



Your reference :
Our reference : EF13/3764; DOC15/125892
Contact : Ms Sheridan Ledger; (02) 6332 7608

Mr Paul Freeman
Senior Planner
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

17 April 2015

Dear Mr Freeman

ULAN COAL MINE – CONTINUED OPERATIONS PROJECT (08_0184 MOD 3)
EPA COMMENT

I refer to your correspondence dated 18 March 2015 requesting the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) to provide comment on the proposed Ulan Coal Mine Modification 3 (the Proposal).

The EPA has reviewed and considered the Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Proposal and would like to provide the following advice:

Noise

The EPA can confirm that the day/evening noise limits for receivers R57 and R254 in Environment Protection Licence 394 (the licence) for the Ulan Coal Mine (the Mine) are 37 dB(A) and 38 dB(A) respectively and the night time limit for R57 and R254 is 36 dB(A) and 37 dB(A), respectively. Should the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) grant approval for the Proposal, the Mine will need to apply to the EPA to vary the licence for the Mine. Should the Mine enter into a negotiated agreement with the affected landowners, notification should be provided to the EPA for the EPA's records.

The EPA notes the predicted noise levels at receivers R57 and R254 during the proposed construction of end block shafts 4 and 5, in particular that the predicted noise levels will not exceed the original Project Specific Noise Levels (PSNL) by 5 dB(A).

The EPA recommends:

- the Noise Management Plan for the Mine be updated to include a monitoring program specifically for receivers R57 and R254 during the construction period;
- the Mine specifically defines "adverse" weather and that a Trigger Action Response Management Plan (TARP) be developed and implemented utilising this definition in conjunction with the noise monitoring program for receivers R57 and R254 to respond to any elevated noise levels; and
- that any approval granted by DPE for the Proposal includes conditions requiring the implementation of the noise management strategies contained in the EA which aim to reduce noise levels at receivers R57 and R254.

Currently, the licence for the Mine has $LA1_{(1min)}$ criterion limits for sleep disturbance which is consistent with the current approval. The EPA notes that sleep disturbance levels for the Proposal have been assessed utilising the L_{Amax} criterion. The EPA supports altering the sleep disturbance criteria from $LA1_{(1min)}$ to L_{Amax} in any approval granted by DPE. A variation of the licence will also be required should this alteration be approved.

Surface Water and Site Water Balance

The EPA would like to advise that at the current time, the licence permits a total daily discharge volume of 30 ML/day from licence discharge points 3, 6 and 19 and 2 ML/day from licence discharge point 4, not 52 ML/day as indicated in the EA. The EPA notes that as a result of the Proposal, groundwater reporting to the Ulan West mining area will increase by an estimated 2.1% and when considering the proposed increase in groundwater levels, clarification should be provided to DPE regarding the site water balance considering the current permitted discharge volume from the Mine.

For many years the EPA has worked with the Mine in response to increasing amounts of mine water requiring treatment and offsite disposal. At the current time, discharges from the Mine are limited to discharges via Ulan Creek and ultimately into the Goulburn River. The approved potential discharge into the Tallbragar River catchment has not eventuated. Considering the current volume being discharged from the Mine, greater flexibility in the water management system at the Mine is required for a number of reasons. Any potential increase in the volume requiring discharge reinforces the need for the implementation of an alternate point of discharge from the Mine.

Should you have any further enquiries in relation to this matter please contact Sheridan Ledger at the EPA's Central West (Bathurst) Office by telephoning (02) 6332 7608.

Yours sincerely



MATTHEW CORRADIN
A/Head Central West Unit
Environment Protection Authority