



COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (INCORPORATING NEW COBAR COMPLEX PROJECT CCC)

MINUTES

The meeting was held on 4 June 2020 at the Peak Gold Mines, Hillston Road, Cobar. (Chair and Jonathon Thompson by telephone)

Meeting commenced at 4.09pm.

Present at the Meeting:

Garry West (Independent Chair)
Julie Payne (Community Representative)
Russell Grant (Community Representative)
Craig Thomas (General Manager, Peak Gold Mines)
Samantha Lloyd (Peak Gold Mines, Environment and Social Responsibility Advisor)
Laura Barnes (Peak Gold Mines, Graduate Environment and Social Responsibility Advisor) as Observer
Jonathon Thompson (Aurelia Metals Ltd, Representative, Group Manager, Environment)
Garry Ryman (Cobar Shire Council, Director of Planning & Environmental Services) as Observer

1. Apologies

Chris Bruce (Community Representative)
Kay Stingemore (Community Representative)

2. Introduction of New General Manager

Craig Thomas provided an account of his 30 years experience in the mining industry.

3. Pecuniary and other interests

NIL

- 4. Minutes of Last Meeting** – Minutes of CCC meeting on 3 March 2020 were confirmed on 18 March 2020 and uploaded to the company website.
- 5. Correspondence** – Cobar Shire Council advised of the appointment of Cr Julie Payne as Council's representative on the New Cobar Complex and DPIE advised the appointment of Kay Stingemore, Chris Bruce and Russell Grant as Community representatives on the New Cobar Complex CCC.

6. Company Presentation

A presentation was provided detailing the environmental performance of the Peak Mine operations. (A copy will accompany the final minutes and be placed on the company website)

An update on employment statistics was provided.

Peak Gold Mines Employees:

- Total workforce: 137 employees (previous quarter 134 employees)
- Residing in Cobar: 112 employees (previous quarter 122 employees)
- Residing within 300km radius of Cobar: 7 employees (previous quarter 5 employees)

Pybar Employees:

- Total workforce: 204 employees and labour hire (previous quarter 200 employees)
- Residing in Cobar: 93 employees (previous quarter 109 employees)
- Residing within 300km radius of Cobar: 10 employees (previous quarter 5 employees)

Environmental Monitoring

Blast vibrations have been well below the limit for all periods over the last quarter.

Several complaints were received regarding blasting vibration and one notification. Complaints are categorised into notifications and complaints. All blasts were below the 10mm/s licence limit.

Dust monitoring at both the mine and town gauges show the annualised depositional dust results are compliant with licence conditions.

There were 5 recordable injuries in the last quarter. 3 in January; 1 February and 1 March. Recordable injuries are Medical Treatment, Restricted Duties and Lost Time injuries. The total recordable injury frequency rate (TRIFR) for site is 12.03.

Raw water usage declined during 2019 and 2020 usage is at similar levels. Water usage is under constant review.

Environmental Incident (New Cobar Dam 4 Seepage)

From late March to early April a large rainfall event occurred. New Cobar Dam 4 (NCD4) catches rainfall runoff from New Cobar Complex offices, shaft & winder house, surface workshops and laydown areas. NCD4 has contingency measures in place to pump to the settling ponds where the water is transferred to either Spain's Dam or the Young Australia Dam (as per EPL Conditions) during rainfall events to reduce the risk of an uncontrolled discharge from site.

The pump in NCD4 failed, allowing the water level to rise, in turn breaching the trigger level in the dam. A small seepage point developed in the south-western wall.

No pooling water was observed beyond the road reserve. Samples were taken approximately 300m past this point as a precaution. No environmental harm was observed as a result of the incident and no clean-up works were undertaken as the clean-up would have had a greater environmental impact than the impact of the incident.

The failed pump has been replaced with a pontoon style system. Preventative maintenance checks will be completed on a monthly basis in the future and environmental dam inspections will be undertaken monthly and after 20mm rain events as per the current procedure.

Great Cobar Pipeline

Pumping of Great Cobar groundwater has commenced. The water quality includes high total dissolved solids and heavy metals and additional water treatment will be necessary prior to use. Peak are currently in the process of installing a Reverse Osmosis (RO) plant.

New Cobar Complex

The Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) were issued on 12 February 2020.

Technical assessments have progressed including: Field component associated with traffic, surface water and groundwater assessments; Baseline Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) field sampling has been conducted; and modelling associated with air quality and groundwater has commenced.

The EIS is on schedule to be submitted by Q1 2021. Community engagement and consultation have been via online and print platforms due to COVID-19.

Great Cobar Exploration Decline

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) was submitted to the Resources regulator and Cobar Shire Council on 14 February 2020 and approved by the Resources regulator on 8 May 2020. Despite this approval, there are no immediate plans to commence the exploration decline.

Tailings Storage Facility – Life of Mine Approval

A development application is being prepared to support a life of mine construction program for the tailings storage facility (TSF). The proposal includes three components: TSF construction schedule to contain tailings to 2035; rehabilitation of the Queen Bee via transportation of waste rock from Queen Bee to existing operations; and surface exploration within the Mining Leases. Feedback is encouraged.

The TSF lift is approved to stage 4; the proposal will allow for stages 5, 6 and 7; no additional land disturbance is proposed; final elevation will be 17m higher than current stage; and will provide tailings capacity until 2035.

Rehabilitation of the historic Queen Bee mine via transportation of waste rock material from Queen Bee to existing operations requires approval and the material will be used for the TSF construction, storage in the New Cobar Complex waste rock dump or transported underground for use as backfill. A traffic assessment is required.

The surface exploration requires approval on existing Mining Leases and will only be within disturbed areas.

Recent donations to community organisations were outlined.

7. Matters which Community Representatives wish to raise with the mine operator

- Question was raised regarding water being discharged into the Young Australia Complex. It was identified that PGM had not discharged to the facility since January 2019. PGM are licenced to discharge to the Young Australia Complex under their Environmental Protection Licence. The water discharged is classed as contaminated as the makeup is primarily dewatering water or site water runoff. Signage has been installed around the dams to notify public not to drink or swim in the water.
- Community Concerns about the Mining Camp. Perception is that it is owned and operated by PGM which is incorrect. The Camp provides accommodation for other mines as well as Peak.

8. General Business

PGM is seeking input in regard to the COVID-19 guidance that is provided to contractors about their interaction within the town of Cobar. As restrictions are being lifted by the NSW Government should contractors now be permitted to go to town to buy groceries and socialise? What is the community response? After general discussion indicating the community was somewhat divided on the issue it was agreed that the guidance should be modified to encourage contractors to interact with the town but with caution.

Next Meeting

3 September 2020 commencing at 4pm

Meeting Closed: 5.20pm