Leading equine health specialists: Drayton South presents no adverse effects for horses

Details

Published: 15 May 2015

Twitter

inShare0

Two independent equine health experts have endorsed an assessment of Anglo American's Drayton South proposal which found the project will have no adverse effects on the health of horses at neighbouring studs.

Specialist equine veterinary surgeon and Fellow of the Australian and New Zealand College of Veterinary Scientists, Associate Professor Nicholas Kannegieter's Equine Health Assessment Report 2015 includes a scientific review of more than 100 veterinary science documents and air quality, acoustics and visual assessment data generated in the Drayton South Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

"Based on the literature review and evaluation of data generated in the EIS assessments, I concluded that in terms of dust, noise, vibration and lighting, the Drayton South Project will have no adverse effects on the health of horses on the Coolmore and Woodlands Studs," Associate Professor Kannegieter said.

Associate Professor Kristopher Hughes and Dr Deborah Racklyeft undertook separate independent peer reviews of Associate Professor Kannegieter's report and concluded his findings were justified.

Key findings of the Equine Health Assessment Report 2015 include:

? Data generated in the air quality, acoustics and visual assessments indicate at the appropriate worse case levels of dust, noise, vibration and light that horses at both Coolmore and Woodlands Studs will be exposed to as a result of the Project will be far less than that which they are exposed to in a breeding and racing career;

? Noise levels from the Project are not predicted to exceed current or future background levels at the horse studs and will not have any impact on the equine population. Noise levels from blasting will remain far below that of other noises in the environment, including farm machinery and

helicopter landings at both horse studs.
“Horse breeding and racing venues in Muswellbrook and Singleton sit within the typical range of annual average readings of particulate matter [suspended dust particles] recorded in the majority of Australian and international horse breeding and racing enterprises,” Dr Kannegieter said.
“There are some outliers, including Saudi Arabia, the world-famous Sha Tin complex in Hong Kong and Tianjin, on the outskirts of Beijing.” Tianjin is the site of the proposed Equine Culture City Thoroughbred breeding and racing operation.
In 2012, Coolmore Stud was chosen as the initial joint venture partner in establishing the Equine Culture City. Under the deal, Coolmore is providing approximately 100 Thoroughbred broodmares and potentially stallions, to stock a stud farm at Tianjin.
Within Tianjin, PM10 levels range between 165 and 377 ?g/m³, far in excess of any dust particulate levels that might be experienced on horse studs near the Drayton South Project.
“To put the potential impacts of the Project on Coolmore and Woodlands Studs into greater local context, I made a comparison to Edinglassie Stud,” Associate Professor Kannegieter said.
Edinglassie breeds elite Thoroughbred racehorses less than 130 metres from active operations at the State’s largest open cut coal mine – BHP Billiton’s Mt Arthur – more than five times the size of the proposed operations at Drayton South (more than two kilometres away from Coolmore and Darley’s main operating areas).
Edinglassie enjoys an excellent reputation and record at both the Inglis and Magic Millions yearling sales, with leading trainers including Gai Waterhouse, Chris Waller and David Hayes all purchasing Edinglassie yearlings in 2014 and 2015.
Dr Racklyeft found the scientific literature review undertaken was comprehensive.
“Further, as part of my independent peer review I confirmed that it is relevant and meaningful to compare the amount of dust, noise and vibration that horses are known to be exposed to during the various stages of their lives with predicted levels for the Project as Associate Professor Kannegieter has undertaken,” she said.
Associate Professor Kristopher Hughes concurred with the findings, interpretation of scientific data and conclusions made in the report.
“I conducted an impartial and independent peer review of the report, considering the available scientific evidence and understanding of possible effects of the Project on the health of horses on adjacent properties,” Associate Professor Hughes said.
“The report provides a comprehensive and considered review of the potential effects of dust/air quality, noise, vibration and light on the health of horses, and includes scientific data, precedents and comparative situations.
“The assessments and conclusions made in the report, that in terms of dust, noise, vibration and light, there will be no adverse effects on horse health, are justified, based on the available scientific data.
All three specialists recommend that the Project’s monitoring programmes include dust concentration (air quality), noise and vibration levels and effects to ensure impacts are in line with the projected outcomes of the Project’s EIS.
Anglo American NSW Projects Director, Mr Rick Fairhurst, welcomed the findings of the equine health assessment report and the independent peer reviews.
“The findings of the equine health impact assessment are that the Project will have no adverse impact on equine health providing that dust, noise, blasting and light levels remain below the appropriate worst case scenario outcomes predicted throughout this EIS,” Mr Fairhurst said.
“Anglo American will conduct real-time air quality monitoring, noise monitoring and blast

monitoring which will be detailed in the revision of the existing Drayton Mine environmental monitoring plan.

“Anglo American also proposes to develop and implement a series of communication and information management protocols in conjunction with the neighbouring horse studs should the Project receive approval.

“These measures demonstrate our commitment to coexistence and ensure security for our employees and their families, small businesses, contractors and suppliers as well as the future of the studs and their operations,” Mr Fairhurst said.