

Thursday, 26 May, 2011

April compliance activities of Singleton office
Response given to the *Singleton Argus*

Further to the April compliance report and the activities of the Singleton office, can you provide a break-up of the nature of the 12 complaints the month, the four advisory letters and the two warning letters?

Department response:

During April, the Department's Singleton office received 12 complaints on the following issues:

- Dust: 4
- Noise: 2
- Noise and dust: 1
- Blast fume: 1
- Smoke and odour: 3
- Lighting: 1

The office issued four advisory letters for April:

- A letter was sent to Mt Arthur mine, relating to faulty blasting equipment and requesting its internal procedures be revised to include regular inspections of blast monitoring equipment to ensure it is operational at all times.
- Letters were sent to the Integra and Ashton mines to report back on the Department's review of each mine's annual review of environmental performance.
- A letter to Integra advising that noise monitoring completed as part of an independent review was inconclusive, and further noise monitoring would be carried out during winter.

Two warning letters were sent by the Singleton office for the month:

- On April 1, the Department wrote to the Integra mine concerning a blast which recorded 128.37 decibels at the Dulwich monitor on March 23, exceeding the maximum permitted noise level of 120 decibels. The mine provided information about the incident and that it had taken preventative actions to reduce the risk of a reoccurrence. In view of the mine's actions, the Department took no further action and warned the mine that future exceedances of blast impact criteria could result in further enforcement action.
- On April 7, the Department wrote to the Hunter Valley Operations mine in relation to a report on a slow-leaking water pipe that discharged saline water into the Hunter River between April 2010 and January 2011. The mine took action to stop the leak and modify pipework to prevent further leaks. The Department advised no further action would be taken on this occasion, but warned the mine that future unauthorised discharge of mine water could result in further enforcement action.