

2012-2013 Complaints Register

YTD	#	Complaint Date/Time	Issue	Complainant	Method	Nature of Complaint	Investigation	Action Taken / Follow-up
1	223	3/04/2012 11:00pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Complainant stated that mine was very loud tonight	The calm conditions and strong inversion at the time of complaint was likely to result in noise enhancement at the complainants residence, however the noise levels measured without the influence of cattle did not exceed the noise criteria.	EO relocated the noise trailer the follow night to avoid impacts from cattle. A written response provided to the complainant.
2	224	4/04/2012 5:45pm	Dust - Mine	AD Quipolly	In person with EO	Complainant indicated that mine had been very dusty lately and was concerned over microscopic impacting on their health.	Seasonal change and onset of longer and stronger inversions had been concentrating dust emissions. Dust deposition gauge results for the last 12 months at complainant's property have been well below dust criteria.	A written response and NSW Health Coal Mine Dust factsheet provided to the complainant.
3	225	18/04/2012 12:29pm	Light - Mine	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	Lights from WCC were shining at complainants residence and neighbours for the last 2 nights from 11:30pm.	Lighting camera confirms glow of mine lights visible but not intrusive. In pit inspection confirms lighting plants orientated away from Werris Creek.	Lighting plant re-orientated further to the south by OCE. Written response sent to complainant.
4	226	27/04/2012 10:41pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Complainant stated that noise from mine was loud tonight and preventing her from going to sleep had been noisy that week.	Continuous noise monitor levels show that the average noise levels were below the noise criteria. NCO and OCE appropriately managed operations to prevent further impacts even though noise enhancing conditions were present.	A written response provided to the complainant.
5	227	30/04/2012 3:03pm	Blast - OP/ Vibration	A/EPA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Complainant alleged that a large blast from WCC shook their house on Friday 27 th April 2012.	Blast #19 (BlackSeam4) fired at 13:14 on 27 th April 2012 was an overburden blast in the weathered material on the ridge in front of the pit down to the Black Seam or RL385m. Blast results were in compliance.	A written response provided to the complainant and EPA.
6	228	1/05/2012 11:00pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to WCC Production Office	Complainant stated that mine was very loud tonight 11pm 1/5 and have had to move out of main bedroom.	The wind direction and inversion could cause noise enhancement, however mining noise levels were at or below the relevant criteria of 37dBA.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant.
7	229	10/05/2012 10:03pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Mine too noisy and its not road noise 10pm 10/5.	OCE/NCO modifying operations at time of complaint to reduce noise levels. Temperature inversion present. Extraneous noises causing measured noise level >37dB(A) not related to mining operations.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant.
8	230	12/05/2012 1:29am	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Mine noise is ridiculous 1am 12/5.	OCE/NCO modifying operations at time of complaint to reduce noise levels. A review of audio heard mining noise drowned out by road & train. Temperature inversion (>12oC/100m) present, noise levels measured under these conditions are not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant.

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9	231	14/05/2012 2:15pm	Light - Mine	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	Lights from WCC were shining at complainant's residence at 1:30am Friday 11/5.	Lighting camera confirms mobile machinery lights visible but not intrusive at time of complaint. Lighting Plants not relocated.	A written response provided to the complainant.
10	232	21/05/2012 10:45pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Mine noise tonight is too noisy 10:45pm 21/5.	OCE/NCO modifying operations at time of complaint to reduce noise levels. No temperature inversion present. Noise levels below relevant criteria of 37dB(A).	A written response provided to the complainant.
11	233	23/05/2012 9:18am	Noise – Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Phone to Community Complaints Line	Noise complaint from coal loader at 1am 23/5.	Rail Load Out Facility operated to 3:30am with two dozers pushing up coal stockpile. 22/5/12 had >+12oC/100m inversion and noise levels not applicable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
12	234	23/05/2012 11:33am	Blast – Damage	AE Werris Creek	Phone to Community Complaints Line	Complainant alleged mine blasting caused cracking in home.	Complainant did not identify a particular blast event.	EO visited the complainant's residence. Structural engineer undertook Property Investigation in accordance with PA10_0059.
13	235	24/05/2012 11:14am	Noise – Mine	L Quipolly	Email to EO	Noise from mine was terrible and forced complainant to change rooms at 2am 24/5. Mine related traffic using Paynes Road.	OCE/NCO modified operations at time of complaint to reduce noise levels. A review of audio heard mining noise drowned out by road & train. Temperature inversion (>3oC/100m) and wind speeds (>2m/s) present, noise levels measured under these conditions are not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant.
14	236	30/05/2012 10:33am	Blast – Damage	AF Werris Creek	Phone to Community Complaints Line	Complainant alleged mine blasting caused cracking in home.	Complainant did not identify a particular blast event.	EO visited the complainant's residence. Structural engineer undertook Property Investigation in accordance with PA10_0059.
15	237	30/05/2012 2:44pm	Noise – Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	Complainant alleged that the coal loader on Wednesday 23/5 to Friday 25/5 nights were excessively noisy.	Rail Load Out Facility operated to 3:30am with two dozers pushing up coal stockpile. 23/5/12 had >+12oC/100m inversion and 24&25/5/12 wind >3m/s and noise levels not applicable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
16	238	13/06/2012 10:54am	Light - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	RLO lights on 8/6/12 10:30pm to late shining at house and 2 sets of RLO lights shining at house until 2am on 12/6/12.	Inspection of Rail Load Out Facility lights on 12/6/12 prior to complaint show that they are set up to north west. Possible that the lights seen are from dozers on coal stockpile.	A written response provided to the complainant.

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17	239	20/06/2012 10:16pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Mine noise 20/6/12 getting too loud.	OCE/NCO did not modify operations at time of complaint as Quipolly noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels >37dB(A) not related to mining operations. Temperature inversion present >+12oC/100m so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant.
18	240	22/06/2012 1:50am	Noise – Mine	Z Quipolly	Phone to WCC Production Office	Mine noise is keeping the complainant awake since 1am 22/6/12.	OCE drove to Paynes Road to inspect noise emissions. OCE/NCO modified operations at midnight. Quipolly noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels >35dB(A) not related to mining operations. Wind >3m/s so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
19	241	25/06/2012 1:42pm	Noise - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Email to EM	Noise complaint for Coal Loader at 2am 23/6/12.	Werris Creek noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels >35dB(A) not related to mining operations. Wind and temperature inversion present so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
20	242	25/06/2012 1:42pm	Light - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Email to EM	Light complaint for Coal Loader at 2am 23/6/12.	Inspection of lighting plants at Rail Load Out Facility confirm set up appropriately and orientated to the north west. Possible that the lights seen are from dozers on coal stockpile.	A written response provided to the complainant.
21	243	4/07/2012 9:01am	Noise – Mine	C Werris Creek	Phone to EO phone	Noise from mine very loud at 10pm 3/7/12 and can still be heard 9am 4/7/12.	Werris Creek noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels >35dB(A) not related to mining operations. Southerly wind enhanced noise propagation towards Werris Creek.	A written response provided to the complainant.
22	244	13/07/2012 1:04pm	Noise - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	Noise complaint for Coal Loader on nightshift 11/7/12.	Werris Creek noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels equal to 35dB(A) not related to mining operations and not an exceedance.	A written response provided to the complainant.
23	245	13/07/2012 1:04pm	Light - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Phone to EM phone	Light complaint for Coal Loader on nightshift 11/7/12.	Inspection of lighting plants at Rail Load Out Facility confirm set up appropriately and orientated to the west. Possible that the lights seen are from dozers on coal stockpile.	A written response provided to the complainant.
24	246	17/07/2012 10:53am	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Email to EO	Mine noisy on nightshift 16/7/12. Observed allegedly unsafe equipment operation and Leading Hand that answer phone was rude.	OCE/NCO did not modify operations at time of complaint as audio from Quipolly noise monitor not working but noise levels did not exceed 37dB(A) and not an exceedance. Temperature inversion present >+12oC/100m so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant. WCC to cover the cost of complainant hiring own independent noise monitoring consultant. New Operations Manager to meet with complainant.

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25	247	17/07/2012 11:16am	Noise - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Email to EM	Noise complaint for Coal Loader on nightshift 12&13/7/12.	Werris Creek noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels equal to 35dB(A) not related to mining operations and not an exceedance. Wind >3m/s so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
26	248	17/07/2012 11:16am	Light - Rail Load Out	A Werris Creek	Email to EM	Light complaint for Coal Loader on nightshift 12&13/7/12.	Inspection of lighting plants at Rail Load Out Facility confirm set up appropriately and orientated to the west. Possible that the lights seen are from dozers on coal stockpile.	A written response provided to the complainant.
27	249	17/07/2012 3:25pm	Blast - OP/ Vibration	U Werris Creek	Phone to EO phone	Blast at 3pm 17/7/12 impacted house similar to last years' blast when last made complaint.	Blast performed as expected and all community monitoring location in compliance. South westerly wind (but not towards Werris Creek) could have enhanced blast effects.	A written response provided to the complainant.
28	250	18/07/2012 12:30pm	Dust – Mine	Y Werris Creek	In person with EO	Grey/black dust deposited on ute and roof only appeared over last couple of years and believes not from rail.	No specific event. Complainant's residence adjacent to North West Rail Line.	Dust gauge installed on complainants property and will visually analyse dust source. A written response provided to the complainant.
29	251	27/07/2012 3:10pm	Noise - Rail Load Out	A/EPA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Noise complaint for Coal Loader from 11pm 22/7/12 to 3:45am 23/7/12.	Werris Creek noise monitor identified extraneous noises causing noise levels >35dB(A) not related to mining operations. Wind >3m/s so not assessable against criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
30	252	7/08/2012 7:40am	Surface Water	AG Quipolly	Phone to Community Liaison Officer	Complaint related to alleged new spillway on dam on "Plain View" property south of mine changing flow path and water was dirty in colour.	Dam on "Plain View" is off the mine site. Spillway was present on dam prior to Whitehaven purchasing the property and was not modified during discharge incident. Water runoff due to 75mm rain the previous week and unrelated to WCC.	Additional earthworks undertaken to repair temporary banks constructed during discharge event, fill in spillway and repair boundary fence. Verbal response provided by Regional Operations Manager and Coal Processing Manager to the complainant.
31	253	7/08/2012 8:30am	Dust – Mine	Q Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Complainant stated that the mine looked dusty this morning (7/8/12) as it was hazy and concerned about their drinking water.	Complainant called back indicating that it was hazy in all directions and not necessarily the mine. Temperature inversion present potentially trapping and concentrating dust emissions.	Installed dust gauge on property and sampled drinking water for potable water analysis. A written response provided to the complainant.
32	254	15/08/2012 11:15am	Dust – Mine	M Quipolly	Phone to EO mobile	Complainant was cleaning outdoor table and wiped up black dust and assumed that it was coal dust.	Analysis of wind rose found that wind was from the North West for 25% of last fortnight was not unusual. Excessively high dust level recorded in dust gauge for July unrelated to mining. EPA PM10 in Tamworth showing regional dust event for last 5 days.	Check August dust results at property and organise for visual analysis of dust source. A written response provided to the complainant.

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33	255	22/08/2012 11:45am	Dust – Mine	A/EPA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Complainant alleges dust blowing off mine site on 16, 17 & 18/8/12.	Five offsite visual inspections undertaken on 16&17/8/12 did not identify excessive dust. Scrapers did not operate on Saturday. Over 5ML water used for dust suppression to minimise dust. RLO suspended activities on 17/8/12 due to excessive wind.	Email response sent to EPA and complainant.
34	256	27/08/2012 10:55pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to WCC Production Office Message Bank	Complainant alleges that the mine was very noisy at 11pm 27/8/12.	OCE/NCO did not modify operations at time of complaint due to dominant train noise and mining noise levels below 37dB(A) criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
35	257	3/09/2012 10:59pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to WCC Production Office Message Bank	Complainant alleges that the mine was very noisy at 11pm 3/9/12.	11 hours of production lost due to operations being suspended. WCC mining noise would have been equal to or below the “Hazeldene” noise criteria of 37dB(A) indicating that the OCE was appropriately managing mining operations to minimise noise levels. Noise levels measured under extreme temperature inversions (>+12oC/100m) are not assessable against noise criteria.	A written response provided to the complainant.
36	258	5/09/2012 11:59am	Dust – Mine	AD Quipolly	Phone to EO	The complainant indicated that the laundry is covered in a layer of black dust after being recently cleaned. The complainant is concerned about the black dust from WCC coal mine getting into her drinking water and wants WCC to put a filter on her drinking water supply.	Winds at time of complaint were from north west and had been for the last three days which is not towards the complainants residence. No change in dust levels measured at complainants residence. While it was windy, the Tamworth EPA PM10 indicated that there was a regional dust event present at the time.	In recognition of complainant’s concerns, WCC will investigate installing a filter on drinking water supply. A written response provided to the complainant.
37	259	6/09/2012 11:24am	Dust – Mine	EPA/ Anonymous	Phone to EO	Complainant alleges dust blowing off mine site at 11am 6/9/12.	Four offsite visual inspections undertaken on 6/9/12 did not identify excessive dust. Five water carts in operation. Trucks from 3600 were dumping on RL430m level east side which was the most sheltered dump available in the high westerly winds. Tamworth EPA PM10 indicated that there was a regional dust event present at the time.	Operations Manager relocated 3600 lower in pit so not as exposed to westerly winds. Verbal response provided to EPA.
38	260	28/09/2012 12:30pm	Blast – Dust	Q Quipolly	Phone to EO	Complaint stated large dust cloud generated by blast towards Quipolly.	Dry weather and high winds at time of blast would have contributed the larger than normal dust cloud generated by the blast.	Orica to review blast performance. WCC to review controls for blasting in high winds.

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39	261	25/10/2012 2:24pm	Blast - OP/ Vibration	A/EPA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Complainant alleges that WCC blasted between 12:30 & 12:45pm on 18/10/12.	WCC did not blast on 18/10/12.	Email response sent to EPA and complainant.
40	262	25/10/2012 2:24pm	Dust – Mine	EPA/AA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Complainant alleged heavy dust from mine on 23&24/10/12 covering his house and car.	Dust gauge on property did not indicate that October was a dusty month. The highest result from real time dust monitoring for 23&24/10/12 was 23µg/m ³ which is below criteria. Offsite visual inspections support that there was no excessive dust generation from the mine on those days.	Email response sent to EPA and letter to complainant.
41	263	31/10/2012 1:35pm	Blast - OP/ Vibration	A/EPA Werris Creek	Email from EPA to EO	Complainant alleges that blast on 31/10/12 shook house and created “brownish/rusty” colour dust cloud.	Except for Werris Creek monitor, blast results were in compliance. The Werris Creek monitor missed the blast and no result is available. The blast scored a “0” for fume and the colour was due to the rock type.	Orica to investigate Werris Creek monitor failure. Email response sent to EPA and complainant.
42	264	22/11/2012 12:32pm	Blast - Odour	AH Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant alleges that the WCC blast smelt sulfurous and could see a dust cloud from the mine towards Werris Creek.	The pre-blast weather check confirmed winds not towards Werris Creek. The blast results were in compliance. Upon investigation there was no obvious reason to confirm the cause of the odour or whether it was sourced from the blast.	A written response provided to the complainant. The next blast to the former magazine area will have the DO NOT BLAST arc around Werris Creek will be increased.
43	265	28/11/2012 1:09pm	Clearing	DoP	Email from DoP	The complaint from WIRES was in relation to impacts of clearing on protected fauna during nesting season.	WCC undertook clearing on 20 th November in accordance with Biodiversity and Offset Management Plan. Approximately 20 habitat trees were assessed with no fauna identified. After clearing, no threatened fauna were identified however a number of nestlings were found and were taken to WIRES to be cared for.	Ecologists to issue a Clearing Report. A written report provided to DoP.
44	266	09/01/2013 10:08am	Dust – Mine	Q Quipolly	Phone to EO	A lot of dust from the mine blowing towards Quipolly.	The complaint coincided with a sudden increase in wind speed from 7m/s to over 13m/s at 10am with wind speed dropping back to average at 10:30am. All five water carts were operating applying 2.4ML of water on the 9/1 for dust suppression.	EO met with complainant on day of complaint. A written response provided to the complainant.
45	267	14/01/2013 11:41am	Dust – Mine	AI Werris Creek	Phone to WCC Production Office	Last fortnight dust has been bad, especially 9/1 & 10/1 with coal dust on house floor.	Prevailing weather conditions have been hot and dry including two non-mining events affecting air quality. However, Werris Creek dust levels (whether from WCC or other/ambient dust sources) have not exceeded the accepted criteria for air quality impacts and that on average the Werris Creek PM10 levels are lower than that measured in Tamworth indicating that Werris Creek is not being adversely impacted by WCC mining operations.	A written response provided to the complainant. ALS to analyse dust sample and test drinking water quality.

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46	268	24/01/2013 8:01am	Dust – Mine	I Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Black dust has coated roof and swimming pool over the last fortnight. Blast dust looks like coal dust.	Prevailing weather conditions have been hot and dry including two non-mining events affecting air quality. However, Werris Creek dust levels (whether from WCC or other/ambient dust sources) have not exceeded the accepted criteria for air quality impacts and that on average the Werris Creek PM10 levels are lower than that measured in Tamworth indicating that Werris Creek is not being adversely impacted by WCC mining operations.	A written response provided to the complainant. ALS test drinking water quality.
47	269	29/01/2013 2:15pm	Dust – Mine	AJ Werris Creek	Phone to WCC Production Office	Black dust on pegs has stained clothes on clothes line.	Prevailing weather conditions have been hot and dry including two non-mining events affecting air quality. However, Werris Creek dust levels (whether from WCC or other/ambient dust sources) have not exceeded the accepted criteria for air quality impacts and that on average the Werris Creek PM10 levels are lower than that measured in Tamworth indicating that Werris Creek is not being adversely impacted by WCC mining operations.	A written response provided to the complainant. ALS test drinking water quality.
48	270	31/01/2013 11:35am	Groundwater – Contamination	AK Quipolly	Passed on by CCC member	Alleged that the bore water supply is contaminated. Groundwater level has declined and don't accept that it is to do with dry conditions.	Across 2012, Quipolly Alluvium aquifer upstream of "Naranji" has fallen on average by 0.6m across the 15 bores monitored, equating to between 5 and 15% decrease. Water quality monitoring of Quipolly Creek and Quipolly Alluvium has not identified any changes in water chemistry or contamination of the creek or aquifer. Rainfall had only reached 64% of the Quirindi Long Term Average (259mm out of 403mm for April to November) demonstrating how dry it was prior to December.	ALS to test bore water quality and commence monitoring bimonthly water levels. A written response provided to the complainant.
49 to 54	271 to 276	08/02/2013 1:17pm	Blast - OP/ Vibration	Various	Phone to EO	The complainants allege that the blast on 08/02/13 shook their homes and rattled objects inside.	Blast performed as expected and all community monitoring location in compliance. Investigation did not identify a reason for the blast causing the complaints but did identify actions to improve processes and procedures around blast design.	A written response provided to the complainants. Property investigation by structural engineer organised for one complaint of alleged property damage.
55	277	21/02/2013 11:09am	Noise - Mine	C Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant stated that the mine noise was high (loud) at 11pm on 20/02/13.	Noise levels and audio from Werris Creek noise monitor demonstrate that rail noise is major component of elevated noise levels. WCC mine noise very infrequently audible and in compliance.	A written response provided to the complainant.



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56	278	27/02/2013 11:50pm	Noise - Mine	L Quipolly	Phone to Old OCE Office Phone	Complainant stated that the mine noise was "ridiculous" at midnight on 27/02/13 and questioned why the mine noise was louder than it had been for some time.	Noise levels and audio from Quipolly noise monitor demonstrate that there were no elevated noise levels and mining noise was in compliance with the criteria. OCE not required to change mining operations.	A written response provided to the complainant.