

**METROPOLITAN COAL
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE - MEETING MINUTES**

Date: Tuesday 31 March 2026
Time: Commenced 3:01pm
Location: Metropolitan Coal Mine Meeting Room, Upper Administration, Helensburgh

Attendees:

- Michael Ulph (MU) – Independent Chairperson
- Stephen Love (SL) – Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Kane Organ (KO) – Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Nicolas Tucker (NT) – Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Allan House (AH) – CCC Member
- Kerrie Belter (KB) – CCC Member
- Keith Hawkins (KH) – CCC Member
- Vicki Christie (VC) – CCC Member
- Peter Turner (PT) – CCC Member
- James Hannigan (JH) – Peabody Metropolitan Coal
- Patricia Gauci (PG) – CCC Member
- Ron Zwicker (RZ) – Wollongong City Council (WCC)
- Catherine Reynolds (CR) – Observer
- Jarrad Prangell (JP) – Symbio Wildlife Park

Apologies:

- David Henry (DH) – Wollondilly Council

Welcome and introductions:

- MU welcomed all members to the meeting and thanked members for attending including CR as a community observer.

Declarations of interest:

- MU declared his position as Independent Chair for the CCC approved by the Director General of the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure (DPHI) and engaged by Peabody.

- MU reinforced the need for CCC members to disclose conflicts of interest such as owning shares in Peabody or family members employed by Peabody. Conflict of interest disclosure forms will be updated yearly as part of the CCC Terms of Reference.

Action items from previous meeting:

- MU declared CCC meeting minutes for 18 November 2025 were finalised and sent to members and confirmed that meeting minutes will be published two weeks after CCC meetings.

Correspondence:

- MU informed CCC members of administration updates.
- MU confirmed correspondence in arranging CR to observe CCC meeting.

Symbio Wildlife Park Conservation Partnership update – Jarrad Prangell

A presentation was provided to the CCC regarding Symbio Wildlife Park's Southern Stuttering Frog (SSF) Conservation Partnership.

- 30 million years ago Australia was much wetter and cooler, now much dryer and warmer, so suitable habitat for SSF has shrunk and split between northern and southern species.
- There are many threats to the frog: habitat loss, pollution, fire and Chytrid fungus – which has killed a large proportion of frogs worldwide.

MU asked how long it takes for the fungus to infect and kill a SSF. JP described various scenarios required for infection including climate, temperature, rainfall and species.

- The northern species has a better survival rate due to warmer temperatures which protect against Chytrid.
- Bushfires have decimated a large proportion of the SSF population.
- The SSF lives in riparian zones, not up trees.

SL highlighted a visit to Symbio Wildlife Park to inspect the frog enclosures designed for the SSF breeding program.

- Tadpoles have been collected from sites such as Gloucester.
- There are 3 genetic populations within the collection area.

SL asked about genetic testing between different populations of SSF. JP indicated testing is conducted to ensure a broad mix of genes when selecting individuals for the breeding program.

- SSF can remain a tadpole for 9–12 months or longer, compared to many frog species that metamorphose in 10–12 weeks.

MU enquired about the length of time for SSF to metamorphize from tadpole to frog. JP stated it depends on environmental factors such as temperature, food availability, also coupled with individual size and weather events.

- Breeding started within the first 12 months of commencement of the breeding program, which was quicker than expected. The males sit on a “nest” for a couple of days to ensure eggs are settled and secure.

SL asked what was the trigger for frog breeding? JP explained that cool, wet weather changes typically trigger breeding events.

- Tadpoles hatch after around 2 weeks.

MU asked how tadpole-to-frog is tracked. JP outlined how tadpoles are tagged with a tracker and with a dot marker to assess individual growth.

KB asked where frogs and tadpoles are being released. JP indicated that tadpoles and frogs are released under a scientific license in the Royal National Park and other suitable locations along the south coast.

MU asked if universities are involved. JP confirmed Wollongong and Newcastle Universities are involved with various input from experts.

VC stated that she has frogs in her yard in Helensburgh even with no pond. JP explained that frogs can be found everywhere even with lack of water (even in deserts, living underground and waiting for rain). For the SSF a stream is needed.

AH asked if the SSF has been listed internationally as endangered? JP indicated that no one has done the research and is only listed as endangered in Australia. AH further asked more generally of other frog species threatened in the area. JP mentioned that the Green and Golden Bell Frog is also being managed by the Park, with 25 new Bell Frogs from two populations in the southwest. Chytrid fungus, extreme weather events etc. are contributing to their population loss. Work is continuing to try to build immunity to the fungus in frogs by carefully exposing them in controlled settings.

AH asked about the Red Crowned Toadlet. JP confirmed it's another threatened frog species, constrained to the Sydney Basin. Its population is reducing by around 2% every year or so. JP issued an open invitation to all present to come and visit the Park.

Metropolitan Coal operations update – Stephen Love, Environment & Community Superintendent

NSW Coal Industry 2026–50

NSW Government strategic statement on coal, stated no new greenfield coal operations will be considered. The only operations to continue are existing operations which are able to expand to adjacent coal leases.

Emissions abatement will be an increasing area of focus for existing mines.

Mine Planning

- Metropolitan Coal is progressing the Project Modification – extension of longwall 317 and addition of longwall 318, new vent shaft and first workings to the west.
- Comments from agencies received from DPHI. Metropolitan has completed a response to these submissions which was submitted to DPHI last week.
- DPHI will consider if another round of submissions is required before requesting advice on any residual issues from the from the Independent Expert Advisory Panel for Mining (IEAPM).
- PT queried if IEAPM has been engaged earlier in the process during previous Extraction Plans. SL thought this was consistent with previous consultation but could be mistaken.
- SL also raised the imminent submission of a Scoping Letter to DPHI for a future mining domain further to the west of the current mining lease. DPHI will then provide a list of Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs), which will advise what particular issues DPHI will be focused on during the assessment process.
- SL further explained that the SSD is a planned continuation of the existing operation, activities at the surface facilities area will remain the same and no plans to increase mining intensity. Mining will continue to be via relatively narrow walls which, combined with increased depth of cover as mining heads further west which will further dissipate impacts over the surface.

Mining Update

- Recently completed Longwall 312 and commenced Longwall 313 in March.
- Swamps 76, 77 and 92 are in the current mining area. The Longwalls stand off Swamp 92 and so do not undermine it. Real-time monitoring shows no impact on Swamp 77 groundwater levels to date. We are using GNSS (Global Navigation Satellite System) to measure ground movement in real time.

- PT queried how much maximum subsidence had been experienced during Longwall 312.
- SL explained that total subsidence is not manifest in an area until further longwalls have been completed. At completion of a longwall, subsidence directly above would be in the order of 300-400mm but will reach a maximum of approximately 1200mm once further longwalls are extracted.
- SL detailed findings of second year of monitoring of the Giant Dragonfly. Several have been found in Swamp 92, with two also detected in a small area of Swamp 77. No dragonflies have been detected in Swamp 76 to date.
- VC asked how large are they? SL answered that the females are up to five inches (12.5 cm) in wingspan, with males slightly smaller. They are amongst the largest dragonflies in the world.

2025 Air Quality

- SL – there are 10 dust gauges around Helensburgh. A few higher numbers in 2015 which was a dry period, but with the rain in the last few years, much less dust.
- For PM10, Helensburgh has very low levels, with one exceedance on 27 May 2025, which was a regional event, probably a dust storm in the west coming through.

Site Water Recycling

- SL – Our revamped water treatment plant has been running for about 18 months.
- We have significantly improved (about 20% reduction) water consumption for a similar level of coal production.
- During March, June and July there was not much production hence the lower consumption there.

Camp Creek water quality

- MU identified that no discharge was made to Camp Creek from the WTP in October, November or December 2025 but electrical conductivity was higher downstream than upstream. SL confirmed that Helensburgh Creek, which joins Camp Creek between the upstream and downstream locations has a naturally high EC (frequently over 500 μ S/cm) which influences downstream values. It is also dark and turbid during rainfall events. VC queried what influenced this water quality. SL explained that run off from Helensburgh township was the primary source.

General business

PT asked in relation to the Response to Submissions – the submission from WaterNSW suggested that Metropolitan were going to provide a more comprehensive loading report regarding metal inflow and storage in the reservoir. Has that happened? SL confirmed this was being finalised and will be provided in the 2025 Annual Review.

SL – Sediment data is provided by Water NSW. Originally they tried to collect cores, to get a temporal record, but couldn't make that work, so went to a grab sample.

PT – How do we have confidence in the report if the (Water NSW) data itself is questionable?

SL – It's not "questionable" as long as you understand what it is – a grab sample – the idea being that if you've had a metal loading in one arm of the reservoir, you should have higher metals in those sediments compared to an arm that hasn't been impacted by mining. We haven't seen any evidence of that.

PT queried if this was a suitable approach, SL confirmed that Metropolitan's specialists believed so, and invited PT to review the report once it was available.

KB asked about a change in noises emerging from the mine over the past month. SL indicated that during the recent longwall move increased surface activity and truck movements may have contributed. JH explained that there is an increase in maintenance at the CHPP during these shutdowns.

AH raised his continued concerns with the lack of action from Sydney Water and EPA regarding overflows of raw sewage on Tunnel Road which flows into Wilsons Creek and Camp Creek. AH flagged that Metropolitan's assistance may be sought in managing the sewage flow into the old rail tunnel in cooperation with Sydney Water and Landcare. AH further discussed the ongoing issues with EPA not responding and Sydney Water lacking urgency to fix sewer issues. SL confirmed that Metropolitan had attempted to raise AH's concerns with EPA on multiple occasions but was surprised at their lack of interest in repeated pollution incidents.

KB queried the blank signposts near the mine entrance. KO explained that the information signs previously located around the mine boundary were being reprinted and updated due to their age and condition.



METROPOLITAN COAL

MU reviewed the CCC Terms of Reference relating to purpose and scope. This is to be conducted every 12 months. TORs were agreed for 2026.

Meeting closed: 4:30pm

Proposed next meetings: 21 July 2026, 17 November 2026.