmed EnergyAustralia would rather hear about issues before they become problems, so encouraged information and concerns to be shared so that they can be addressed.
  - » The next CCC meeting is scheduled for Monday the 3<sup>rd</sup> of December.
  - » Meeting was closed at 7:00pm.
-

2 October 2018

# **EnergyAustralia** **Lithgow Region Community** **Consultative Committee**

Dale Hogarth  
A/Head of Mt Piper

## Agenda

1. Welcome and Introductions
2. Review of Notes from Meeting One
3. Site update from EnergyAustralia
4. Project updates from EnergyAustralia – existing and planned
5. Project in focus – Rail Unloader
6. Meeting close

# **Welcome and Introductions**

# **Review of Notes from Meeting One**



# Answers to Questions Arising from Meeting of 31/7/18 & Previous CRG meetings

## Response to Questions

### **Provide Species list of plants to be used on Ash Repository Rehabilitation (March 2018 meeting)**

*The list of species to be used will be detailed in the management plan that is currently under development. We will consider existing grass and shrub species that have already naturally colonised across Kerosene Vale and Sawyers Swamp Creek Ash Dam.*



## Response to Questions

### Provide information regarding the quality of water in the Kerosene Vale Ash Repository

- *The Sawyers Swamp Ash Dam (SSCAD) and Kerosene Vale Ash Repository are operated as zero discharge sites. The Springvale Mine discharge point (LDP09) is the key source of water for the Sawyers Swamp Creek catchment. For circumstances when water levels in the SSCAD need to be reduced, the water is transferred to the caustic dosing plant at Wallerawang Power Station for pH balancing prior to being discharged via LDP03 (discharge point) into the Coxs River. There has been no discharges from LDP03 for the 2018 calendar year.*
- Amber Blue-green Algal Alerts at Lake Lyell



## Response to Questions

### **Could Oberon Dam reach a level that prevented it from being used as a source of water?**

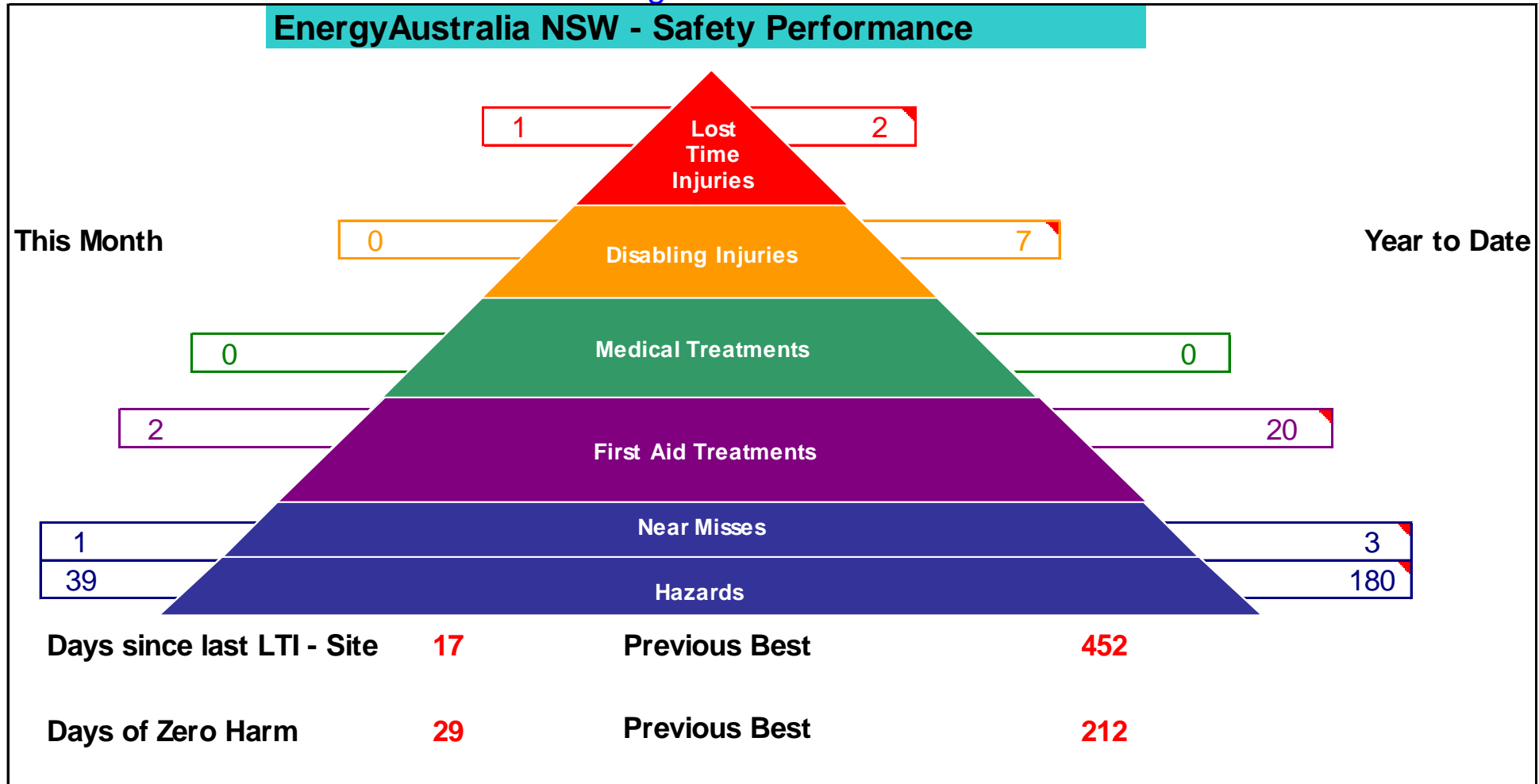
*Restrictions for Mt Piper Power Station in accordance with our Fish River Water Supply Agreement, come into effect when Oberon Dam reaches below 50% (our entitlement decreases to 80%, ie 127 ML/wk). To have our supply from Oberon Dam prevented completely, Oberon Dam water level would need to be below 8%.*



# Site Safety

# Site Safety

August



# Update - Water Management

## Update on Water Management

- Oberon Dam level is at 53.87% (decrease)
- Total Active Storage is at 85.3% with:
  - Lake Lyell at 79.1%
  - Lake Wallace at 110.6%
  - Thompsons Creek Dam at 90.7%
- Lake Wallace continues to spill
- Green alerts for Blue-green Algae at Lake Lyell & Lake Wallace.



as at 21 September 2018



EnergyAustralia



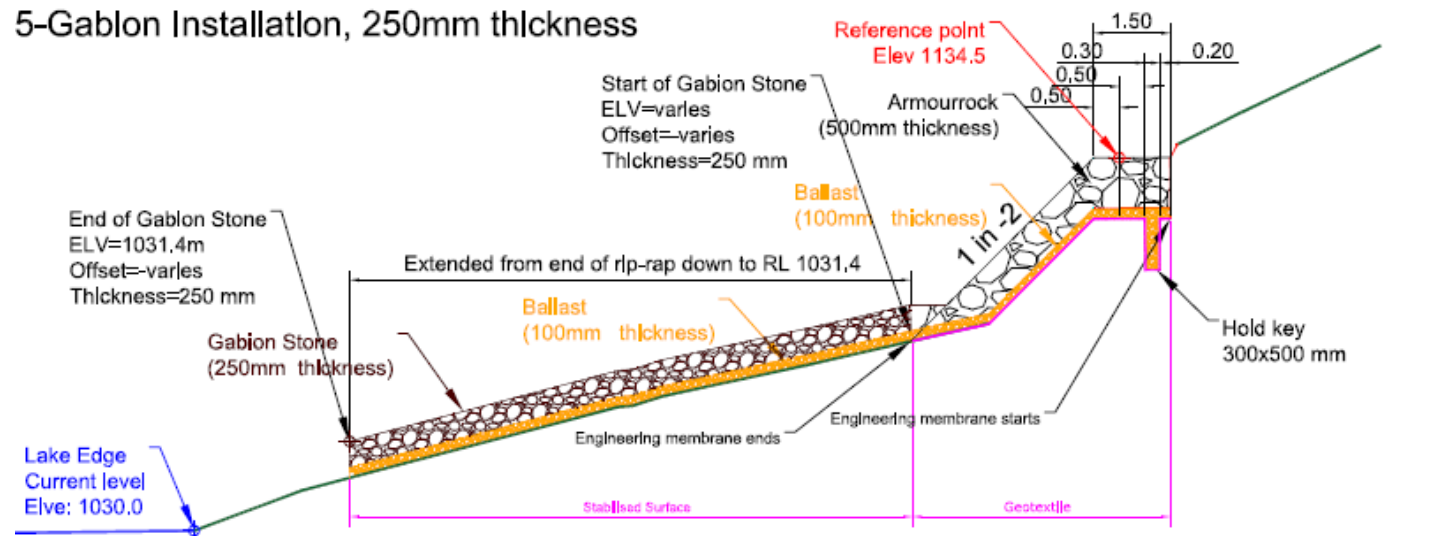
# Dam Update

# Thompsons Creek Dam

- Significant erosion eastern foreshore
- Cause: wave action during high winds
- Length: 460m
- Left unchecked erosion will continue
- Dam is safe
- Erosion protection design requires 4,400m<sup>3</sup> of local hard durable rock

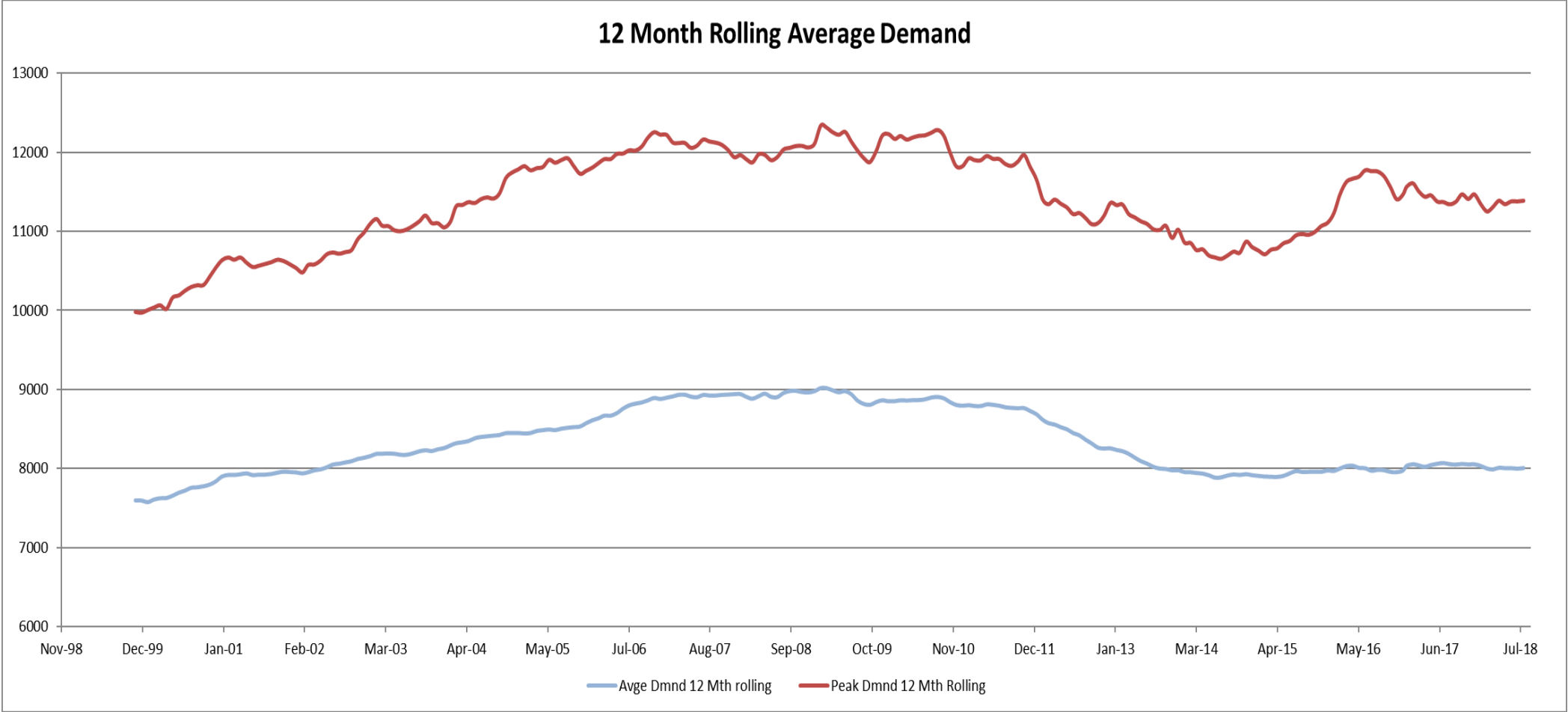


## 5-Gablon Installatlon, 250mm thickness



# Market Update

# Market Update



# Operations (Site) Update

## Mt Piper Operations

- MP1 outage was extended for a short period to allow additional works on some high temperatures components.
- MP2 has been running reliably for the period that MP1 has been in outage. In fact generation from this unit has been breaking records.
- Fuel handling and safety are greatly improved now Springvale Mine is operational after longwall move.
- Preliminary planning is underway for future outages to improve plant flexibility and efficiency.



## Pinedale Mine Update

### Yarraboldy project update:

- In care and maintenance while future is assessed.
- Progressing rehabilitation in areas where mining is complete,
  - SLR study indicates soil has achieved benchmark levels,
  - Positive outcome for rehabilitation efforts.

### Exploration Lease 7621 update:

- Desktop assessment continuing,
- Renewal application to be submitted to extend term.

# Wallerawang DDR

General Update



## Wallerawang Re-purposing

- EnergyAustralia continues to work with a number of proponents for repurposing projects,
- This work will take some time,
- These projects are commercial in confidence,
- When information can be provided to the public we will advise the committee.

## Wallerawang DDR

- Initial Asbestos Assessments for salvaged plant have been completed, work is ongoing as additional gaskets are made available for inspection
- Alternative power system has been designed
- Security upgrades are planned
- An initial review of buffer land for potential development has been completed, the process is underway to engage a third party to prepare a divestment strategy.
- Identified lead dust in some areas of the main station building.
- We removed our work teams from the site due to this risk.
- An appropriately qualified contractor will be engaged to manage this issue.

# Wallerawang DDR

Ash Dams Area Rehabilitation

## Importation of Capping Material to SSCAD & KVAR

- Approval conditions have been issued by DPE
- 2 year project to import capping material to Wallerawang Ash Repository from outside Lithgow Local Government Area (LGA)
- Control Measures include:
  - Maximum of 100 trucks per day;
  - Must use State Highways only, cannot use local roads in the Lithgow LGA;
  - Signage to be installed on Castlereagh Hwy;
  - Operational Transport Management Plan to be developed to address, minimising traffic impacts, complaints mgt, scheduling, emergency management and a driver code of conduct;
  - Update the existing Operation Environmental Management Plan

# Wallerawang Ash Repositories – Closure & Rehabilitation

## Key Considerations:

- NSW Planning Approval considerations
  - Detailed technical assessments:
    - Regional groundwater model
    - Geotechnical assessment
    - Rehabilitation and final landform options assessment
- 
- Develop draft Closure and Rehabilitation Plan
  - Stakeholder Consultation
  - Approval of Closure and Rehabilitation Plan
  - Implementation
  - De-register SSCAD Dam from *Dam Safety Act*



## Ash Area: Environmental Site Management

### Asbestos Disposal

A draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) has been prepared and is currently under review. It is anticipated that this will be submitted to Lithgow Council in August/September 2018.

### Station Area

A draft Statement of Environmental Effects for the demolition of the Wallerawang Power Station has been prepared and is currently under review. It is anticipated that the Development Application will be submitted to Lithgow Council in August/September 2018.

# Update Rail Unloader Project

# Rail Unloader - Current Status

- Since the last CCC meeting:
  - The application to modify the rail unloader design was submitted to DPE
  - DPE reviewed the application and placed it on public exhibition from 7 September to 21 September
  - EA again contacted local residents and other stakeholders to inform them that the environmental assessment documents were available, and discussed the project with those that sought further information
  - Government agencies visited Pipers Flat to inspect the location of the project
  - DPE reported that one submission was received from the public (of a negative nature)
- EA is waiting to be provided submissions from the public/government agencies by DPE before preparing a response to those submissions (which will be made publicly available)
- DPE will then review the environmental assessment, the submissions and EA's response before making a determination

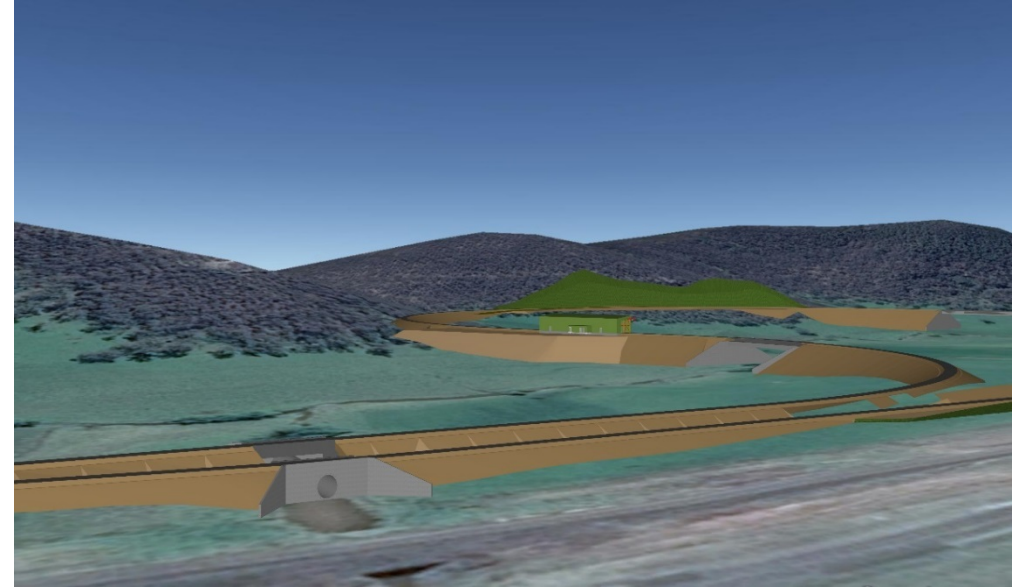


# Recap: modified rail unloader design

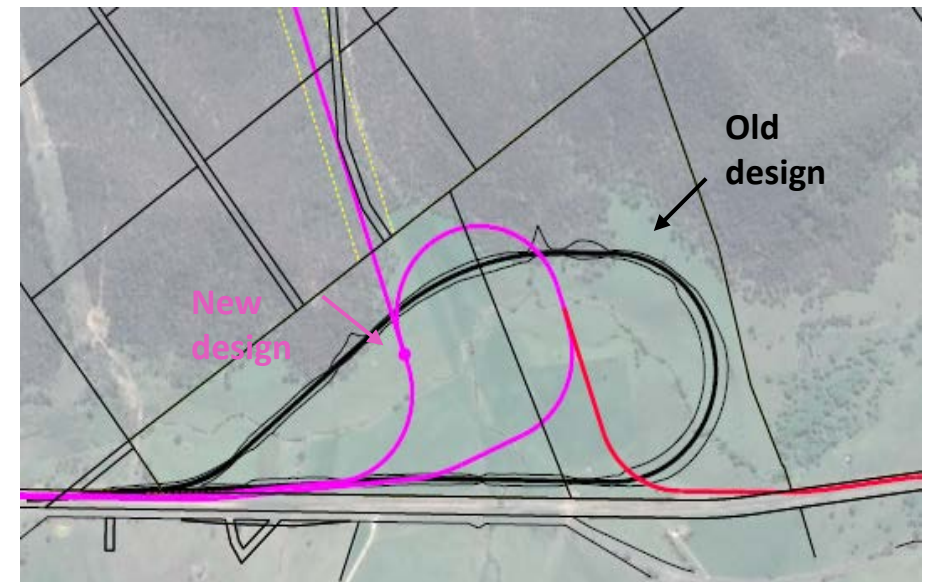
Aerial view



Pipers Flat Road view



- The proposed modification includes:
  - realignment of the rail line to reduce earthworks and reduce the height of the embankment
  - relocation of the rail dump hopper to remove an intermediate coal transfer station and conveyor
  - the addition of a second connection to the main rail line and a spur line to provide operational flexibility
  - an additional conveyor and rill tower near the power station
  - removal of trains provisioning buildings



# Update – Lamberts North Ash Placement Project

# Lamberts North Ash Placement Project Update

- Ash Placement Volume
  - July to August 2018 was 141,834 tonne
  - Ash Placement will continue at Lamberts North in September & December,
- No complaints received,
- No incidents recorded,
- No non-compliances,
- 2017-18 Annual Environment Management Report development about to commence.



# Update – Water Treatment Project

## Joint EANSW/Centennial Water Treatment Project

- Veolia and their sub-contractors are now working in all areas including the pipeline route and the main facility.
- Project mechanical construction phase has commenced with the installation of some of the larger mechanical equipment. The Brine Crystalliser being one of these.
- Minor footing concrete pours will continue for a short while.
- More equipment is arriving daily.
- Further newsletters have been sent to affected residents to show progress.
- The main pipeline welding and hydrotesting is progressing.

# Community Engagement Program

## Community Engagement Program 2018



- Introduction to Mick Hanly, Community Relations Lead, Mt Piper.
- The applications for the 2nd Round of Community Grants have been reviewed, with 25 applications received. Input from the Committee is requested.
  - 7 applications definitely meet selection criteria,
  - 10 applications may meet the selection criteria and need input,
  - 8 applications did not meet the selection criteria and will not be further assessed.

## Community Grants Selection Criteria

EnergyAustralia has two priority areas for grant funding. To be considered for funding, activities should address one of these areas:

**Education:** Funding aimed at promoting education and knowledge acquisition. This can include programs with a social or environmental focus and organisations which support career or skill development.

**Social Inclusion:** Funding aimed at facilitating social inclusion. This is aimed at initiatives that support community cohesion and can include such things as men's sheds, upgrading communal facilities, improving local amenities and supporting vulnerable community members.



## Community Grants Selection Criteria

Applications will be reviewed against these criteria:

**The organisation:** The applicant has a clear purpose, clearly understands who it is targeting and how it addresses the issue.

**Social Issue:** The issue is important to the local community and addresses one of the outlined criteria.

**Funding:** The proposal clearly outlines how donated funds will be utilised. The grant amount should cover a significant part, if not all, of the total project cost.

**Measures:** There are measures in place to evaluate project success.

# Community Grants Selection Criteria

## Exclusions:

- Political parties
- Programs/projects/activities with an exclusive religious focus
- International aid appeals (with exception of Disaster Relief donations)
- General appeals
- Indirect fund-raising purposes
- Fund-raising projects such as charity dinners, auctions, fetes.
- Social activities (eg industry golf days)
- Membership of community organisations
- Overseas travel
- Sports teams (eg covers paying for uniforms, membership fees etc)
- An individual person (or group) seeking support for personal interests.
- Organisations that promote controversial issues or spokespeople that may damage EnergyAustralia's reputation.
- Initiatives supported by a direct competitor to EnergyAustralia
- For profit organisations
- Major or business-related sponsorships
- Proposals that do not align with our criteria

# Mt Piper Energy Recovery Project



# Energy Recovery Project Development Update

## Studies indicate the project is technically and economically viable

- Preliminary studies in 2017 concluded the project is viable and should proceed to the development stage and seek development approval.

## Community and stakeholder consultation ongoing

- Current focus is to make community and stakeholders aware of the Project.
- Gathering feedback and suggestions from community members before we start the formal Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).
- More consultation will be part of the formal EIS process and before it is submitted to Dept of Planning & Environment (DPE).

## Technology Partner selection nearing completion

- Two companies have been shortlisted as potential technology partners
- Both companies have multiple reference plants in Europe that have been designed to meet stringent European emissions standards
- The reference plants and technical capability are being thoroughly assessed to ensure that EfW Policy and relevant regulatory requirements will be met.
- The appointment of the preferred technology partner is expected in October 2018 and preliminary design studies are expected to commence in Q4 2018

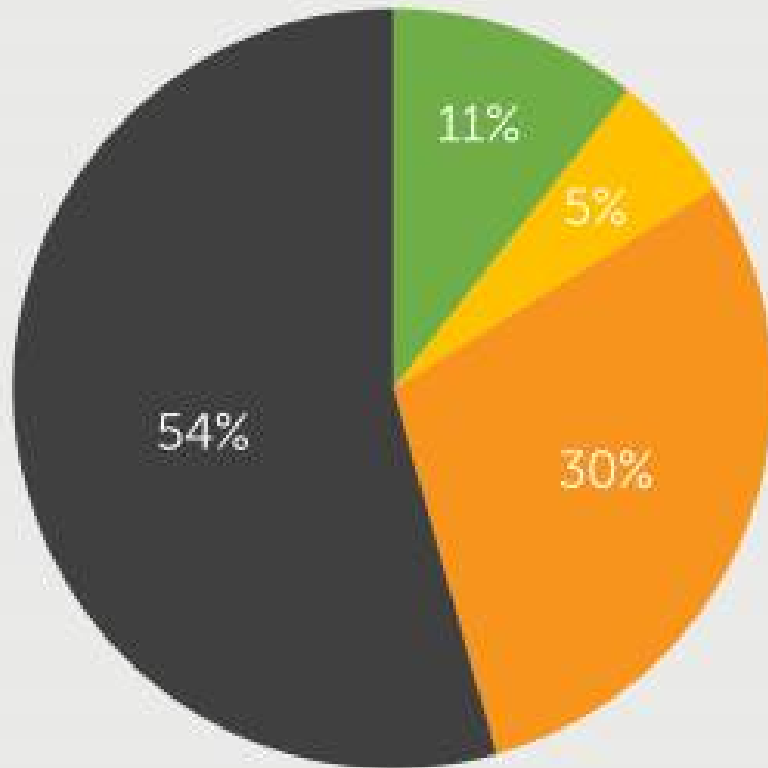
## Commissioning

- If the project receives development approval it could be operational in 2022.

# EIS and Planning Approval Update

- To recap, the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued for the Project in 2017 and updated in mid 2018. The areas of study are:
  - Community & Stakeholder Engagement
  - Strategic and Statutory Context
  - Air Quality and Odour
  - Human Health Risk
  - Waste Management
  - Soils and Water
  - Traffic and Transport
  - Noise and Vibration
  - Biosecurity
  - Hazards and Risk
  - Visual
  - Greenhouse Gas and Energy Efficiency
  - Flora and Fauna
  - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
  - Bushfire Risk
  - Contributions
  - Social and Economic
- Some preliminary and baseline studies have been completed by the independent consultant (ERM), further information from technology provider is required for next stage of EIS – Work will commence in parallel with the preliminary design work, and is expected to complete by early 2019.
- The EIS will be a public document and all stakeholders to the Project may review and provide feedback to the EIS when it is exhibited by the DPE.
- [?insert a note on the plans for community feedback to be sought during the design and environmental studies]

# Generation and contracted portfolio



## Wind (562MW)

- Cathedral Rocks (32MW)
- Mortons Lane (20MW)
- Waterloo (56MW)
- Gullen Range (166MW)
- Boco Rock (113MW)
- Taralga (107MW)
- Bodangora\* (68MW)

## Solar (291MW)

- Manildra (43MW)
- Ross River\* (93MW)
- Gannawarra (50MW)
- Coleambally\* (105MW)

## Storage (55MW/80MWh)

- Gannawarra (25MW/50MWh)
- Ballarat\* (30MW/30MWh)

## Gas (1,563MW)

- Hallett (203MW)
- Newport (500MW)
- Jeeralang (440MW)
- Tallawarra (420MW)

## Coal (2,880MW)

- Yallourn (1,480MW)
- Mount Piper (1,400MW)

\* In development



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# UP TO SNIFF

THE NSW Environment Protection Authority has signalled it will be altering Mt Piper's licence to bring it up to standard with the air monitoring requirements placed on all other coal fired power stations in the state.

Currently Mt Piper is the only station in NSW not required to conduct constant monitoring of air pollutants it emits known to harm human health, including

particulate matter, Nitrogen Oxides and Sulphur Dioxide.

An EPA spokesperson said the change was a result of a review of licences, which found "some limited and unnecessary variation" between the five stations' licences.

"As a result of this review the EPA is working with power stations to make emissions monitoring more consistent, to protect the

health of the community and the environment, including in the Lithgow area," he said.

An EnergyAustralia spokesperson said the monitoring system will be "up and running" by 2019.

He said pollutants emitted into the air from the station were currently monitored periodically. Emissions are sampled and reported every three months.

"Readings are tested and

verified by independent laboratories and third-party auditors, before they're submitted to the state environment regulators," the spokesperson said.

"Also, we measure the coal quality coming into the station on a daily basis. Coal that does not comply with the quality specification is rejected and returned to the coal supplier.

"In the unlikely event the

monitoring indicates an elevated air quality result, another round of monitoring follows. Should this second test verify the elevation a thorough investigation is conducted and corrective actions follow."

EnergyAustralia is not required to contact the EPA if a pollutant limit is exceeded, only if "environmental harm" is caused. The EPA found only one case of Mt Piper record-

ing an exceedance between 2011-2016, but stated it was likely a monitoring error.

A fortnight ago not-for-profit legal group Environmental Justice Australia held a forum at Hoskins Church where they described Lithgow as an air quality monitoring "black spot" due to the lack of real-time monitoring by the power station, and government agencies.

**More on page 7.**

**NEWS: RFS URGES MOTORISTS TO AVOID BELLS LINE OF ROAD P3**

# Constant pollution monitor to start

## ENVIRONMENT

CONTINUED from front.

"Continuous monitoring is really important for two reasons: the first reason is that we can't hope to get an accurate picture of pollution the power station is emitting if we only monitor pollution once or four times a year," EJA researcher Dr James Whelan said.

"Continuous monitoring provides a much more accurate picture of real pollution.

"The community also has a right to know what they're breathing, essentially. Conducting continuous monitoring is important, but providing access to that data to will be the next challenge."

The group also pointed out the Lithgow local government area is not included in the state government's air quality monitoring network. More than eighty monitoring stations run by the Office of Environment and Heritage are active across the state, some commissioned as early as 1992.

"Nationally, coal fired power stations are the number one contributor to Nitrogen Oxides (NOx), Sulphur Dioxide (SO2) and fine particle pollution (PM2.5). Coal mines are the number one for PM10," Dr Whelan said.

"I live in Newcastle and we have five monitoring stations and the public can access the data in real-time," he said.

"So if I wake up at night

and smell something funny, I can check in real-time and get an explanation."

The closest government air monitoring station to Mt Piper Power Station is located in Bathurst, however it does not monitor SO2 and NOx, only particulate matter (PM2.5 and PM10).

The air monitoring station closest to Mt Piper Power Station that measures all four pollutants is in Richmond, 60km away.

The EPA said it was looking to establish a temporary monitoring base in the Blue Mountains "with a view to commencing the monitoring in Spring".

Under Mt Piper's current licence quarterly periodic testing results must be published on EnergyAustralia's website and the station must contribute yearly periodic figures to the National Pollutant Inventory, which is published online.

The EPA review found EnergyAustralia failed to publish four required data sets from Mt Piper (a further one was incomplete) on their website in the 2015-16 period.

The EPA did not state whether it would require the continuous monitoring data from Mt Piper Station be made available to the public.

Information about the health impacts of SO2, NOx, PM 2.5 and PM10 is available on the NSW Health website.



# Media release

20 September 2018

## EnergyAustralia invests \$2m in Mt Piper groundwater management

EnergyAustralia, one of the country's leading energy retailers, today said it has committed \$2 million toward new measures to manage underground water at the Mt Piper power station in the central west of New South Wales.

Ross Edwards, EnergyAustralia Executive - Energy, said the spend was part of a broader program to provide the community, workers and customers with certainty about the future of the power station, which has an operating life until 2043. Works already underway at Mt Piper include a \$200 million water treatment plant and pipeline project, assessment of a waste-to-energy project and a rail development to expand sources of long-term coal supply.

The new "groundwater" investment is in addition to the \$11.5 million already spent each year at Mt Piper on managing water at the site.

"In 2016 a study at Mt Piper confirmed readings of elevated chloride in the groundwater beneath the ash repository, and ongoing monitoring has now given us a good indication of the source. It showed chloride from ash was making its way through the soil and rock and into groundwater beneath the repository," Mr Edwards said.

"If we're planning for Mt Piper to be part of the energy system for a long time to come, then groundwater is one of the potential impacts we have to manage and get right. Owners of big power stations have an obligation to make sure their operations are environmentally and socially acceptable," he said.

EnergyAustralia acquired the Mt Piper and now-closed Wallerawang power stations from the New South Wales government in 2013.

Ash is a by-product of generating electricity from coal. It's stored on site in large, specially-designed pits or repositories. The ash is mixed with salt water from the power station's cooling system.

"Chloride is basically salt. It occurs naturally in water and isn't harmful to humans, except in extremely high doses," Mr Edwards said. "But if left to make its way into water courses and streams the salt residue can impact the local ecology, and we can't let that happen."

The power station has an existing network of 18 bores to monitor and test the quality of water below ground. To manage groundwater over the long term, EnergyAustralia has built three, new 20-mega-litre double-lined water retention ponds with leak detection systems. It is investing in a groundwater and surface water assessment program that includes the installation of 14 new groundwater monitoring bores.

The company is also developing an updated groundwater model to help predict flows and guide ongoing water management and remedial works, if they're needed.

Meanwhile, EnergyAustralia recently announced it had applied to build a rail coal unloader as part of plans to expand Mt Piper's potential sources of supply. The company is also assessing

# Media release

**20 September 2018**

the potential for energy recovery, which would allow the power station to generate power to meet the electricity needs of around 40,000 typical homes in New South Wales without having to burn additional coal.

**-END-**

Mt Piper fast facts:

- On average, Mt Piper's operations use approximately 40 megalitres of water per day
- The site has complex water treatment facilities that ensure all process water is reused up to six times within the site; it's not released directly into the local environment
- Mt Piper already commits around \$11.5 million to water management including \$200 million in a water treatment plant and an additional \$2 million in groundwater management
- Mt Piper is responsible for the controlled release of water from Lake Lyell into the Coxs River to Warragamba Dam (Sydney's drinking water catchment)
- Mt Piper was built in two stages; unit two was commissioned in 1992 followed by unit 1 in 1993. The site has an operational life until 2043