

# COWAL GOLD OPERATIONS COMMUNITY ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT FOR 2021

## Cowal Gold Operations Community Environmental Monitoring & Consultative Committee

|                                 |                       |                           |                          |
|---------------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>CCC / Project Name:</b>      | Cowal Gold Operations | <b>Reporting Period:</b>  | March 2020 to March 2021 |
| <b>Independent Chairperson:</b> | <b>Lisa Andrews</b>   | <b>Proponent Contact:</b> | <b>Renee Pettit</b>      |

### 1. Executive Summary

The Cowal Gold Operations is located approximately 38 kilometres north-east of West Wyalong in New South Wales (NSW), owned and operated by Evolution Mining (Cowal) Pty Limited.

The project was originally approved in 1999 and mining operations commenced in April 2005. Several companies have owned the mine (Rio Tinto, Homestake Australia, Barrick and now Evolution).

The CEMCC is the oldest community consultative committee in New South Wales, operating originally under its own charter with strict environmental monitoring requirements. The CEMCC resolved to operate under the Department of Planning, Industry & Environment's Community Consultative Committee Guidelines for State Significant Developments, when they were introduced in November 2018.

The project is located within three local government areas, and therefore has a large membership, comprising of:

- Four local community representatives (including a representative from the Lake Cowal Land Owners group)
- One Bland Shire Council delegate
- One Parkes Shire Council delegate
- One Forbes Shire Council delegate (and alternate)
- An Independent Scientist
- Stakeholder Group – Wiradjuri Condobolin Corporation
- Three company representatives; and
- One Independent Chairperson.

The meetings are held quarterly, in March, June, August and December. With the COVID-19 restrictions, all meetings were able to be conducted in person with several members also opting to participate via video-conferencing. As is often the case, there were some technical difficulties, however, mostly the CEMCC was able to operate effectively.

Attendees receive a comprehensive presentation from the proponent, which includes updates on the modification applications, proposed expansion project (underground) and exploration decline. Topics of discussion during the reporting period included:

- Environmental Monitoring Results (air quality, blasting, surface water, lake water, ground water, operational noise, fauna & flora)
- Environmental Management Plan updates
- Fauna Incidents (deaths, etc)
- Lake Cowal levels
- Rehabilitation
- Reportable Incidents

- Complaints Report
- Bush Fire Management
- Sponsorship and donations; and
- Community Engagement.

The CCC meets in alternate locations (West Wyalong, Forbes, Condobolin & on site at Lake Cowal, which includes a site inspection) to cover the three local government areas and is an effective communication forum between the community, the Councils and the company. It functions well and accordingly, fulfils its objectives under the Department's guidelines.

## 2. CCC activities over last 12 months

- The committee met in March, June, August & December 2020 and March 2021.
- Attendance at the meetings is high, with the occasional apology due to competing commitments.
- There were no joint CCC's held.

## 3. Key issues

Trending topics of committee discussion can be summarised as:

| Issue  | Actions Taken  | Outcome  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Proposed Underground Development</b>                            | A workshop was conducted by Elton Consultancies regarding the proposed Underground Project's social engagement activity.<br><br>Input and feedback was sought from the CEMCC members regarding strategies for engaging with the community on the proposed Underground Project. A social impact work sheet/questionnaire was provided to all attendees and feedback/input received. | Ongoing updates and presentations are provided at all meetings regarding all aspects the proposed Underground Development. |
| <b>Modification 14 &amp; GRE46 Exploration Decline</b>             | The proponent provides details of the status regarding secondary approvals associated with the recently approved Mod 14, as well as providing updates on the progress of GRE46.  | Ongoing.   |
| <b>Rehabilitation Work</b>   | Presentation on the Rehabilitation Works Management Plan.  | Ongoing updates provided at CEMCC meetings.  |
| <b>Lake Cowal Water Bird Monitoring Survey</b>                     | Members are very interested in the results of an ongoing water bird survey undertaken by Peter Gell.   | Presentation proposed for the June 2020 meeting.   |
| <b>Ongoing Complaint regarding a parking issue in West Wyalong</b> | The proponent continues to liaise with a retail business operator in town regarding allegations of employees' parking and obstructing customer access.   | Parking notices have been issued to employees involved.  |
| <b>Vehicles/people trespassing on</b>                              | It has been determined and agreed that these vehicles are not mine related and   | Monitor and take further action if necessary.  |

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|--|---|--|
| <b>neighbouring private properties</b> | members of the public are accessing private property illegally. |  |
|--|---|--|

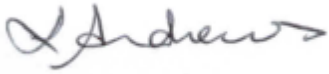
#### 4. Focus for next 12 months

The planned activities for 2021 will be guided by the contributions of the CCC members. These activities are likely to include:

- A site inspection in September 2021.
- Continued updates on environmental monitoring and results.
- Continued updates on the approved modification (14) and obtaining relevant government agency approvals.
- Continued updates on the Exploration Decline and proposed underground operations development application.
- Continued updates on Community Engagement & Support Programs.

To the best of my knowledge, there are no outstanding or emerging issues that have not been addressed.

CCC minutes and presentations are available on the project website.

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| Signature of Chair: |  |
| Date:               | 20 April 2021   |