

## Community Consultative Committee Details

<b>CCC / Project Name:</b>	Austar Coal Mine	<b>Reporting Period:</b>	January - December 2018
<b>Independent Chairperson:</b>	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	<b>Proponent Contact:</b>	Carly McCormack

### 1. Executive Summary

The Austar Community Consultative Committee was established in 2006 as part of a modification to the existing 1996 consent approval DA29/95 by the Minister for Urban Affairs and Planning. The Committee operates in accordance with the current version of the Department of Planning and Environment's Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Projects.

The Austar Coal Mine is an underground coal mine situated in the Cessnock Council Local Government area, approximately ten kilometres south west of the town of Cessnock and in proximity to the villages of Paxton, Ellalong and Pelton in the Lower Hunter Valley of NSW. The Austar Coal Mine incorporates the former Pelton, Ellalong, Cessnock No. 1 (Kalingo) and Bellbird South Collieries and includes coal extraction, handling, processing and rail and road transport facilities. Extensive mining has been undertaken within the Austar Coal Mine since 1916. Historical mining was predominantly via bord and pillar mining and more recently via conventional longwall mining and Longwall Top Coal Caving (LTCC) methods.

The committee meets quarterly each year and comprises:

- four local community representatives;
- one elected Cessnock City Council representative;
- two Austar Coal Mine representatives, with attendance from other personnel as required;
- one independent Chairperson.

The majority of the community representatives on the committee are long term members and as such, their knowledge of the mine, operations and personnel is quite comprehensive. As near neighbours and adjoining property owners, they are an integral part of the broader community and demonstrate a strong commitment to their area and their involvement in the committee. Accordingly, meetings are well attended and succinct with detailed PowerPoint presentations given by Austar representatives to each meeting.

Matters discussed during the reporting period were diverse, ranging from current operations and exploration, redeployment of staff to other operations because of a workforce stand down, introduction of new committee members to reforms to the Coal Mine Subsidence Compensation Act and subsidence claim procedures. Other topics of discussion for the reporting period also included but not limited to:

- general environmental management and monitoring, including air quality, noise, surface water and groundwater
- variation to environmental protection licence and Annual Return

- Bushfire management
- trespass and illegal removal of trees on Austar land
- subsidence and vibration monitoring
- environmental incidents
- community complaints
- community sponsorship
- Independent Environment Audit
- proposed underground site visit

The number of complaints are minimal and seems to indicate an acceptance of the history and coexistence of mining in the area and the mine operating in accordance with its regulatory requirements. A good rapport exists amongst all members who clearly understand their roles and the committee functions well.

## 2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- Committee meetings were held in the months of February, May, August and November 2018.
- Attendance at meetings is consistent, other than occasional apologies due to unforeseen commitments. The committee sets its meeting dates at the end of each calendar year for the ensuing year to avoid any known potential conflicts.
- A comprehensive site tour of the Austar operations was undertaken as part of the February meeting for the benefit of the new members.
- No joint CCC meetings were held during the period.

## 3. Key issues

Austar Coal Mine has faced some challenges over the last couple of years with geological faults, coal burst incidents and prohibition notices from the Resources Regulator. This has seen a stand down of the workforce, proposed mining stages put on hold and readjustment of mine plans to accommodate same. The committee is supportive of the Austar workforce and the mine's operations in general and maintains a watching brief on its future.

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Actions Taken</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>
<b>Future mining layout and plans</b>	Austar provides updates to the committee at each meeting on the status of future mining and proposed sequence.	Ongoing.
<b>Request for Yancoal structure and access arrangements</b>	Information provided to committee.	Completed. Updates as and when required.


#### 4. Focus for next 12 months

The planned activities for 2019 will continue to be guided by the contributions of the CCC members. These activities are likely to include:

- exploration updates
- future extraction plans for the area
- progress of Stage 3 and Bellbird South mining areas

To the best of my knowledge, there are no outstanding or emerging issues that have not been addressed or are in the process of being so, to the committee's satisfaction.

Committee Meeting minutes and presentations are available on the website within two weeks of each meeting.

Signature of Chair:	
Date:	April 30 2019