

Abel Community Consultative Committee (CCC) –2023 Annual Report

CCC project name:	Abel Coal Mine	Reporting period:	January 1 – December 31 2023
Independent chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill	Proponent contact:	Phillip Brown, Environment and Community Relations Superintendent

1. Executive summary / introduction

The Abel Community Consultative Committee was established in 2007 as a condition of consent to the Minister for Planning’s approval of the Abel underground coal mine. The mine is located approximately twenty three kilometres north west of Newcastle and bounded roughly to the south by John Renshaw Drive and George Booth Drive, west of Buttai Creek and east of the M1 Expressway. The project is mainly within the Cessnock Council Local Government Area with a very small section in the Maitland Council Local Government Area. The Yancoal Abel mine has approval to use the adjoining Bloomfield Coal Handling Preparation Plant. As the mine is on care and maintenance, since May 2016, no mining has occurred. Other than rehabilitation activities, a trial water plant treatment plant, yet to be commissioned, was installed near the Big Kahuna Dam. Most site personnel have relocated to offices in Newcastle and other Yancoal sites.

The Committee is comprised of:

- Four local community representatives;
- A representative from Bloomfield Colliery;
- Three Yancoal representatives, with attendance from other personal as required;
- An independent Chairperson.

2. CCC activities over last 12 months:

In view of little activity at the site, the Committee has only met annually since 2021. The September 2023 meeting, as with those of previous years, was well attended by the community representatives.

Topics discussed for the reporting period were the traversing of the Kurri Kurri Lateral Gas Pipeline Project across the Abel/Donaldson site, routine environmental monitoring, no complaints received for 2023, rehabilitation objectives and final landform for both Abel and Donaldson.

The revised DPE CCC guidelines were also discussed and members of the Committee have signed the revised Code of Conduct and Declarations of Interest documents. Members also agreed on a Terms of Reference at the September 2023, meeting as required by the department.

- The Committee meet on the Abel site. No formal visits were undertaken during 2023.
- The Committee has been going for nearly two decades with the same community representation, whom enjoy a good relationship with Abel personnel. It does still serve a purpose in the short term, until Yancoal’s future plans for the mine are known and what development may be proposed for the surrounding area.

3. Key issues

With the mine being on care and maintenance for almost eight years, there are no major issues.

4. Focus for next 12 months:

- The planned activities for the Committee remain similar to previous years; continued reporting on monitoring and environmental performance, any community complaints and responses, management plans, mine closure and future development.
- Currently, there are no known outstanding or emerging issues. However, it is reasonable to expect these will be addressed when and if they occur.

Name of chairperson:	Margaret MacDonald-Hill
Date:	February 23 2024.