



Mr Mark Nolan  
Principal Advisor Project Approvals NSW  
Rio Tinto Coal Australia  
PO Box 315  
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Dear Mr Nolan

**Hunter Valley Operations South - Modification 5 (PA 06\_0261 MOD 5)  
Request for Additional Information – Air Quality Review**

As you would be aware, the Department commissioned Ramboll Environ to undertake an independent technical review of the Air Quality Impact Assessments (AQIA) for the United Wambo Open Cut Coal Mine Project (SSD 7142) and the Hunter Valley Operations South Modification 5 (PA 06\_0261 MOD 5).

Given the concurrent nature of these two applications and the proximity of the two mining operations, specific advice was sought on the adequacy of predicted air quality impacts associated with each proposal individually and cumulatively.

The outcomes of the technical review are attached to this letter. This review identified that while each AQIA provided detailed and rigorous predictions of air quality impacts, when considered together there are significant inconsistencies and variations in the predicted impact levels. To address these inconsistencies, Ramboll Environ has recommended that a further coordinated assessment of the air quality impacts of both proposals.

The Department supports this recommendation and therefore requests that United and Coal & Allied's respective air quality consultants work together to fully implement the recommendations and conclusions in the attached review. While the actual modelling may be undertaken separately, the companies must ensure that the inputs are integrated and the outputs are jointly validated and assessed so that no inconsistencies or disagreements remain.

In requesting this additional assessment, the Department notes that on 20 January 2017, the EPA gazetted an updated version of the *Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants* (2016), which details the statutory methods to be used to model and assess air pollutant emissions in NSW. The Department requests that the coordinated air quality assessment be undertaken in accordance with these contemporary methods and standards.

Lastly, please note that the Department is unable to finalise its assessment of the above application until this coordinated air quality assessment is completed and provided to the Department. If you wish to discuss this matter, please contact Matthew Sprott, Team Leader - Resource Assessments, at the above.

Yours sincerely,



Howard Reed  
**Director Resource Assessments**