

Media statement

27 November 2007

Comprehensive air and water monitoring

The dust monitoring and assessment standards being used by the Wallarah 2 Coal Project comply with the NSW Government's stringent requirements for protection of community amenity and health as well as general environmental factors.

Environment and Community Manager, Peter Smith, has told Wyong Council that monitoring of air quality in the project area began in 1996 and focussed on dust.

The air quality monitoring network was regularly updated and refined to focus on the priority areas relevant to the current Wallarah 2 Coal Project involving collecting information surrounding the proposed surface facilities, he said.

"Two types of automated High Volume Air Samplers have been included in the monitoring network since the outset of monitoring in 1996."

Mr Smith said that up to 20 static dust gauges had been included in the initial monitoring network but by 2002 this had been able to be rationalised to 6 due to the smaller project development area that had been finally selected. They were at the proposed surface facilities sites at Buttoderry and Tooheys road, beneath the Wyee Power line, at the railway line at Spring Creek and the Motorway interchange.

Mr Smith said a meteorological station has long been located at the company's Tooheys Road site to measure wind speed, wind direction, temperature and rainfall.

Monitoring of surface water quality commenced in January 1997 and by 2002 there were 21 monitoring locations. With the finally proposed project area for the current Wallarah 2 Coal project application, the water monitoring network was refined in 2006 to involve sampling at up to 14 locations.

Mr Smith said groundwater investigation and testing has been included more than 360 boreholes and numerous geophysical exploration programs including ground and aerial magnetic surveys. Dedicated groundwater monitoring programs have been undertaken throughout the project exploration phase covering both hard rock groundwater and shallow alluvial systems.

Mr Smith said that assessments based on monitoring results would form an integral part of the Environmental Assessment when it is submitted to the NSW Government. A brief summary, which clearly shows that even worst case dust conditions will not cause adverse impacts on nearby communities is included in the most recent company newsletter distributed to residents in Blue Haven, Warnervale and the valleys.

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