

Matthew Sprott

From: Michael Howat
Sent: Monday, 7 March 2016 4:25 PM
To: Matthew Sprott
Subject: RE: Request for EPA Advice - Mount Owen Continued Operations Project (SSD 5850)

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

Matthew,

In regards to your comments below seeking clarification of the EPA's position on the potential water management and water sharing/discharge scheme in place for the Mount Owen Complex sites, the EPA is aware of the Greater Ravensworth Water Sharing Scheme in place and notes that any water transferred from the Mount Owen Complex under that scheme becomes the responsibility of the premises accepting the water for storage/processing/use/disposal.

For example if Liddell Colliery (subject to EPL 2094) receives surplus water from Mount Owen through the GRWSS that water must then be managed by Liddell and managed/disposed of in accordance with all relevant approvals and licence conditions associated with that site.

If the proponent chooses to pursue a direct discharge point at the Mount Owen Complex then this will be assessed by the EPA once a formal application to vary the Environment Protection Licence (or licenses) is received.

Hope the above helps clarify our position.

Regards

Michael Howat

Operations Officer - Hunter

NSW Environment Protection Authority

Ph: (02) 4908 6819 Mob: 0407 262 553

michael.howat@epa.nsw.gov.au www.epa.nsw.gov.au [@EPA_NSW](https://twitter.com/EPA_NSW)

Formal electronic correspondence to the EPA should be sent to hunter.region@epa.nsw.gov.au

Report pollution and environmental incidents 131 555 (NSW only) or +61 2 9995 5555



From: Matthew Sprott
Sent: Wednesday, 2 March 2016 5:24 PM
To: Karen Marler
Cc: EPA RSD Hunter Region Mailbox; EPA Planning Matters Mailbox
Subject: Request for EPA Advice - Mount Owen Continued Operations Project (SSD 5850)

Good afternoon Karen,

As you may be aware, the NSW Planning Assessment Commission (the Commission) published its review report on the Mount Owen Continued Operations Project on 17 February 2016.

The Commission's report included a total of 24 recommendations regarding the Department of Planning and Environment's (the Department's) preliminary environment assessment, which relate to biodiversity, air quality, final landform and rehabilitation, water, Aboriginal cultural heritage, socio-economics and the need for further public input. The Commission's report can be downloaded from the Department's website at: http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=5850

Throughout the assessment of this project, the Department has consulted with a number of agencies and received advice from the EPA on 6 March 2015 and 26 August 2015 (see attached). As part of its review report, the Commission has recommendation that the Department undertake further consultation with the EPA in relation to air quality and water issues.

Specifically, the Commission's seventh and sixteenth recommendations state, in part, that "The Department should forward a copy of the updated peer review of the AQIA to EPA ... and seek further comments in relation to the residual issues raised in their previous submissions." and "That, prior to determination, the Department seeks further comments from ... EPA about the discharge of surplus water from this project".

The Department would therefore appreciate the EPA's consideration of and response to the following two matters.

- 1) With regards to the air quality peer review, I have attached a copy of Todoroski Air Sciences' peer review (dated 20 November 2015) and Pacific Environment Limited's (ie Glencore's) initial response to this peer review (dated 14 December 2015).

In light of this additional information, DPE is seeking confirmation from the EPA as to whether the concerns it has raised to date have been adequately addressed and whether it has any residual concerns regarding the air quality aspects of the project.

FYI: Following its initial response to the November 2015 peer review, Glencore is in the process of providing some additional information (including data input files) for Todoroski Air Sciences' consideration in finalising its final peer review of the air quality aspects of the project. Once the final air quality peer review has been completed, DPE will seek the EPA's final feedback on air quality matters.

- 2) With regards to the discharge of surplus water from the project, I note that the project is expected to generate a net positive water balance in the later years of the mine life and that this water may be transported offsite under the Greater Ravensworth Water Sharing Scheme (GRWSS). I believe that the Commission is seeking recognition from the EPA that the project could result in water from the Mt Owen site being transported offsite and the EPA's express consideration of the acceptability of the potential for discharging this water from licensed discharge points at the Ravensworth or Liddell sites under the GRWSS. Your comments on these matters would be greatly appreciated.

The Department considers your advice in response to the Commission's recommendations to be critical in informing the Department's final assessment of the project. It is therefore requested that, as a matter of urgency, you consider the Commission's review report, focussing on the seventh and sixteenth recommendations, and provide further comments or feedback on the above matters (including any requirements concerning additional information to be provided by Glencore) to the Department by no later than COB Wednesday, 9 March 2016.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any queries regarding the above.

Regards,
Matthew

Matthew Sprott

A/Team Leader | Resource Assessments
Department of Planning & Environment
23-33 Bridge Street SYDNEY 2000 | GPO Box 39 SYDNEY 2001
ph: 02 9228 2054 | e: matthew.sprott@planning.nsw.gov.au