

HUNTER VALLEY OPERATIONS

Hunter Valley Operations (HVO)
Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Meeting
Wednesday 17 August 2022 at 1.30 p.m.

Attendance

Chairperson

Dr. Colin Gellatly Independent Chair HVO CCC via WebEx

Community Representatives

Brian Atfield Community Representative

Todd Mills Community Representative

Janelle Wenham Community Representative

Singleton Council

CR. Hollee Jenkins Singleton Council via WebEx

Company Representatives

Tony Morris General Manager

Andrew Speechly Manager Environment & Community

Merri Bartlett Environment & Community Officer

Peter Bowman Environment & Community Officer

Catherine Fenton Approvals Coordinator HVO Continuation Project

Apologies

Michael Wellard Community Representative

Jeannie Hayes Community Representative

Di Gee Community Representative

Dr. Neville Hodgkinson Community Representative

Minutes Sarah Purser via WebEx

- Welcome;** Col opened the meeting and welcomed members in attendance both on site and via WebEx. Andrew ran through housekeeping and emergency procedures.

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners;

"We acknowledge the traditional owners of the land where we meet today and pay respect to Elders, past, present and future".

- Apologies;** Advised and recorded.
- Declaration of pecuniary interests/conflicts of interest; Standing;** Col and Sarah are engaged by HVO to provide the respective roles of Independent Chairperson and meeting minute taking.

4. Out of Session Correspondence

Via email

2/06/2022	Nathan	HVO Continuation Project Monthly Update – May 2022
4/07/2022	Nathan	HVO Continuation Project Monthly Update – June 2022
5/07/2022	Merri	Rehabilitation Management Plan
8/07/2022	Merri	Advice regarding Flood Recovery Assistance
2/08/2022	Nathan	HVO Continuation Project Monthly Update – July 2022
10/08/2022	Merri	Meeting Notice, Agenda & Business Papers for today's CCC Meeting

5. **Confirmation of the previous Meeting's Minutes;** Col called for formal approval of the Minutes for the Meeting held 18 May 2022 and the CCC confirmed their acceptance. The CCC Meeting Minutes are available on HVO's public website - InSite, and can be accessed on-line via <https://insite.hvo.com.au>

6. **Matters arising from the previous meeting held 18 May 2022 - Action Items**

Ongoing Action; HVO to continue to provide the CCC with a monthly update on the HVO Continuation Project.

- ✓ Provided to the CCC by Nathan for May, June and July 2022, members were invited to direct any queries to Nathan, Andrew or Merri.

Ongoing Action; HVO to provide an update on the detailed design for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall when the geotechnical studies have progressed.

- The geotechnical assessment has been delayed due to wet ground conditions, HVO have scheduled to progress that work in September 2022.

HVO to provide the CCC with results of their investigations and review of the two annual average exceedances against annual criteria at Warkworth monitoring in 2021. Col to review Neville's correspondence and provide feedback.

Andrew provided a detailed overview of HVO's investigation to compliment information that Neville had provided to Col. Please refer to Company Presentation Slides 8, 9, 10 and 11.

In summary:-

- ✓ The Annual Average PM10 Air Quality in Warkworth is below criteria.
- ✓ HVO responds to dust alerts sent from the PM10 monitor.
- ✓ HVO has obligations to occupants of mine owned residences.
- ✓ TSP is an amenity criteria, predicted to exceed Annual Averages in Warkworth. This monitor does not provide any additional value to the PM10 monitor.
- ✓ The Depositional Dust gauge is not representative of monitoring for HVO North.
- ✓ A recent review of HVO's Air Quality Monitoring Network recommends the TSP and Depositional Dust Monitoring in Warkworth be discontinued.

Andrew advised that HVO's tenants are provided with air quality monitoring data in the event of an exceedance and Col queried if any had subsequently terminated their lease agreement. Andrew responded that had not been the case and Peter confirmed that a number of tenants have been residing in Warkworth between 10 and 20 years, so they were considered long term residents.

Andrew noted that this information had been prepared in response to feedback from Neville regarding cumulative air quality impacts in the Warkworth Village area. As Neville was not in attendance at today's meeting Andrew advised he would provide the results of HVO's investigation to Neville and make an offer to discuss the results.

ACTION 1: Andrew to email Neville HVO's Warkworth Air Quality Monitoring presentation with an offer to provide an overview of the results.

7. **Company Reports | Update on Hunter Valley Operations**

Operations Update

Tony advised the extensive wet weather continued to have significant impacts on operations. In West Pit there had been increased water levels and in response HVO had implemented an intense pumping regime to transfer this water to key offsite storage dams.

Operations Update - Continued

Tony commented that similarly South Pit had also been affected, resulting in a volume drop in waste and coal due to the wet weather. Tony noted that absenteeism caused by the second round of Covid-19 cases influenced the availability of people to operate machinery.

Tony said it was positive news that the Enterprise Agreements had been finalised back in July. HVO has made offers of employment to approximately 120 people, with a number of contractors securing full time roles. HVO have continuing labour requirements, so there will be further opportunities to join the company over the upcoming months.

Tony advised that Riverview has now been mined up against the Golden Highway and approaching the end of mine life. Riverview's completion was scheduled for August 2023, however HVO will cease operating the dragline in September 2022 and mine with trucks and excavators to accelerate plans to finish. This will enable Riverview to become a key water storage area, with a capacity in the order of 4 gigalitres, which will assist HVO in storing water on site.

Todd queried the amount of water that HVO discharge per day and Andrew responded this is dependent on how much water is running in the Hunter River and salinity of the water. HVO have a maximum discharge licence across three points of 430 megalitres per day, however they rarely achieve that rate.

Environment

Licensed Water Discharge

HVO participates in the Hunter River Salinity Trading Scheme (HRSTS) and have three licensed discharge points; Lake James, Parnell's and Dam 11N, collectively totalling 430 megalitres. Andrew identified these discharge points via mapping and explained how water travels from each of these points to the Hunter River. Andrew provided an example of a water discharge on 17 August 2022 from Lake James and Parnell's with a combined value of 900 to 1,000 litres per second, which equated to 80 megalitres out of a total licence of 430 megalitres per day. Water discharge volumes from the three discharge points were provided for the period January through to August 2022.

Andrew advised that a company must hold a license to discharge and part of the regulation in the HRSTS is to allow discharge in high flow events, this is often when irrigators are not using water. The amount of water released is not to cause river salt levels to exceed 900 uS/cm to maintain water quality objectives. Water NSW advise industry participants of their total discharge allowance and credits held in the HRSTS, HVO holds approximately 90 credits.

In response to a query regarding the colour of water Andrew responded there are suspended solids limits which relates to the clarity of the water. HVO cannot discharge unless this criteria is met. Water quality is required to be continually monitored during release.

Water discharges are regulated by the EPA and real-time monitoring data is publically available via the Water NSW website <https://realtimedata.waternsw.com.au/> or Water Live app.

Complaints

There had been no additional community complaints received by HVO since 19 March 2022, as reported at the May CCC Meeting.

Water Containment Pollution Reduction Program

Andrew advised there has been significant capital investment by HVO to contemporise water facilities and reduce water leaving site:-

- ✓ Dam 28W enlargement has doubled its capacity and there is the ability to pump water back into the mine after storage.
- ✓ Burst pipe line detection means that HVO will receive an alarm to take action i.e. turning off water.
- ✓ Remote dam level monitoring and alarming has been installed on all types of dams i.e. mine water, sediment etc, the systems report back to the Control Rooms where there are procedures and actions to be undertaken at certain water levels.

Rehabilitation

Andrew explained the Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) now replaces the Mining Operations Plan (MOP) and that this is a Government initiative, the annual plan period is July 2022 to June 2023.

- ✓ 44 hectares of new rehabilitation (8.4 hectares seeded since start of 2022)
- ✓ 100 hectares are in second stage rehabilitation (16 hectares seeded since start of 2022)

Andrew noted that Tony had spoken about a reduction in material movement due to wet weather, he explained this has had a secondary impact on rehabilitation delivery as that material is placed on dumps for rehabilitation. Rehabilitation works have also been impacted by wet conditions, however HVO have completed maintenance in rehabilitated areas where they were able to get equipment on, including slashing and spraying of weeds in Cheshunt Pit.

Planned Rehabilitation 2022/2023

HVO presented the planned rehabilitation for Year 1 and Andrew identified forecasted disturbance and land prepared for rehabilitation, existing rehabilitation and disturbance, ecosystem and land use, explaining where these areas were located on site.

New Standard Rehabilitation Conditions

These regulations became effective 2 July 2022. HVO are required to initially provide the Rehabilitation targets on a financial year basis instead of calendar year. Andrew confirmed that the Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) had been provided to the CCC for consultation on 5 July 2022, he explained that the RMP essentially replaces the MOP that HVO have been working to over the past 20 years, the key components of the RMP new conditions include:-

- Rehabilitation Management Plan (RMP) – published on HVO website
- Rehabilitation Objectives Statement – requires approval
- Rehabilitation Completion Criteria Statement – requires approval
- Final Landform Plan – requires approval
- Rehabilitation cost estimate and security – requires approval
- Forward Work Programme (three year plan – rehab and disturbance)
- Annual Rehabilitation Report – published on HVO website
- Maintain rehabilitation records

HVO will provide an Annual Rehabilitation Report to the Regulators reporting on performance against projected rehabilitation and disturbance. Andrew noted that to a degree rehabilitation records are already

captured in the Annual Environmental Review. Andrew advised that all mining companies are required to transition from the MOP to RMP.

Feral Pest Management 2022

Peter provided an overview of the program of activities for 2022, synchronised baiting programs are coordinated with other sites and the Hunter Local Land Services. HVO have completed Summer and Autumn 1080 Wild Dog Control Programs and the Autumn Hoggone pig baiting program. The number and type of pests controlled YTD 2022 were presented. The spring Hoggone pig baiting program dates will coincide with Wild Dog Control Programs. HVO are supporting rural licensee pig baiting programs via bounty payments and Kangaroo commercial harvests are underway with two new commercial harvesters currently on-boarded.

Peter noted Autumn results remain consistent, however HVO will not drop any of their Wild Dog Control programs and continue to run three per year and acknowledged that coordination with other sites has been effective.

Heritage

Proposed activities:

Archerfield Stables

Vegetation maintenance and structural works on verandas have been completed. Agricultural heritage items were stored in situ whilst structural works were underway. Peter showed before and after pictures identifying the progress of maintenance and restoration works, he noted that all timber work was matched with existing species with the expectation in years ahead that all the new work will meld into existing. Peter noted that another benefit of using this timber is that it is termite resistant.

Dog Leg Fence

The Asset Protection Zone maintenance is planned for August 2022 which involves vegetation clearance to create a fire break.

LEP listed properties

Yard maintenance works and Termite Interception System inspections are ongoing. Peter noted that wet warm conditions are ideal for termites to get moving, so these systems are vital.

Reporting, Exceedances and Inspections


Rehabilitation Management Plan complete and uploaded to the HVO website on 1 July 2022. The Forward Work Programme was submitted to the Resources Regulator on 1 August 2022.

Incidents

Andrew provided an overview of overflow events at Dam 2N on 4 July and Dam 35S, 39S and 15N on 6 July 2022 due to heavy rainfall over the July period, he detailed investigations and reporting undertaken by HVO.

HVO Continuation Project - Update

Catherine presented the process flow for the Continuation Project, HVO are currently working on completion of all assessment studies, as reported at the last CCC.

 EIS study work is ongoing with the majority of technical assessments at report stage. The main EIS document is currently being drafted by EMM Consulting.

- ✚ Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC) Referral is being assessed by the Federal Department of Climate Change Energy the Environment and Water (DCCEEW). Catherine explained it is a complex site so the DCCEEW wanted further information which HVO have provided, HVO were hoping for a decision on this Federal Referral on 20 August 2022.

HVO Continuation Project - Update - Continued

What's next:

- ✚ Community Newsletter with a project update to be distributed in August 2022.
- ✚ Consultation meetings with near neighbours to commence in September to discuss outcomes of technical studies and proposed mitigation measures.
- ✚ Social Impact Assessment (SIA) interviews with EMM consulting will follow.
- ✚ Further community information sessions are to be scheduled for later in 2022.
- ✚ Consultation with government agencies and other stakeholders are also required as per the Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs).
- ✚ EIS forecast to be completed prior to next CCC meeting, HVO will continue to provide monthly updates. Offer of an extraordinary CCC meeting may be required to run through EIS outcomes.
- ✚ EIS summary booklet will be distributed summarising key outcomes of studies.

Catherine explained the EIS is an extensive document, HVO will prepare a summary booklet to be distributed in the latter part of 2022, however members are welcome to read the whole EIS if they desire.

Brian asked if HVO had received any objections to the Continuation Project, Catherine responded that the application had not yet been lodged and noted that following lodgement the EIS will go on Public Exhibition. It is at that point that objections can be made.

HVO South Modification - Additional Ammonium Nitrate storage

Andrew advised this proposal is to store additional Ammonium Nitrate near the existing ANE plant in the South Pit.

The proposed AN compound would be established to:-

- ✚ Store AN stacks in a fenced open air compound.
- ✚ Meet the minimum protected works distances for Class A, Class B and Vulnerable Facilities.
- ✚ Be designed in accordance with Australian Standard AS4326.
- ✚ Provide capacity to store up to 7,250 t of AN.

Andrew noted that at the May CCC HVO had advised of their approval to manufacture ammonium nitrate emulsion, he indicated on mapping where the ANE plant will be located. The Department have requested that HVO complete a modification to their development consent to store additional Ammonium Nitrate and a scoping letter has been submitted to the DPE.

Community

Round One of HVO's Community Grants Programme closed in June 2022, Andrew provided detail of the local organisations that had been successful in obtaining funds totalling almost \$32,000.00. Andrew advised if members have ideas or know organisations needing assistance, particularly going into 2023, to get in touch. Merri advised the CCC via email on 25 August 2022 that Round Two of the Community grants Programme was opening on Friday 2 September 2022 and provided a link to the application page.

9. Community Representative Feedback

Brian Atfield

Brian thanked HVO for funding the Mental Health First Aid Course on which there had been six participants in attendance that had benefited from the course which was held in Jerrys Plains over the weekend of 13 to 14 August 2022.

Janelle Wenham

Janelle's main concern was the erosion along the Hunter River as a result of the July 2022 floods and she wanted to know what can and is going to be done, as farmers do not have control over this land. Janelle described the area from Glennies Creek to Wollombi Brook, when looking from the eastern side, noting it can be seen where the flow comes through. Janelle provided an example of farmland on the river bank side where 30 metres from the length of the farm had eroded and ended up downstream.

Janelle felt she had been lucky that their property had not flooded and believes this erosion is caused by water being forced to go around a build up in the river. Andrew queried what Janelle's thoughts were to address this and the response was that keeping the river side clean and removing the oak trees would assist, as this would stop water being forced to the outside of the river which is causing the devastation. Along with removal of trees, Janelle felt consideration should be given to returning to back burning.

Janelle queried if HVO could assist with her approach to the relevant Government body and Col asked who this concern could be raised with. Andrew responded that this would be the DPE Water Section and that even though HVO is a large company he was uncertain they would have any greater effectiveness in proposing that the river be cleared out. Andrew noted that HVO could potentially assist with community projects related to river bank stabilisation.

Andrew noted that the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue (UHMD) has an annual community day to discuss what is happening in the mining Industry and made an offer to make an approach to NSW Mining to advise that river bank erosion had been raised at this CCC. Merri added that she and Brian would be attending the UHMD Community event on 16 November 2022.

ACTION 2: Andrew to communicate feedback from the CCC regarding riverbank erosion via the UHMD.

ACTION 3: Col to correspond with the DPE Water Section, advising of concerns raised at this CCC in regard to river bank erosion as a result of the July 2022 floods and ask if they have any programs in place to address this. Col to extend an invitation to DPE Water Section to attend a future HVO CCC Meeting.

Todd Mills

Todd queried if HVO were aware of the asbestos in a shed at the tenanted property adjacent to his property on Maison Dieu Road. Peter explained that asbestos is included in building inspections on HVO tenanted properties and bonded if required. In the event of deterioration, asbestos is removed.

10. General Business

No general business was put forward

11. Next CCC Meeting: Wednesday 2 November 2022 at 1.30 p.m.

ACTIONS ARISING

ACTION 1: Andrew to email Neville HVO's Warkworth Air Quality Monitoring presentation with an offer to provide an overview of the results.

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ONGOING ACTIONS

HVO to continue to provide the CCC with a monthly update on the HVO Continuation Project.

HVO to provide an update on the detailed design for the North Void Tailings Storage Facility Barrier Wall when the geotechnical studies have progressed - scheduled for September 2022.

HVO Complaints and Blasting Hotline is 1800 888 733 (free call) - Attended 24/7

To make an environmental complaint | Find out road closure times for blasting

SMS Blasting Notification System - Send an SMS to 0447 448 982 with word subscribe included in text

Websites - HVO -information about the operation: <https://hvo.com.au>