SPONTANEOUS COMBUSTION

Over recent months Sunnyside has experienced spontaneous combustion issues as a result of exposed carbonaceous material at the base of the pit. Whitehaven has been temporarily managing the issue via dozer push, however, due to ongoing outbreaks of spontaneous combustion across different areas of the pit, a comprehensive capping program has been developed. The plan has been provided to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA), following issue of a Notice of Cleanup Action, and comprises the following major components:

- Engagement of a contract Open Cut Examiner to supervise the works in accordance with statutory requirements;
- Completion of appropriate Risk Assessments for the project in accordance with Safety Management Standards, and identification of risk management measures for personnel working in proximity to the spontaneous combustion;
- Engagement of a suitable contractor and equipment to complete the works;
- Progressive completion of earthmoving works to ensure sufficient capping material is available as early as possible. Earthmoving will involve dozing material from the eastern waste emplacement, drill and blast of the western highwall and dozing of material in this area as well as drill and blast of the northern section of the pit to access suitable cover material for hauling and dumping in the southern area of the pit. The rate of spontaneous combustion may increase while reshaping is carried out. Capping material will be placed nearby to ameliorate these outbreaks as required.

Areas exhibiting spontaneous combustion will be capped with a minimum of 5m of suitable material and the final landform in these areas will be compliant to final landform requirements as described in the Sunnyside Mining Operations Plan.

Works are expected to commence in December 2013 with completion planned for March 2014.

In recognition of the concerns raised by the adjacent landholders, Whitehaven is undertaking a communication program to ensure the community is informed as to actions occurring at Sunnyside Mine to resolve the spontaneous combustion issue. The communication strategy involves:

1. Direct phone contact with the Sunnyside Community Consultative Committee (CCC) Chairperson;
2. Direct phone contact with those community members who have raised concerns either direct to Whitehaven or via the CCC or EPA.
3. Provision of this newsletter to CCC members, surrounding landholders and the Gunnedah Shire Council. The newsletter will also be available on the Whitehaven website.
4. Ongoing communication with the EPA, Department of Planning and Infrastructure and Division of Resources and Energy regarding the progress of capping of the affected area.

Contact details are provided on page 2 if you require any further information on spontaneous combustion at Sunnyside.
COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

Sunnyside operates a Community Consultative Committee (CCC) which is comprised of an Independent Chair, Gunnedah Shire Council representative, members of the local community and Whitehaven representatives. Community representatives are appointed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

Until recently the CCC met on a quarterly basis however at the last meeting in June it was agreed that meetings should be held annually whilst the site is in the care and maintenance phase.

If you have any issues that you wish to raise in relation to the Sunnyside site you can contact Whitehaven directly (contact details below) or any of the CCC members.

Current members are:

- Michael Broekman, Independent Chair
  0408 810 968
- Clr Hans Allgayer, Gunnedah Shire Council
- Liz Ferguson, Community representative
- Bruce Reid, Community representative
- Glenn Bailey, Community representative
- Brittany Riley, Community representative

INDEPENDENT ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT

The Project Approval for Sunnyside requires the completion of an Independent Environmental Audit every three years.

Environmental consultants Umwelt (Australia) Pty Limited were appointed by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure to undertake the latest audit. The site inspection was completed by Umwelt in October 2013 and Whitehaven is currently awaiting issue of the final audit report. Preliminary advice from the auditors indicates general compliance with approval conditions with few non-compliances identified. The non-compliances relate to noise and blast exceedances in 2011 and 2012 and the spontaneous combustion issues discussed in detail above.

The final audit report will be issued to the CCC and provided on the Whitehaven website once approved by the Department of Planning and Infrastructure.

CONTACT DETAILS

ENVIRONMENTAL ENQUIRIES
Danny Young
Group Environmental Manager
Phone: (02) 6741 9316
Email: dyoung@whitehavencoal.com.au

COMPLAINTS HOTLINE
0427 106 384

COMMUNITY ENQUIRIES
Tim Muldoon
Manager Community Relations
Phone: (02) 6741 9302
Email: tmuldoon@whitehavencoal.com.au

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT
www.whitehavencoal.com.au