



Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure
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Parramatta NSW 2124

26 August 2025

Aurizon submission: Support for the extension of Metropolitan Mine Operations

To whom it may concern

Aurizon (ASX: AZJ) appreciates the opportunity to provide this submission in support of Peabody's application to extend Metropolitan Mines (**Metrop**) steel making coal operations.

Our company is pleased to support the proposal, recognising the significant and sustainable benefits Metrop's extension of operations to 2031 will provide to the Illawarra economy and directly to the Helensburgh Community. Metrop is a significant consumer of local suppliers' products and a primary local workforce employer.

Metrop is Australia's oldest continuously operating underground mine, reflecting its history of long-term planning, commitment to community engagement, and ongoing economic significance. Aurizon is honoured to serve as their rail haulage partner. We also note the extension submission does not require variation to mine life or annual production and utilises the same working above ground facility footprint.

Aurizon's operations

Aurizon is Australia's largest rail-based transport business. Our purpose is to grow regional Australia by enabling producers to deliver bulk commodities to end customers. Each year, our company transports more than 250 million tonnes of Australian products connecting miners, primary producers, and industry with international and domestic markets.

We provide customers with integrated freight and logistics solutions across our national footprint, with operations in all mainland Australian states and the Northern Territory.

Since initiating heavy haul rail operations in the Hunter Valley in 2005, Aurizon has transported over 50 million tonnes of coal annually throughout New South Wales. More recently, Aurizon commenced operations in the Illawarra in March 2020 and our Illawarra workforce now makes up ~10% of the 500 employees who live and work in the NSW regions of Illawarra, Newcastle, the Hunter Valley and Gunnedah. Aurizon's employees in NSW are a valued part of the company's total workforce of approximately 6,000 people.

Aurizon's ability to continue to provide employment for skilled personnel and to invest in efficient and sustainable supply chains in Illawarra is underpinned by long term partnerships with customers such as Peabody.

Safety

At Aurizon, our safety objective is to ensure the wellbeing of our employees, each other, and the communities we serve. Aurizon and Peabody are united by shared safety values. Both companies are committed to conducting operations in a manner that upholds safe and healthy workplaces for all employees, contractors, visitors, and the broader community where we operate.

We are both working to provide workplaces and operations where there are zero injuries by ensuring that safety and the prevention of injury are part of our culture. Prioritising safety in our culture ensures safe and efficient workplaces, from mining operations and across the entire land transport supply chain.

As part of our safety commitment, Aurizon actively participates in industry-wide efforts to help reduce rail safety incidents. At the forefront is our national level crossing safety campaigner – [*Respect the Sign, Lives are on the Line*](#). We launched a new phase of our level crossing safety campaign this month, releasing a series of videos titled [*1.2.3.Brace*](#) featuring Aurizon drivers sharing their personal experiences. These powerful messages urge the community to take greater care around level crossings. We continue to advocate for collective action and investment across industry, government and communities to improve safety outcomes at level crossings nationwide

Sustainability including decarbonisation

As Australia's largest rail freight business, we are committed to being open and transparent on the Environmental, Social and Governance aspects of our business. Aurizon aims to continuously improve our business to create tangible, sustainable value for stakeholders, including employees, customers, communities and investors. This commitment supports Aurizon's priority to operate the transport supply chain sustainably and minimise environmental impacts from our operations and services.

We have a range of short, medium, and long-term decarbonisation initiatives underway, with the target of achieving net-zero operational emissions by 2050. Our \$50 million Future Fleet Fund continues to progress work on the Battery Electric Locomotive and Battery Electric Tender projects, which aims to use renewable energy sources to deliver low or zero-carbon freight transport solutions for customers. We regularly engage with government and regulators regarding policy and advocacy for fair and equitable treatment of rail as low carbon form of land-based freight transportation and to stimulate the domestic biodiesel production industry.

Regional communities

A high priority for Aurizon is to build on the positive contribution our businesses make to the regional communities where our employees live and work and where our trains and supply chain operations are located.

85% per cent of Aurizon's employees are based in regional locations. In NSW, almost all of our operational and maintenance employees are based in regional cities and communities, including Wollongong, Newcastle and also communities in the Hunter Valley and Gunnedah regions.

Aurizon provides support for charitable and not for profit organisations in our communities through our Community Giving Fund. Since 2011, Aurizon has supported more than 650 local initiatives undertaken by charities and community organisations, including local projects to provide education, community safety, environmental improvement and health and well-being services and support.

Like Peabody, Aurizon sources a large proportion of the company's business inputs from local suppliers. For example, Peabody spent \$217m with local suppliers to service Metrop, while in 2024-25, Aurizon's national footprint resulted in approximately \$1 billion spent with suppliers across Australia, including regional NSW.

Diversity and inclusion

Aurizon is committed to building greater diversity and inclusion in our workforce, with a focus on increasing representation of women and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders across the company.

Aurizon appreciates that an inclusive workplace, which supports gender balance and equality, drives better performance and outcomes for our customers, shareholders and the communities where employees live and work. The representation of women in our workforce is currently 23% per cent, up from 12 per cent from 2012. This increased representation of women includes providing more opportunities to pursue skilled pathways through apprenticeships and training programs within the company.

Providing effective employment, training and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians as part of a broader commitment to achieving greater understanding and contributing to reconciliation, is a key focus for Aurizon.

We have made significant progress, with the percentage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees in our workforce increasing from approximately 2.5 per cent of all employees in 2012, to approximately 7 per cent of total employees today. Our aim is to make further progress by providing opportunities for Indigenous Australians as set out in Aurizon's latest [Reconciliation Action Plan](#).

Long term benefits

The extension of Metrop's steelmaking coal operations through to 2031 offers significant economic benefits to NSW, particularly due to the company's employment of a 400-strong local workforce and the strategic location of its operations. Metrop is a key contributor to the community supporting local sporting clubs and schools, are also through their commitment to developing skilled regional workforce with their intake program of 10 trade apprentices onsite annually.

As the rail haulage provider for Metrop export and local steel manufacturing supply, we see firsthand Metrop's commitment to safety, sustainability and responsible business operations. Metrop's \$1.5m investment in surface water management and relinquishment of 253 hectares of total mine footprint, as part of the modification and extension request, represents a commitment to both environment and community that Metrop operates within.

Informed by the substantial economic, sustainability and community benefits the project would make available, particularly for people living and working in the Helensburgh and Illawarra Community, Aurizon is very pleased to support Peabody's modification and extension of the Metrop steel making coal operations.

Yours sincerely,



Ed McKeiver
Group Executive Coal
Aurizon