

DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE MONTHLY AUDITING AND COMPLIANCE ACTIVITIES REPORT

January 2013

Summary:

This month, the Department has approved a number of mine management plans in the Hunter, including the Bengalla Fume Management Strategy and Mt Thorley Warkworth Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan. It has also overseen Ashton Coal Mine's progress on the Bowman's Creek Diversion Works. Two fines were issued to a developer in the Tweed Shire, and essential fire safety upgrades were completed for a tourist accommodation building in Perisher.

Key outcomes:

SINGLETON OFFICE

Ashton Completes the Bowman's Creek Diversion Works

- In December 2010 Ashton Coal Mine received Departmental approval to build two diversions of Bowman's Creek near Camberwell in the Hunter Valley. These diversions were implemented as part of the mine's approved underground mining plan.
- The diversion is the first of its type in the Hunter. A number of innovative features have been installed to simulate a natural water course, including rock weirs, low flow pools and logs. Following initial construction, the site was irrigated to promote vegetation to stabilise the stream banks.
- The Bowman's Creek Diversion Management Plan was approved by the Singleton Compliance Office prior to construction.
- In December 2012, the diversion was opened to take creek flows. Under the current design, creek flows that exceed a certain height are split so that the excess water flows down the old Bowman's creek, protecting the newly constructed diversion.
- On 31 January, two days after the heavy rain event over the Australia Day long weekend, NSW Office of Water and the Singleton Compliance Office inspected the diversion.
- It was found to be working well with minimal damage from the large water flow. Two large fish were seen swimming upstream, confirming that the fish-friendly design was successful.

Management Plan Approvals

The Singleton Compliance Office in January approved a number of mine management plans including the Bengalla Fume Management Strategy, and the Mt Thorley Warkworth (MTW) Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan, which are available on the Rio Tinto website.

The MTW air quality plan contains a number of initiatives to reduce the risk of dust being generated or leaving the site. These include:

- Two cameras focused on monitoring dust over Putty Road.
- Two new coal hopper hoods to prevent dust generation when unloading (completed Dec 2012), see photo.
- A requirement to limit or stop mining when winds exceed 8metres/second.
- New dust monitors positioned close to mining activity that operate around the clock and measure how much dust is generated so that management can take corrective action if levels exceed the proscribed limit.

The Bengalla Fume Management Strategy includes the following initiatives:

- Minimising fumes by placing a four-day limit on the amount of time an explosive can be kept underground.
- Unexpected blast fume issues to be better managed by introducing a control matrix for the causes of fumes.
- Better selection of the explosives by identifying drill hole conditions more accurately.

Noise and dust

- The Singleton office received 11 complaints during January, including two for blasting, four for noise, one for dust and four for other compliance issues.
- The blasting complaints related to motorists and residents not receiving sufficient notice that nearby roads will be temporarily closed due to blasting. As a result of consultation with the complainant, the Department has requested the mine work on a satisfactory solution and add this task as an agenda item at its next Community Consultative Committee meeting in February.
- The noise complaints related to the Mt Thorley Warkworth mine. The Department's officers investigated the complaints, however no further action was required after reviewing the mine's monitoring results.



Bowman's Creek Eastern Diversion showing the pool and riffle sequence.



Further downstream at Bowman’s Creek Eastern Diversion, showing log structures and vegetation planted within the new stream.



A truck unloading coal in the new coal hopper hood at the Mt Thorley Warkworth mine.

SYDNEY OFFICE

Cobaki Estate

- Leda Manorstead Pty Ltd was issued two penalty notices of \$3000 each for commencing works prior to obtaining a construction certificate, and prior to appointing a principal certifying authority.
- The works were associated with the development of the Cobaki Estate residential development in the Tweed Shire.

JINDABYNE OFFICE

Advisory letter – order 6 completion

- The department issued an advisory letter to a lessee of a Perisher tourist accommodation building, confirming the satisfactory completion of building compliance works, including a voluntary fire upgrade.
- The works were undertaken as a result of a building audit report prepared by lessor NPWS that identified outstanding fire safety and BCA compliance matters. The lessee addressed the matters via a voluntary fire upgrade in several stages that included installing a sprinkler system throughout the building.

The department's key compliance actions over the past month are summarised below:

SINGLETON OFFICE		
ACTIVITY TYPE	MONTHLY TOTAL	2012-13 TOTAL
Inspections and surveillance	19	150
Meetings	13	100
Reviews of reports	12	29
<i>Subtotal compliance monitoring</i>	44	279
Negotiated outcome	0	1
Advisory letters	6	59
Warning letters	0	8
Orders	0	0
Penalty Notices	0	3
Prosecutions	0	1
<i>Subtotal enforcement</i>	6	72
Complaints	11	200
SYDNEY OFFICE		
Audits	0	1
Inspections and surveillance	2	17
Meetings	0	8
Reviews of reports	10	10
<i>Subtotal compliance monitoring</i>	12	36
Negotiated outcomes	0	1
Advisory letters	6	9
Warning letters	2	5
Orders	0	2
Penalty Notices	2	8
Court Orders	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0
<i>Subtotal enforcement</i>	10	25
JINDABYNE OFFICE		
Audits	0	0

Inspections and surveillance	0	12
Meetings	0	0
<i>Subtotal compliance monitoring</i>	0	12
Negotiated outcomes	0	8
Advisory letters	1	13
Warning letters	0	0
Orders	0	1
Penalty Notices	0	0
Court Orders	0	0
Prosecutions	0	0
<i>Subtotal enforcement</i>	1	22
TOTAL ACTIONS		
Compliance monitoring	56	327
Enforcement	17	119