



Dargues Reef

Community Consultative Committee

Minutes of Thirty-fifth Meeting

The DRCCC held its 35th meeting on 16 March 2020 via teleconference.

Meeting

Attendance:

- Members – Brian Elton Chairperson, Philip Owen, David Lever, Bill Waterhouse, Mano Manoharam, Matt Darwon, Kathleen Waddell, Stewart Needham, Pete Harrison (QPRC), Paul Rouse (Dargues Gold Mine), Chase Dingle (Dargues Gold Mine), Shannon Green (Dargues Gold Mine)
- Observers – Andrew Jackson (Dargues Gold Mine) and James Dornan (Dargues Gold Mine)
- Hannah Bubb (Elton Consulting – minutes)

Apologies were received from: Peter Cormick, Belinda Royds and Karis Sanderson.

Not present: Rebecca Bigg.

Welcome and introductions

The Chair thanked the CCC for attending by teleconference.

Pecuniary and other interests

In keeping with the *Community Consultative Committee Guidelines – State Significant Projects* (Department of Planning and Environment, 2016) all members are asked to declare any pecuniary or other interests. No changes were reported by members present.

Minutes

The minutes of the CCC meetings are available to the public at the Braidwood office of the Queanbeyan-Palerang Regional Council and via the Company's website (www.divminerals.com.au).

Matters arising

None raised.

Correspondence

The Chair noted correspondence received through Matt Darwon to DGM from Randall Lemin. This correspondence is provided in Attachment 1.

DGM Presentation

Shannon Green and Chase Dingle presented an update from DGM. The presentation slides are provided as Attachment 2. The following component of the minutes notes questions, responses and information provided additionally to the slides.

Shannon noted that recent weather events had impacted their progress however DGM had been able to complete other projects. Shannon introduced Chase Dingle who had commenced as Sustainability Manager and Andrew Jackson, Senior Environmental and Community Advisor.

Shannon addressed Matt Darwon's question regarding Essential Energy works in the area. Shannon stated:

- high voltage infrastructure had been installed and commissioned
- generators are still in use on site
- DGM expects that night time generators in the workshop and admin area won't be needed from the end of March.

Shannon added:

- underground dewatering is the current focus on site as the bottom of the mine was flooded – this will be dewatered into the completed TSF
- Crawford, the trucking contractor, had been engaged and run through the traffic code of conduct
- additional Harvestable Rights Dam (HRD) construction had been delayed due to weather. As a result, weather events had informed the design and construction approach for future HRDs.

Sediment discharge

The CCC were updated on two sediment events – one recently closed and one recently opened. On the earlier event, the EPA notification had been shared with the CCC and placed on DGM's website.

Stewart Needham queried how the EPA releases the information that it had chosen to fine the Company and whether the EPA can release information to CCC members?

Chase Dingle responded:

- the EPA's media release on their website identifies the facts, however, DGM was concerned that some of the statements did not reflect conversations with the EPA
- DGM had received positive feedback on measures to inform stakeholders and community as well as their response
- DGM understand that the media release is as much information as the EPA will usually share.

Stewart stated that it would be helpful if this information was available in one place. Stewart asked whether the EPA could be contacted to ensure any incident or findings are shared with the CCC.

Shannon raised that the incident report, update and media release had been provided to the CCC by DGM.

The Chair noted that it is not usual protocol for the EPA to forward media releases to CCCs. The Chair undertook to suggest this to the EPA as a general issue.

Matt Darwon stated that DGM's correspondence regarding the incident and the penalty had been satisfactory.

Chase provided an update on the 10 March 2020 event, stating:

- the investigation is still underway
- it appears that a join failed along a pipeline from the TSF to the underground mine, this join was located at the top of the TSF
- DGM immediately notified and inspected in line with the DGM Pollution Incident Response Management Plan
- DGM is currently preparing a final notification for the EPA.

Matt Darwon asked, at what time were you informed and how much earlier had the pipe split?

Chase responded that he and Andrew were notified around 1pm and the EPA was notified around 3pm. Chase added that samples were taken immediately along Spring and Majors Creek and an investigation is still underway to understand when the join failed.

Stewart asked, is the pipeline in a bunded corridor and is there any other protection for future spills?

Chase responded:

- the pipeline was temporary and only being used to transfer sediment laden water from the TSF to the underground mine workings so that construction works could be completed. As it is a temporary pipeline and the fact DGM had no history of such failures, DGM deemed it not necessary for additional bunding
- the immediate response was to find where the join was located, stop and isolate the pipe which was pulled into the TSF
- the risk of it recurring has been avoided
- DGM is still investigating to understand why it failed.

Stewart queried, is the pipeline corridor generally isolated? Stewart also asked, is there a risk of another event?

Chase responded:

- during the operational phase pumping to the underground workings won't occur directly from the TSF
- all pipeline ratings are currently being reviewed as part of the investigation.

In response to a question from Matt Darwon, Chase stated that:

- line diameter is 110mm
- the join is a Plasson metric fitting, not welded

Shannon added, DGM is investigating the fittings as these fittings are commonly used onsite and within the industry, with a pressure rating far in excess of what it was being operated at.

Matt asked, does this investigation need to go to the EPA before DGM can share more information?

Chase responded:

- it depends on level of investigation by EPA
- DGM is cooperating fully with the EPA's investigation
- DGM is finalising the detailed investigation and are consulting with EPA on how they wish to proceed
- DGM had received a positive response from the EPA regarding the earlier event and our response
- DGM will seek to keep the CCC as informed as reasonably practicable.

Environment

Chase informed the CCC that noise monitoring had occurred last week and another round is scheduled for March to coincide with commissioning activities.

Matt stated that he had discussed the positions of loggers along the boundary line and George Street with DGM. Matt queried whether loggers could be introduced there or anywhere else in Majors Creek.

Chase responded, one real-time logger has been installed as part of the approved Noise Management Plan, adding that there is the ability to relocate this logger in response to concerns from community or proactive monitoring, on a temporary basis.

Matt asked, are there any other positions for monitoring?

Chase responded, Andrew will regularly complete attended monitoring, adding that this is proactive monitoring program to assess any changes in operations or weather conditions.

Matt asked, will DGM bring in a consultant again for commissioning?

Chase responded, the consultant will do more verification testing including at set monitoring and distances to help understand noise from different parts of the plant.

Matt asked, will this involve extrapolating what elements of the plant are creating noise at night and day time?

Chase responded, this will involve monitoring at sensitive receivers.

Chase agreed to inform the CCC when evening and night monitoring is occurring.

Regarding air quality sampling, Chase stated that DGM had experienced some elevated readings caused by bushfires.

Regarding water monitoring, Stewart queried how earthworks are operating.

Chase responded:

- The project successfully managed two individual rainfall events greater than 140mm of rain
- the surface water infrastructure and supporting pumping infrastructure held up well and managed to contain all the rainfall

- the clean water diversion drain on the TSF had been sprayed with hydro mulch leading into the rain event and that the rain had helped across the site in revegetating some areas recently rehabilitated following construction activities.

Stewart queried whether the sediment laden runoff would settle down.

Chase responded, that sediment discharge from site is an element that will require ongoing maintenance and supervision, but the recent rainfall events had seen the existing controls work effectively. Chase added that Andrew Jackson has extensive experience with erosion sediment control.

Chase updated the CCC on the site's biodiversity offset requirement, stating:

- DGM contacted the Department of Planning, Industry and Environment seeking an extension to satisfy the condition until February 2021, which was granted
- the request for extension was based on the significant time and resources invested in sourcing the difficult to locate vegetation as stated in our SSD conditions and that DGM believes this does not reflect the existing environment
- DGM committed to update the Department whilst continuing their investigation
- DGM will update the CCC at the next meeting.

Regarding the Water Management Plan, Chase noted that the monthly water balance review meeting is to be held on site to review and forecast the water balance, and determine what management measures to put in place.

Stewart noted that DGM had provided an amended Water Management Plan and sought an indication of DGM's modifications and how these modifications had incorporated comments from CCC and EPA.

Chase responded that a number of comments were received and have been addressed in a response to submissions. Chase added that DGM have incorporated the comments where reasonably practicable and required by the SSD conditions.

In response to a question from Stewart, Chase noted the next steps:

- the response to RFI and Water Management Plan update are with DPIE for review
- DPIE could seek more information from DGM or approve as modified
- once approved by DPIE, the Water Management Plan will be available online and the CCC will be informed.

DGM thanked those community and DCCC members who had made a submission.

Matters which community representatives wish to raise with Dargues Gold Mine

Compensatory Flow Program

David Lever provided questions regarding the Compensatory Flow Program, in Attachment 1, and spoke to the item, stating:

- there has been concern, for some time, that the Company is failing to comply with its obligations under the CFP
- there is particular concern with how DGM has determined when the CFP should commence in interpreting s7.9.2, where there is no ambiguity in the provision
 - *Following receipt of all base flow monitoring results, the Company will, within 3 business days, review that data against the trigger value identified in Table 7.6 [3.2L/sec]. In the event that the measured flow rate together with the Compensatory Flow Program is lower than the trigger value, the Company will immediately arrange for further check sampling to be undertaken to confirm the initial monitoring result. It is noted that the check sampling will be required to be undertaken following a period of no rainfall, to ensure that base flows only are being measured. Should the check sampling indicate that Majors Creek base flow volumes remain lower than the trigger value, the Company will immediately increase the rate at which water is being discharged as part of the CFP to achieve the identified base flow trigger value.*
- section 7.9.1 notes that the trigger value was determined based on a combination of monitoring of base flow prior to the commencement of mining operations, as well as groundwater modelling
- the flow in Majors Creek has ranged between 0.0L/sec and 75.0L/sec, with flows less than 3.2L/s most of the time since July 2019
- section 5.5.1.2 states that “releases to Majors Creek as part of the CFP will commence at the same time as dewatering of the mine commences” – dewatering commenced in July 2018
- DGM has not suggested any change to the wording around the CFP in the current update to the WMP
- farmers in Araluen have been subject to a cease to pump rule, in relation to their access to water in Araluen Creek
- people in Araluen are concerned that the CFP has not commenced and mine is able to pump – provisions are being breached.

James Dornan took the questions on notice, adding:

- the CFP was in place during original EA to reflect the need for the mine to compensate flow in Spring and Majors Creeks, compensating withdrawal from the aquifer as a result of mining activities
- the CFP is not in place to keep flow at 3.2L/s
- the 3.2L/s trigger value is one for further investigation – the plan operates that should baseflow in Majors Creek drop below 3.2L/s the mine will investigate whether this is caused by the mine and, if so, compensate
- although the baseflow has dropped below 3.2L/s, DGM believe this to be due to drought conditions.

David queried how DGM determines the cause of the reduced baseflow. James undertook to provide an overview of how the CFP is calculated at the next CCC meeting – this was supported by Matt and David.

David added there is concern regarding future droughts and DGM still requires EPA approval for the water for the HRD. Kathleen stated that she supported David's comments and that there had been little information from DGM on the CFP, noting Araluen residents had raised this concern.

The Chair committed to following up the CFP discussion with Chase and James.

Site visit

The Chair noted recommendations from Peter Cormick and Stewart that site visits undertaken allow people to get off the bus.

Stewart stated:

- site visits should be used to look at where an issue has occurred in the previous months
- the CCC understand the need to comply with all WHS requirements
- it is critical that CCC is able to view areas of incidents
- it is appropriate that CCC members are able to visit areas of interest whilst supervised, including significant infrastructure.

Matt supported these concerns and requested that DGM provide a detailed tour of the processing facility if possible. Matt added that it was a surprise that the CCC couldn't get out of the bus at the last meeting's site visit.

Shannon responded that site visits will need to be structured in future so that CCC members can be inducted properly. Paul Rouse added that during the intense construction period, which is nearing completion, there were many contractors on site – the CCC will be able to have a better view of the site now.

The Chair stated that the meeting agenda items and site visit plans will be determined ahead of the meeting. The Chair added, the CCC will be engaged to prioritise locations for the site visit and the next CCC meeting site visit to focus on the processing plant.

In response to a question from Bill Waterhouse, Shannon stated that visitor inductions are required to be completed at each visit to follow a regularly updated process.

Stewart agreed with the Chair's proposal for planning site visits, requesting that if there have been any incidents between visits that these locations are automatically included.

Bill suggested that the format include a tour on the bus and a walk around at a specific location.

Matt thanked DGM for the support during the bushfires adding that it was a comfort to the community and DGM's role was appreciated. It was noted that CCC members Peter Cormick and Kathleen Waddell had lost their properties to the bushfires. The CCC expressed their sympathies to Peter and Kathleen.

Stewart requested that DGM's future presentations include incident reporting as a regular item as this is a key issue for the CCC.

David Lever asked, who do community members contact given Len Sharp's departure?

Chase responded, DGM encourage people to continue to use the email DGM.Community@divminerals.com.au which allows Chase, Andrew and Shannon to receive the correspondence.

Shannon thanked Matt for acknowledging the DGM resources provided during the bushfires and added further condolences to impacted CCC members. Matt responded that DGM's effort was appreciated.

Matters which Dargues Gold Mine wishes to raise with the community representatives

Items were discussed during the presentation.

Other business

Matt Darwon proposed that if a new community CCC member is sought, that a representative from Majors Creek is nominated.

Next Meeting

The Chair noted that he will monitor health advice and assume face to face meetings will occur in the future. The Chair thanked CCC members for participating and adjusting to the teleconference format

The below dates are provided as tentative days and times for a future meeting.

- Monday, 22 June 2020 at 2:30pm
- Monday, 14 September 2020 at 2:30pm

The Chair will negotiate the dates and times for the balance of the year between meetings, and will endeavor to give at least 10 working days' notice if any additional meetings are to be held.

These minutes are endorsed by



Brian Elton
Independent Chairperson
Dargues Reef Community Consultative Committee

Attachment 1

As one who has never been in favour of the Dargues Gold Mine, I nevertheless accepted the Government decision to allow the operation to proceed.

There have been two recent events that appear to confirm that Majors Creek residents have indeed been fortunate in having Pybar Mining Services as the primary operator of Dargues.

I would like to express my gratitude to Pybar for these incidents which I believe demonstrate their commitment to achieving good corporate citizen status.

The first was in their successful effort to retrieve the body of miner Cameron Goss killed in an accident at Henty Gold Mine. This must have been an extremely expensive operation for the Company, and yet their prime concern appeared always to be for Cameron and his family. I once heard that “ one should never lament casually, but within the strict confines of dignity and beauty ”, and the Company seems to have heeded that instruction in the aftermath of the accident.

The second instance was closer to home during the bushfire episode. Pybar appeared to be very proactive in assisting with the construction of containment lines and providing access to water to the general public for fire fighting. Eventually the crisis passed without major damage to the Village, but at least the Company showed a willingness to support the more traditional firefighting mechanisms in whatever way they could.

One can only hope that there are no serious accidents at Dargues, and that the Company maintains this same ethical approach to their operations.

Sincerely Randall Lemin

Attachment 2

Progress of the Project



SAFETY
SERVICE
RESPECT
RESULTS

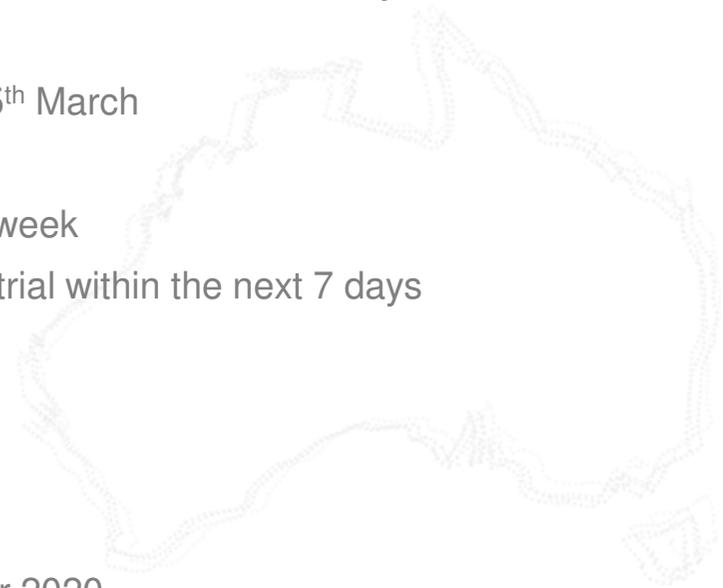


DARGUES
GOLD MINE

PYBAR
MINING SERVICES

Look ahead - next 3 months

- Dewatering of the Underground Mine – over 40ML pumped U/G since start of February
- Secure offsite Biodiversity Offset Area
- Final Processing Plant commissioning with first ore planned 25th March
- 24/7 operation of Processing Plant – late March
- Tailings Storage Facility completion and commissioning – this week
- Commencement of concentrate trucking – late March with dry trial within the next 7 days
- Further local employment
- Construction of additional Harvestable Rights Dam
- Next Community Information Session – proposed for April
- 2nd round of Community Grants – April
- Finalise Dargues Gold Mine School Environmental Program for 2020
- Community Engagement Survey – coming soon.....



Sediment Discharge Event Update

17 September 2019

- Incident Report published on website
- Proponent of Dargues Gold Mine (Big Island Mining) issued with a \$15,000 Penalty Infringement Notice for an alleged breach of s120 of the *Protection of Environment Operations Act 1979*.
- Outcome communicated via statement on the website & email to DCCC.

10 March 2020

- Sediment laden water discharged from pipeline used to transfer water from the Tailings Storage Facility (TSF) to the Underground Mine.
- All regulatory agencies were immediately notified, along with DCCC, the Downstream Water Users Group and the community via our website and Facebook.
- An Incident Report will be available once the investigation is complete.

Environmental and Approvals

- Environmental Monitoring – Status given recent bushfires
 - Noise Monitoring – conducted in March with further monitoring proposed during 24 hour commissioning of Processing Plant
 - High Volume Air Sampling – elevated readings during reporting period due to bushfire smoke
 - All water monitoring conducted during reporting period in accordance with WMP, including event monitoring related to February & March rain events (151mm & 140mm respectively)
 - Blast monitor and weather station calibration complete during reporting period
- Timeframe to secure an offsite biodiversity offset area
 - 12 month extension granted by DoPIE
- Update on Environmental Management Plans – Water Management Plan
 - Feedback received from EPA, DoPIE & DCCC members
 - Response to 'Request for Information' and an amended water management plan has been submitted to DPIE for approval
 - Monthly Water Balance review meeting underway onsite

Contacts

The best source of up-to-date information is our website:

www.divminerals.com.au

Or

<https://www.facebook.com/DivMinerals/>

For more detailed assistance please call the Dargues Gold Mine Information Line on 1800 732 002 or alternatively email DGM.Community@divminerals.com.au

For Employment, visit the PYBAR careers page: <https://careers.pybar.com.au>

Community Newsletter - <http://www.divminerals.com.au/newsletter/>

Next Community Consultative Committee – 16 June 2020 at 2:30pm

SAFETY
SERVICE
RESPECT
RESULTS


DARGUES
GOLD MINE



Meeting close

