

MINUTES

NSW Minerals Council UHMD – Joint Working Group - Water

UHMD Resource Centre, Upstairs of the Town Square Shopping Centre
Suite 1, 159 John Street, Singleton NSW 2330

Wednesday 11 May 2016: 10.00am – 1.00pm

In attendance

David O'Brien (Chair)	Glencore
Chris New	Rio Tinto
Julie Thomas	Muswellbrook Coal
Rebekah Gomez-Fort	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Bob Mackie	<i>theresource</i>
Chris Quinn	The Bloomfield Group
Bruce Devonport	Singleton Council
Andrew Rode	NSW Minerals Council

Apologies

Greg Sullivan	NSW Minerals Council
Ron Fenwick	UHMD - Individual Contact
James Benson	Anglo American
Harry Egan	Peabody Energy
Wendy Bowman	NSW Mine Watch
Adam Gilligan	NSW Environment Protection Authority
Ken Bray	Hunter Valley Water Users' Association
James Barben	Yancoal Australia

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed attendees and noted apologies. The Chair noted a drop in attendance and that a quorum had not formed for the meeting. The members present decided to proceed with the meeting in the absence of a formal quorum.

2. Minutes and actions of the previous meeting

The minutes of the 12 November 2015 meeting were confirmed.

3. Water Resources Map

Andrew Rode provided an update on the water resources map, advising that DRE was working on an updated test version of Common Ground.

4. Hunter Bioregional Assessment

The working group discussed the *Coal and CSG resource assessment* document. Julie Thomas advised that some sections relating to West Muswellbrook were incorrect. The working group agreed to review whether any other sites were also incorrect, and advise the Office of Water Science, and other relevant agencies.

ACTION:

- NSWMC to seek review of the *Coal and CSG resource assessment* from industry members and advise of any necessary changes to the Office of Water Science, Division of Resources and Energy and DPI - Water.

5. MCA Water Accounting Framework

The working group reviewed the 2015 water accounting framework information and suggested that since there was delay in preparing the 2014 data, that the 2015 data should be the focus of the media release and exclusive story. The 2014 data would be released as a soft-launch to the website only. The working group also suggested that the rainfall data be checked, as it seemed higher than expected.

ACTIONS:

- NSWMC to postpone release of MCA Water Accounting Framework data until the 2015 data is available.
- NSWMC to review the rainfall data for the Upper Hunter.

6. Hunter River Salinity Trading Scheme Review

The working group discussed EPA's proposal for companies to monitor metals in their discharge water. The working group suggested that the work should be supported by regional monitoring program of the background metals / metalloid levels in the Hunter River that should be undertaken by the NSW Government.

ACTIONS:

- Chris New to discuss the EPA's approach to monitoring metals in discharge water at the HRSTS Committee meeting.
- NSWMC to organise a meeting with EPA to discuss its proposal for companies to monitor metals in discharge water.

7. Voids project

The working group agreed that a regional committee should be established to provide a strategic view of voids (and rehabilitation / post-mining land use). It was important to consider how this initiative would tie together with the update of the Upper Hunter Synoptic Plan.

ACTION:

- NSWMC to arrange a meeting with the Department of Planning and Environment and the Division of Resources and Energy to discuss a voids/rehabilitation Upper Hunter regional committee and how it may tie in with the update of the Upper Hunter Synoptic Plan.

8. UHMD Annual Forum Report

The working group reflected upon the fact that public outrage associated with mining in the Upper Hunter had diminished significantly and that the UHMD was becoming less concerning for several community members. It was therefore considered appropriate to consider consolidating working groups, reducing the regularity of meetings. Some of the projects (such as the water accounting reporting and rehabilitation reporting) could potentially continue without much direct review and involvement with the community members. Overall it was believed that the working group and UHMD could be transitioned to a less resource intensive exercise and that community and other members could be brought together to deal with any emerging and key issues.

9. Update on UHMD communications initiatives

The working group noted the communications updates.

The working group was very supportive of the schools tours idea, suggesting also that they be built into their science / STEM courses. It was suggested that in the medium to long term these tours could include the whole coal production and export system, including the power stations, train lines and ports. It was also suggested that collateral and videos be provided to students whilst on the buses.

10. Working group performance, relevance and strategic direction

The working group suggested that some of the considerations about the working group's strategic direction be considered post a UHMD resurvey.

Due to the reduced attendance at meetings it was suggested that the Joint Advisory Steering Committee consider whether the water working group should be discontinued.

ACTION:

- NSWMC to ensure UHMD resurvey considers the importance of water issues.
- JASC to consider whether to discontinue water working group.

11. Other Business

Andrew Rode advised that Anglo American was no longer a member of the NSW Minerals Council, or the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue.

The meeting closed at 12:10pm.

**Actions arising from meeting on 11 May 2016
UHMD Water Joint Working Group Meeting**

Action	Responsibility	Status
1. Welcome and Apologies		
2. Minutes and actions of previous meeting		
3. Water Resources Map		
4. Hunter Bioregional Assessment		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to seek review of the <i>Coal and CSG resource assessment</i> from industry members and advise of any necessary changes to the Office of Water Science, Division of Resources and Energy and DPI - Water. 	NSWMC	Completed
5. MCA Water Accounting Framework		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to postpone release of MCA Water Accounting Framework data until the 2015 data is available. 	NSWMC	In progress
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to review the rainfall data for the Upper Hunter. 	NSWMC	Completed
6. Hunter River Salinity Trading Scheme Review		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chris New to discuss the EPA's approach to monitoring metals in discharge water at the HRSTS Committee meeting. 	Chris New	Completed
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to organise a meeting with EPA to discuss its proposal for companies to monitor metals in discharge water. 	NSWMC	Completed
7. Voids project		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to arrange a meeting with the Department of Planning and Environment and the Division of Resources and Energy to discuss a voids/rehabilitation Upper Hunter regional committee and how it may tie in with the update of the Upper Hunter Synoptic Plan. 	NSWMC	In progress
8. UHMD Annual Forum report		
9. Update on UHMD communications initiatives		
10. Working group performance, relevance and strategic direction		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NSWMC to ensure UHMD resurvey considers the importance of water issues. 	NSWMC	Ongoing
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> JASC to consider whether to discontinue water working group. 	NSWMC	Completed
11. Other business		