

Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

2016 UHMD Annual Forum Report

6 December 2016



Workshop attendees discussing the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue

Introduction

About the forum

On 6 December 2016, around 85 participants involved in the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue (Dialogue), met to review progress of the Dialogue during 2016, and consider how the Dialogue can continue to evolve to meet its goal of bringing together the Upper Hunter community to promote co-existence with mining and deliver the best overall outcomes for local communities.

This was the fifth annual gathering. The first was held in December 2012 and concluded that an annual gathering of the many individuals and groups involved in the Dialogue was a helpful way to keep track of the progress of the many Dialogue projects and to consider broad issues such as how the Dialogue is managed, whether it is making good progress and the issues it should be tackling.

For the first time, the forum was also joined by a group of Muswellbrook and Aberdeen high school students who participated in their own workshop aimed at the Dialogue developing an educational program for local schools which will include bus tours of mines and rehabilitation programs.

About this report

This report captures the written feedback from the afternoon workshop session. The discussion points have been transcribed verbatim however some small additions and/or amendments have been made to the written feedback where it is necessary to assist the reader (grammar and spelling corrections, expansion of acronyms etc.). It will be the task of the working groups and/or industry to determine what and which suggestions are to progress.

Thank you to the UHMD Joint Advisory Steering Committee that reviewed the draft report.

Next steps

Valuable feedback on the Dialogue was provided during the afternoon workshopping session. The Joint Advisory Steering Committee, Industry Steering Committee, Executive Oversight Committee and working groups will consider the feedback in this report during their first meetings in 2017.

Thank you

The NSW Minerals Council and our Upper Hunter industry members would like to thank everyone who participated in the forum and throughout the year, particularly the hard working members of the Joint Working Groups and Joint Advisory Steering Committee.

Special thanks to:

- The panel members for their valuable contributions, which consisted: The Hon Michael Johnsen MP (Federal Member for Upper Hunter), Gill Eason (Singleton Business Chamber), Mike Kelly (Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry), Professor Richard Bush (International Centre for Balanced Land Use, University of

Newcastle, John Richards (UHMD Chair), Cr Wayne Bedggood (Mayor of Upper Hunter Shire Council), and Steve Barry, Department of Planning and Environment

- The UHMD participants that presented: John Richards (Bloomfield Collieries), Bill Baxter (Coal & Allied), John Watson (Glencore), and David O'Brien (Glencore).
- The government presenters that provided updates on key areas relating to mining and Dialogue issues: Steve Barry (Department of Planning and Environment) and David Blackmore (Division of Resources and Energy, Department of Industry).
- Di Sneddon for facilitating the forum.
- Muswellbrook Race Club and its staff for hosting the forum's guests.

Program

The program for the 2016 Annual Forum is provided in the table below.

8:30am	FORUM OPEN	
8:30am	Arrival and networking	Coffee, tea & muffins available
8:55am	Welcome	Di Sneddon, Facilitator
9:05am	Year in review: Focus on events/activities in the past year	Greg Sullivan, Director Policy, NSW Minerals Council
9:20am	Future priorities of UHMD	David O'Brien, Joint Advisory Steering Committee Chair
9:30am	Keynote address	Professor Richard Bush, International Centre for Balanced Land Use, University of Newcastle
9:55am	Hunter regional plan	Stephen Barry, Department of Planning and Environment
10:20am	Panel discussion: Post mining use of voids Hosted by Stephen Cenatiempo from 2NM's 'Hunter Valley Today' radio show	Professor Richard Bush, International Centre for Balanced Land Use, University of Newcastle Mike Kelly, President, Muswellbrook Chamber of Commerce and Industry John Richards, UHMD Chair Cr Wayne Bedggood, Mayor of Upper Hunter Shire Council Michael Johnsen MP, Member for the Upper Hunter Gill Eason, JASC Community Member Stephen Barry, Department of Planning and Environment
11:00am	MORNING TEA	
11:20am	Presentation: Calculating rehabilitation bonds	Dr David Blackmore, Division of Resources and Energy, Department of Industry
11:50am	Case study: Estimating rehabilitation costs	Dean Fletcher, SLR Consulting
12:20pm	Presentation: Survey results	Ruth McLeod, Hunter Research Foundation
12:50pm	LUNCH	
1:30pm	Working group updates	David O'Brien, JWG Water Chair John Watson, JWG Emissions and Health Chair Bill Baxter, JWG Land Management Chair
2:00pm	Small group discussion: Future plans for the UHMD	In table groups with facilitator at each table
2:30pm	Plenary Discussion: Future plans for the UHMD	Di Sneddon, Facilitator
2:55pm	Summary and wrap up	John Richards, UHMD Chair
3:00pm	FORUM CLOSE	

Morning presentation session

Attendees heard from multiple experts from research and government presenting on subjects including the development of balanced land use across the mining, agriculture, viticulture and horse racing industries, the need for innovation, the development of a Hunter Regional Plan and Rehabilitation Bond calculations.

A panel consisting of industry, research, government and community representatives provided a lively discussion on the potential beneficial use of final mine voids, with strong support among participants for a refresh of the Hunter's Synoptic Plan and further research to identify future voids and plan their future use. Panelists also discussed the need for greater economic diversity within the Upper Hunter, as well as how mining could be integrated into future tourism opportunities within the region.

Participants also received an update on the Dialogue's land management, emissions and health and water management projects. Key items of interest included the Weather Forecasting Project, Industry Grazing Trials and the recently-released Water Accounting Framework.

Afternoon workshop session

Following the scene setting discussions and updates in the morning session, a workshopping session was held in the afternoon. The purpose of the workshopping session was to seek suggestions from the participants on the future direction of the Dialogue, including recommending specific tasks that could be undertaken by the UHMD.

Specifically, the following questions were posed for the participants to discuss:

Future direction of Dialogue

- What are some the lessons learned / observations about the UHMD and how it has operated so far?
- Where do we want the Dialogue to go?
- What should its goals and outcomes be?
- What should the Dialogue be doing to meet those objectives?
- Are there any other specific tasks or activities that you think the UHMD should be undertaking?

A summary of participant discussions is provided below.

General discussion of issues

Table 1

- Virtual reality package with local content.
- Mine visits for students.
- More exploring visits.
- Classroom resources:
 - Mining and geology presentations.
 - Career information.
- Hands on activities
- Where do the things we use come from?
- Mine experts visit schools e.g. engineers, operators, geologists.
- Real time mine statuses
 - Live updates

- Written in accessible language
- Competition for ideas about what to do with mine voids.
- Horse studs on rehab land.
- Voids into motorbike tracks, gun range
- Support wildlife rescue using rehab land.
- Mining games for younger children - develop apps.

Table 2

- Community Engagement:
 - Getting the message out to the broader community
 - Expanding contact database
 - Start doing it!
- Issues:
 - Voids - availability
 - DRE/DPE/EPA - owning and communicating status of issues e.g. bonds / security
 - Awareness of opportunities for voids / buffer land (integration)

Table 3 - focused on innovative land use

- Context of land remediation, economic and environmental sustainability.
- Generation of large amounts of biomass.
- Best product fuel (ethanol)
- Technology development and provision.
- Government policy and industry support (Difficult to align)
- Value adding for sugar cane and timber
- Hostile takeover - competitor for ethanol production
- Move to Muswellbrook research centre
- Flexibility in consent conditions.

Table 4/7

- Integrated Land Use Plan
 - Scoping ownership
 - Identify stakeholders (and role of UHMD)
 - Engagement strategy
 - Progress regional committee (Voids)
 - Opportunity for quick wins (existing info)
 - Staged presentation of landform / voids (rolling plan) - not just mining
 - Timeline commitment (and resourcing)
 - Review of best practices (study)
 - Community support / communications plan
 - Buffer lands included / other land uses
 - Digital tool
- Voids
 - Continue voids project - focus on community engagement
- UHMD
 - Broaden community engagement across all industries
- Mental and social impacts of shift work

Table 5/8

- Synoptic Plan
 - Integrated Final Land Use Plan - not the final use of the land.
 - Consider combined hydrological impacts of land forms
 - Define the intent of the rehabilitation and allow flexibility for Agriculture / Commerce / Bio
 - Multiple land use scenarios considered with flexible regulation
 - Utilise existing infrastructure.

- Projects
 - Tourism - combined interactive display and site tours
 - Voids water quality and research
 - Skills and employment - UHMD to identify the skills that we have that might complement future industries.

Table 6

- Develop a plan to show what the mining landscape post-mining will look like
 - Timing
 - Details
- Review the existing plan for applicability
- Define the scope of the new project
 - Stages
 - Regular reviews
 - Sub-plans
- How does the regional plan fit in?
 - Other infrastructure
- MOU
- Who are the key stakeholders to be involved?
 - Many investors
- Identify an owner?
 - DPE?
- Who is going to fund it?
- Develop key principles on voids
- New projects
 - Need to be material / strategic
 - Economic diversification
 - Buffer zones
 - Can we piggyback or influence of other initiatives?
 - Can we continue to bring key stakeholder groups together?
 - Can we improve the social aspect of some towns i.e. Muswellbrook?
 - Rehabilitation
- Engagement
 - Better engagement with existing groups e.g. Rotary
 - Survey mineworkers
 - Link in with other initiatives.

Table 9/10

- Final Land Integrated Plan (FLIP)
 - Scope - Geographic boundaries
 - Upper Hunter Coal Fields
 - Local land Services Boundaries
 - Geranges
 - National / Federal Plans
 - Link to Hunter Regional Plan 2036
 - Social / Economic / Environmental Expectations
- Include integration with surrounding land use.
- Incorporate planning approvals and reg expectations
- Consider offsets - big difference to 1999 plan
- High level plan of current offsets and current post-mine / approved land use
- Needs to link to data sharing between mines.
- Landforms to align to land use.
- Mitigate issue of land use conflict.
- Define Stakeholders and Working Party
- Include specialist stakeholders e.g. Landcare groups.
- Earthengine (Google) as a tool for knowledge sharing - understand the big picture.

- Stakeholders
 - Universities / Research
 - TAFE / Trainees
 - Aboriginal groups
 - Local / State Governments
 - Local Land Services
 - Local Landholders
 - Schools
 - Blue sky thinkers
- FLIP must be dynamic from the very beginning.
- ?? Format of the FLIP - GIS based document and include current / lead practice technology
- Future Projects
 - Use current data / technology to help plan future land use of mine sites - predictive / contextualise approach.
 - Cropping trials as a fibre crop on mine rehab areas
 - Economic value add to local area
 - Use local infrastructure
 - Voids
 - Current state
 - Define footprint / location / timeframes
 - Revisit 2010 objectives of UHMD and review what has been accomplished vs. dropped off radar.

Conclusion

The Annual Forum provides an opportunity each year to bring together the participants in the Dialogue to review the progress of projects and the Dialogue more broadly, and to continue to evolve the process so that it continues to building a sense of community and making a valuable contribution to building coexistence with mining in the region.

The overwhelming feedback this year related to a focus on community engagement and thinking about planning for land uses after mining has ceased.

A number of suggestions from the afternoon strategy workshop sessions may be considered for adoption by the Dialogue, as they relate to potential projects. These include:

- Invest in and develop a virtual reality package with local content, mining-related apps (kids, weather, live mine status updates) that can deliver information to school students in an accessible way.
- Mine experts with various professional backgrounds (engineers, geologists, machine operators) to deliver school presentations.
- A research study into the mental and social impacts of shift work.
- Tourism project that delivers a combined industry interactive display and site tours.
- Skills and employment project that identifies the various skills across Upper Hunter industry workers and how these might be applied to the community for future industries post-mining.
- Survey of mine workers to better understand their sentiment
- More cropping trials on mine rehab sites
- Economic diversification project - improving social aspects of towns.
- Buffer zone project

All of the feedback and the recommended ideas that have been identified at the Annual UHMD Forum will be considered by the Joint Working Groups and/or industry as they progress work.