



Coal Handling and Preparation Plant (CHPP)
2013 Complaints Register

#	Method	Date/Time of Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Investigation	Action Taken / Follow-up
1	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	17/01/2013 11:48am	Noise/vibration from the Whitehaven CHPP since midnight 15/01 through to 6:30am this morning.	The EPA is aware of ongoing consultation with the complainant concerning low frequency noise. A meeting was held with the complainant on Friday last week with acoustic specialists from Advitech to discuss findings of investigations and actions moving forward. This includes investigation into varying speed/frequency cycles on screens in the plant to ascertain if this resolves the vibration impact. Also, option of additional strengthening of the CHPP structure to reduce potential for noise/vibration propagation. These options are currently being investigated with an update meeting to be held with the complainant in mid February. A valuation of his property was also provided to the complainant in the event he wishes to consider acquisition as an option.	Follow up meeting to be held mid February.
2	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	18/01/2013 2:29pm	Noise from the CHPP on 17 th Jan from 5:30pm to 7:36pm, especially from roaring engines and reversing alarms.	The EPA is aware of ongoing consultation with the complainant concerning noise from the CHPP. The issue of the reversing alarms was followed up with the maintenance superintendant to confirm the broadband squashed duck alarms were in use across the site. Audit identified 2 loaders with high frequency alarms, albeit turned down to their lowest possible setting. As a consequence, broadband squashed duck alarms have been ordered to replace these alarm types and should be fitted by the end of the week.	Follow up meeting held mid February. Broadband alarms fitted to required equipment.
3	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	29/01/2013 9:17pm	Noise from the CHPP on 29 th Jan from 6:30am all day to time of call at 9:17pm	The EPA is aware of ongoing consultation with the complainant concerning noise from the CHPP. Costings are currently being prepared to look at the options of reducing noise emissions from the Screens within the CHPP structure. All equipment had previously been fitted with "squashed duck" reversing alarms. The EPA is aware of our intent to meet with the complainant the week of the 11th February to provide him an update as to the status of these investigations. The EPA is also expecting advice from Whitehaven on this by the 11th February in order to facilitate an appropriate Pollution Reduction Program.	No further follow up required until proposed meeting week of the 11 th February.
4	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	27/02/2013 5:30pm	Noise from the CHPP on 26 th February from 5:30pm that had been constant for 45 minutes. Cyclical vibration that is consistent with what has been a constant problem.	The EPA is aware of ongoing consultation with the complainant concerning noise from the CHPP. A meeting was held with the complainant on 27 th February 2013 to discuss proposed works at the CHPP to address the vibration issues. At the meeting, it was agreed that both parties consider progression of acquisition of the property. To facilitate this, the complainants are arranging for a valuation to be completed as a means of informing subsequent negotiation on potential purchase by Whitehaven.	No further follow up required until copy of valuation received and negotiations can commence.
5	Phone call to Environmental Officer	21/03/2013 8:32pm	Excessive noise and vibration experienced inside the house and shed, as bad as it's ever been.	The Environmental Officer contacted the CHPP Manager who advised that operations at the CHPP were as per normal. The Environmental Officer rang the complainant who reiterated his concerns about noise and vibration from the plant and dozers during the afternoon and into the night. He also noted the dozer noise at 7:00am on the previous Sunday. It was agreed that the process would continue as previously discussed, including provision of a proposal for acquisition from the	The complainant sent a text message to the Environmental Officer at 10:11pm which said "My ears are hurting from the beats of it. It is going in my eardrum right now. Not good."

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				complainant and changes to the plant as required by the Pollution Reduction Program in the Environment Protection Licence for the CHPP. The CHPP Manager had a conversation with Nick Duff (washery operator) at 9:30pm last night who reported that the CHPP was running as normal at around 500tph. There had been no losses of feed which can increase the obvious noise output.	No reply was issued.
6	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	22/03/2013 10:41am	Complainant indicates issued occurred at 18:00hrs on 21/03/13 and that "Noise pollution from Whitehaven Coal Cyclical plant. House is vibrating".	The Environmental Officer contacted the CHPP Manager who advised that operations at the CHPP were as per normal. The Environmental Officer rang the complainant who reiterated his concerns about noise and vibration from the plant and dozers during the afternoon and into the night. He also noted the dozer noise at 7:00am on the previous Sunday. It was agreed that the process would continue as previously discussed, including provision of a proposal for acquisition from the complainant and changes to the plant as required by the Pollution Reduction Program in the Environment Protection Licence for the CHPP. The CHPP Manager had a conversation with the washery operator at 9:30pm last night who reported that the CHPP was running as normal at around 500tph. There had been no losses of feed which can increase the obvious noise output.	Email reply to EPA providing update on private negotiations and plant modifications. No further action proposed at this stage.
7	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	22/03/2013 10:52am	Noise pollution coming from Whitehaven Coal Cyclical plant. Noise is at a high frequency & its the worst its ever been. Incident time was 18:00hrs on 21/03/13.	The Environmental Officer contacted the CHPP Manager who advised that operations at the CHPP were as per normal. The Environmental Officer rang the complainant who reiterated his concerns about noise and vibration from the plant and dozers during the afternoon and into the night. He also noted the dozer noise at 7:00am on the previous Sunday. It was agreed that the process would continue as previously discussed, including provision of a proposal for acquisition from the complainant and changes to the plant as required by the Pollution Reduction Program in the Environment Protection Licence for the CHPP. The CHPP Manager had a conversation with the washery operator at 9:30pm last night who reported that the CHPP was running as normal at around 500tph. There had been no losses of feed which can increase the obvious noise output.	Email reply to EPA providing update on private negotiations and plant modifications. No further action proposed at this stage.
8	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	25/03/2013 5:08pm	"Whitehaven Coal Cyclical plant noise has just woken caller up. Whole House is vibrating." Incident time was 0430 hrs on 25 March 2013.	The Environmental Officer referred the complaint to the CHPP Manager who followed up with the CHPP operators. There didn't appear to be anything out of normal operation that could be identified that would have caused the vibration issue. At the time of the complaint the CHPP was processing Tarrawonga coal at reduced rates (500tph) with low reject rates due to high yield, there were no plant trips around the time of the report & there were no trains being loaded.	Email reply to EPA providing information from CHPP Manager. No further action proposed at this stage.
9	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	2/04/2013 8:45am	Excessive noise pollution from the Whitehaven Coal Cyclical plant, Kamilaroi Hwy, Gunnedah all day today, 29/3/13. Ongoing issue. Caller advises it is Good Friday and they are trying to have a family dinner and there are roaring of	The Environmental Manager reviewed operating activities over the period 29 th – 31 st March and advised EPA of the following (via email): The CHPP shut down from 6pm Thursday 28 th March to 8am Tuesday 2 nd April (ie there could not have been any cyclical low frequency noise from the screens etc in the CHPP). Train loading was the only activity occurring on site over the weekend, with no CHPP plant operation or coal deliveries. Only 1 dozer was in operation between Thursday night and Saturday afternoon. 6 trains in total were loaded during this period at the following times:	No further action proposed.

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			engines, clanking, trains, etc. Incident time: 00:00hrs on 29/03/13.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 29th March – Train loaded between 3.46am and 6.26am. • 29th March – Train loaded between 2.16pm and 4.43pm • 30th March – Train loaded between 3.37pm and 6.05pm • 30th March – Train loaded between 10.35pm and 1.00am • 31st March – Train loaded between 10.10am and 12.37pm • 31st March – Train loaded between 7.55pm and 10.18pm <p>If anything, it would be expected that noise levels diminished over this period given the shutdown of the plant, no coal deliveries and operation of 1 dozer over 2 days.</p> <p>Data from the EPA's noise logger at the complainant's property was requested and the EPA said they would look at getting the data next week and investigate supplying information to Whitehaven for the period relating to the complaint.</p>	
10	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	2/04/2013 8:45am	Loud noise from a bulldozer working at Whitehaven Coal Mine, Kamilaroi Hwy, Gunnedah most of the weekend. Happening at time of complaint (31/3/13 at 08:00).	See Complaint 9 investigation	No further action proposed.
11	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	16/04/2013 1:20am	Roaring noise from Whitehaven coal trucks and engines, and specifically bulldozers operating on stockpiles.	<p>The Environmental Manager reviewed operating activities at the time of the complaint and advised EPA of the following (via email):</p> <p>Loading of a train was completed at 1:05am. On completion of loading a dozer operated on the stockpile in preparation for the next train. There was no CHPP, train loading, truck deliveries or loader operations occurring at this time. It was noted that the quarterly noise monitoring was to be completed by Spectrum later in the week and Spectrum would be asked to consider if dozer noise was indicative of approaching noise limits (excluding any impact of the low frequency noise issue currently under assessment).</p> <p>The complainant is aware of works progressing on the Pollution Reduction Program attached to the licence.</p>	No further action proposed.
12	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	18/04/2013 5:00am	Noise pollution from Whitehaven CHPP.	<p>The Environmental Manager reviewed operating activities at the time of the complaint and advised EPA of the following (via email):</p> <p>The CHPP was shut down from 330am Thursday 18th April due to work on the screens. The plant was shut down all day so there is no probability that there was low frequency cyclical noise from the plant at the time of the complaint. Dozers were operating on the stockpiles in preparation for train loading. EPA advised of works being undertaken in accordance with PRP requirements, and that further measurements would be taken at conclusion of Stage 1 to verify any changes to noise output.</p> <p>The complainant is also aware of works progressing on the Pollution Reduction Program attached to the licence.</p>	No further action proposed. Advice issued post completion of monitoring. This included consideration to the change out of pulleys on the screen deck to reduce vibration.

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13	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	18/04/2013 8:15pm	Noise pollution from Whitehaven CHPP. Low frequency noise from the plant and dozer noise.	<p>The Environmental Manager reviewed operating activities at the time of the complaint and advised EPA of the following (via email):</p> <p>The CHPP was shut down from 330am Thursday 18th April due to work on the screens. Work on one screen was completed but mechanical issues prevented completion of works on screen 2. As a consequence the plant was returned to operations from 8pm. At 9:15pm, the plant was shutdown again as a consequence of a failure of Screen 2, and remained shutdown until 2am. Dozers were operating on the stockpiles in preparation for train loading. EPA advised of works being undertaken in accordance with PRP requirements, and that further measurements would be taken at conclusion of Stage 1 to verify any changes to noise output. Completion of works to Screen 2 occurred during Saturday, with the plant not recommencing operations until Monday morning.</p> <p>The complainant is also aware of works progressing on the Pollution Reduction Program attached to the licence.</p>	No further action proposed. Advice issued post completion of monitoring. Following review of monitoring results, and ongoing negotiations relating to purchase, it was agreed to acquire the complainant's property.
14	Phone call to Environmental Manager	24/05/2013 9:00am	Noise from Whitehaven CHPP. Complainant described the noise as predominantly engine noise under load. Particularly noise from around 1am for most of the night.	<p>The Environmental Manager requested information from the Plant Manager as to operations occurring at the time of the complaint.</p> <p>The Plant Manager advised that no trains were loaded during the night and there was no work conducted by dozers/loaders on the bypass pad (that stockpile on the western side of the pad closest to the complainant). All stockpile work was undertaken on the product stockpiles pushing coal away from the slinger. This is on the eastern side of the stockpile. A single 988 Loader worked during the night providing feed to the plant on the opposite side of the stockpile. No dozer operations occurred at all between 2am and 3:30am.</p> <p>On the basis of this advice, CHPP operations were occurring on stocks that should be less intrusive to the complainant's property, the only loader operating was on the opposite side of the plant, and dozer operations were intermittent through the night with no train loading. This should have resulted in lower noise emissions being experienced at the complainants residence. The Environmental Manager will arrange for noise monitoring at the complainants property at the next attended monitoring event to verify noise levels.</p>	Contact will be made with the complainant prior to the next monitoring round due in August 2013.
15	Email and phone call to Environmental Manager from Dept of Planning & Infrastructure	27/06/2013 5:09pm	Gunnedah Council contacted the Dept. of Planning to raise a complaint Council had received from a motorist passing the CHPP entrance road. Specifically, the complaint related to the tracking of coal fines out of the CHPP, onto the Highway and Bluevale Road, causing slippery road conditions, covering of line markings, and covering of vehicles in black sludge.	<p>The DoPI was advised that current actions comprised:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gunnedah Council street sweeper does a circuit from our washery access road out to the bridge on Blue Vale Road every Monday, Wednesday and Friday to removal any built up coal fines from the road surface. Council have in the past, and recently, graded the road verge to remove coal fines and allow better drainage from the road surface. Whitehaven maintains contact with Council on these requirements. Council have in the past, and recently undertook washing of the road surface and the guideposts to remove build-up of black fines as consequence of wet weather. Whitehaven maintains contact with Council on these requirements. 	Contact will be made with the DoPI following the next wet weather event to confirm if the above actions were effective or if additional works required.



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			DoPI questioned what actions WCL was taking to reduce potential for this to occur.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a consequence of the recent weather, and to reduce potential for coal fines to be tracked off site, Whitehaven put an extra water cart on standby to wash-down the CHPP access road surface to minimize potential for any build up of coal fines on the road surface. <p>Additional actions proposed include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trucks accessing the wash at a slower speed to improve the effectiveness of the current spray system; • Adjustment to timers on the spray system to enhance the washing of each truck; • Install of ripple strips at the wash bay to assist in removal of coal fines from truck body and tyres. 	
16	Phone call to Manager Community Relations	8/10/2013 ~1:30pm	The complainant advised that the trains have started to get noisier and are waking him up again. He said they were not too bad for a while however the last month they have gotten worse. In particular this morning around 5am there was a very loud screeching of the brakes. The complainant said he could understand that they may have been attempting to stop the clanging of carriages however he didn't know which was worse.	<p>Initial investigations identified that there was a train on the main line that had to pull up to let the train into the rail loop, which may have been the screeching of brakes that the complainant was referring to.</p> <p>Pacific National were contacted via phone and email and requested to investigate the claims.</p>	