

2016-2017 Complaints Register

YTD	#	Complaint Date/Time	Issue	Complainant	Method	Nature of Complaint	Investigation	Action Taken / Follow-up
1	508	1/04/2016 1:37pm	Blast (Vibration/ Overpressure)	Anon DPE Werris Creek	Email to EO	Complaint regarding a blast – ground vibration. Email received 7/4/2016 1:23pm	WCC shot #2016-042 (S15_B1112_UG_P5a) was a small underground collapse shot fired at 1:37pm on Friday 1st April 2016 and was in compliance. Actual blast vibration @ 0.15mm/s (Werris Creek South) was below the predicted vibration and well below the anecdotal threshold for vibration complaints of 0.5mm/s. Weather conditions were a light northwesterly wind (319°) @ 3.5m/s with no inversion present.	Written response provided to DPE.
2	509	8/4/2016 9:10am	Noise (Mine)	BS Quipolly	Phone call to site admin	The complainant advised that they could hear the roar of mining machinery and wished to complain	<p>Audio streaming from the Quipolly noise monitor was reviewed in association with measured noise levels at the monitor. Noise levels during the period of the complaint were below 35dB(a) LF, with the exception of occasional short duration peaks. The audio stream combined with visual assessment confirmed these peaks to be attributed to a light aircraft flying in the area at the time. When the light aircraft was not audible through the audio stream noise levels returned to below 35dB(a) LF.</p> <p>WCC Operations Manager and Production Superintendent drove to the road adjacent to the complainant's property to identify the noise sources and levels in this area. The principal noise source for most of the observation period related to the light aircraft identified in the audio stream. When the aircraft was not audible, general mining hum was audible, however it was identified to be close to background noise levels, and not at a level that would could a nuisance. A dozer operating on the top of the overburden emplacement was stopped for a short time, however this had negligible impacts on the measured noise levels and field observations. No further actions were taken at this time.</p>	Environmental Officer called complainant back at 10:44am on 8/4/16 to advise of the progress of the investigations. Complainant advised that they no longer thought noise levels were excessive. EO requested notification next time complainant believed noise levels were excessive.
3	510	13/4/2016 4:08pm	Blast (Vibration/ Overpressure)	U Werris Creek	Phone call to EO	The complainant stated that the roofing in the shed vibrated badly, and wished to lodge a complaint.	WCC shot #2016-049 (S14_B1617_RL245_TSB) was fired at 4:08pm on Wednesday 13th April 2016 on the western side of the pit as a through-seam shot. The shot was designed with a pre blast vibration prediction for Werris Creek South of 0.4mm/s. Blast monitoring results were in compliance at all community monitoring locations. Actual blast vibration at the Werris Creek South monitor (closest to the complaint) of 0.45mm/s was in line with the predicted vibration and below the anecdotal complaint threshold of 0.5mm/s. The shot was next to and at the same level as the previous complaint from the same complainant. Combined these two shots are the first in several months with significant blasting in the G-seam interburden.	Return phone call and email response provided to complainant with blast results.

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4	511	18/4/2016 1:45pm	Blast (Vibration/ Overpressure)	BI Werris Creek	Email to EO	Complainant advised that "house shook for quite a while on this blast, at least 10 seconds of moderate to high shaking".	WCC shot #2016-050 (S15_B1720_RL260_TSB) was fired at 1:34pm on Monday 18th April 2016 on the western side of the pit as a through-seam shot. The shot was designed with a pre blast vibration prediction for Werris Creek South of 0.3mm/s. Blast monitoring results were in compliance at all community monitoring locations. Actual blast vibration at the Werris Creek Mid monitor (closest to the complaint) of 0.28mm/s was in line with the predicted vibration and below the anecdotal complaint threshold of 0.5mm/s. The shot was located in the F and G interburden, which may have contributed to the complaint given the relatively low measured vibration levels at the monitoring stations in Werris Creek. This shot was adjacent to two previous blasts resulting in complaints (complaint #507 and #510).	Email response to complainant with details of the blast. Offered to monitor vibration levels at complainant's residence the next time blasting occurs in this area.
5	512	19/4/2016 9:02am	Odour	Y Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant advised that they could smell the "burning smell of coal, quite strong at my residence"	EO and Operations Manager visited the road adjacent to the complainants property immediately after receiving the complaint. No mine-related odour could be detected. Data from the site weather station was reviewed to confirm that the current location was directly downwind of the mine at the time of observation. Following a conversation with the complainant, EO then undertook a west-east transect of the mining area to ascertain any impact from the mine, with no odour detectable at any point along the transect. Weather conditions at 9:25am on 19/4/16 were a light southerly (191°) at 1m/s with no inversion present (overnight inversion broke down at 7:20am)	Phone discussion with complainant to inform of current mining sequence and progress of mining old underground workings. Requested to be notified if odour is detected in future, to allow continued monitoring.

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6-8	513-515	20/4/2016 2:05pm	Blast (Vibration/ Overpressure) and Blast (Dust)	A Werris Creek & I Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant A advised that they felt the blast. Complainant I advised they felt the vibration and also had dust come over the property.	<p>WCC shot #9 (blast #2016-052 S19_B1013_RL400 & #2016-051 S15_B0810_Gseam_PS) was fired at 1:58pm on Wednesday 20th April 2016. #2016-052 was an overburden blast located on natural surface in the middle of the strip, and #2016-051 was a presplit blast located on the eastern side of the strip. The blasts were designed with a pre blast vibration prediction for Werris Creek South of 0.5mm/s and 0.4mm/s respectively. Blast monitoring results were in compliance at all community monitoring locations. It is expected that #2016-052 was the cause of the overpressure/vibration complaints due to the location and monitoring results. Actual blast vibration at the Werris Creek South monitor of 0.37mm/s for #2016-052 was below the predicted vibration the anecdotal complaint threshold of 0.5mm/s. Overpressure was measured at 98.1 dB at the Werris Creek South monitoring site, well below the compliance limit.</p> <p>The pre-blast weather check was undertaken following a weather-related delay of 5 minutes, without favourable wind speed and direction of 3.0m/s at 158° (SSE) at time of firing. Monitoring of the dust plume following the blast shows the dust rising and travelling slowly across the closed Werris Creek road before dispersing.</p>	Phone discussions with complainants, advising of the steps followed to minimise impacts on the community.
9	516	20/4/2016 2:12pm	Odour	A Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant advised that they could smell fires burning for the past 3 weeks. Smell was not currently present.	<p>WCC has been actively managing spontaneous combustion stemming from the underground workings of the former underground colliery. Actions taken include injecting flyash into roadways and sealing open headings with clay to reduce the oxygen intake leading to self-heating in the underground areas. In addition, additional watercarts have been manned during the mornings to reduce spontaneous combustion in ROM coal and partings material in the spoil, when inversion conditions may limit dispersion and exacerbate impacts. The former underground workings in strip 15 were mined out in the last week of April 2016, removing the source of the spontaneous combustion.</p>	Phone discussion with complainant, advising of the current mining sequence.

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10	517	5/5/2016	Odour	A Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant advised that they could smell burning coal on the 4/5/2016 at 11:30am and on 2/5/2016 and wanted to know how much longer it was going on.	Several locations around Werris Creek immediately checked for nuisance odours. No odour associated with burning coal could be detected. An analysis of wind direction on the days leading up to the 5 th May 2016 indicates that Werris Creek was downwind of Werris Creek Coal Mine for less than 5% of the period of the complaint, with northerly and northwesterly winds predominant during this period. The source of the odour cannot reasonably be attributed to Werris Creek Coal Mine.	Follow up letter provided to complainant.
11	518	13/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	AW Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast. A low rumble at the residence.	WCC blast 061 fired at 12.22pm on the 13 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits for blasting at all locations.	Follow up phone call to provide information on the compliant blast. Structural assessment to be undertaken on the property. Note: Assessment cancelled by complainant.
12	519	13/5/2016	Blast	U Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complaint made regarding the blast generally. Complainant requested details of the blast.	WCC blast 061 fired at 12.22pm on the 13 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO provided blast results and a description of the blast to the complainant via email.
13	520	13/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	Anonymous (DPE) Werris Creek	Email to EO	Vibration complaint – no further detail provided. DPE requested blast details.	WCC blast 061 fired at 12.22pm on the 13 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	Details of the blast were provided to DPE as requested.
14	521	13/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	A Werris Creek	Email to EO	Request for blast data. Property vibrated.	WCC blast 061 fired at 12.22pm on the 13 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO provided blast results to the complainant.
15	522	13/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	AH Werris Creek	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 061 fired at 12.22pm on the 13 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
16	523	16/5/2016	Dust	BS Quipolly	Phone to EO	The complainant advised that the mine was generating excessive dust, with the dust visible to the northeast of the mine.	A visual inspection and photographs were taken immediately after complaint. Meteorological conditions and dust suppression activities were also reviewed. Dust suppression activities were in operation and little to no atmospheric dust was observed.	EO called the complainant to advise findings of the investigation.
17	524	18/5/2016	Dust	Anonymous, EPA	Email to EO	Report of orange-brown dust at Werris Creek Mine.	Detailed review of routine operations, photography, meteorological conditions and dust suppression activities.	An email was provided to the EPA outlining the details of the investigation and reported compliance with the Air Quality and Greenhouse Gas Management Plan.
18	525	25/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	M	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 066 fired at 11.39am on the 25 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
19	526	25/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	U	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 066 fired at 11.39am on the 25 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
20	527	25/5/2016	Blast (Vibration)	AH	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 066 fired at 11.39am on the 25 th May. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.

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21	528	29/6/2016	Dust	BS	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they had noticed excessive atmospheric dust levels around the north east corner of the mine.	EO and Operations Manager viewed the mine from the complainant's residence taking photographs and noting a small dust plume north of WCC operations. On site operations were also inspected, photographs taken, dust suppression activities were in use. No point source could be observed on site. Meteorological data reviewed temperature inversion present.	EO called the complainant to discuss outcomes of inspections. Second follow up phone call and email sent to the complainant.
22	529	15/7/2016	Blast	AW	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 078 fired at 1.05pm on the 15 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
23	530	15/7/2016	Blast	AH	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 079 fired at 1.13pm on the 15 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
24	531	26/7/2016	Blast	U	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence. Requested blast data	WCC blast 079 fired at 1.13pm on the 26 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance. Blast data sent through to complainant.
25	532	26/7/2016	Blast	AL	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 079 fired at 1.13pm on the 26 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
26	533	31/8/2016	Blast	AW	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence. Requested blast data	WCC blast 092 fired at 1.13pm on the 26 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO returned phone call to discuss the details of the blast. Further discussion was held regarding undertaking a structural assessment of the property. The property owners had cancelled their previous assessment however requested to undertake a new assessment. This has been scheduled for the 7 th September.
27	534	31/8/2016	Blast	BI	Email to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 092 fired at 1.13pm on the 26 th July. Monitoring results were under compliance limits at all locations.	EO responded via email confirming blast was within limits and providing a copy of the blast data.
28	535	19/9/2016	Water release	AG	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they were disappointed and frustrated with the controlled water release.	EO advised that the controlled water release was undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Protection Licence and was a result of increased rainfall experienced during September.	Prior to the controlled water release the complainant (and others including the EPA were consulted). The complainant also attended a site visit to view the process of release on the 6 th September.
29	536	20/9/2016	Water release	AG	Email to EO	Complainant advised they were not impressed with the controlled water release. The complainant requested the water release was ceased.	EO advised that the controlled water release was undertaken in accordance with the Environmental Protection Licence and was a result of increased rainfall experienced during September.	EO advised the complainant that the water release to the south of operations had ceased on the 20 th .
30	537	6/10/2016	Dust	BS	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they had viewed dust lifting off operations on the eastern side of the WCC pit.	EO called OCE and advised complaint had been made. OCE ceased operations until the water cart could make its way back to the area. Operations continued with ongoing cycling of water cart usage as normal.	EO advised the complainant of the steps undertaken to manage the dust lift off in the area. Complainant thanked WCC for the quick response to the complaint.

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31	538	8/11/2016	Blast	M	Phone call to site admin – Operations Manager took the call	Complainant advised the blast had vibrated their lounge room floor and was very loud.	WCC blast 117 fired at 1.04pm on the 8 th November. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	OM returned phone call to discuss the details of the blast and confirmed blast was within compliance limits.
32	539	19/12/2016	Blast	BI	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 136 fired at 1.13pm on the 19 th December. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
33	540	19/12/2016	Blast	AW	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they felt the blast at their residence.	WCC blast 136 fired at 1.13pm on the 19 th December. Monitoring results were within compliance limits at all locations.	EO advised blast was in compliance.
34	541	29/12/2016	Dust	BS	Phone to EO	Complainant advised they had viewed dust lifting off operations on the eastern side of the WCC pit.	EO called OCE and advised complaint had been made. OCE ceased operations on the Eastern side of the pit until the water cart could make its way back to the area. Operations continued with ongoing cycling of water cart usage as normal.	EO advised the complainant of the steps undertaken to manage the dust lift off in the area.