



**Tarrawonga Coal Pty Ltd – Tarrawonga Coal Mine**  
**2013 Complaints Register**

#	Method	Date/Time of Complaint	Nature of Complaint	Investigation	Action Taken / Follow-up
1	EPA on behalf of anonymous complainant	9/01/2013 5:27pm	Complaint relating to excessive dust from Tarrawonga mine this morning.	<p>The 9<sup>th</sup> January was a very dry and windy day causing significant dust generation from all sources in the area. During the morning, the Environmental Manager had discussions with the Engineering Surveyor, the Open Cut Examiner and the Operations Manager to identify options to reduce the dust lift off associated with the Tarrawonga operation. As a consequence of these discussions, the following actions were implemented:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scraper Crew parked at 9:30am</li> <li>• Daracon Coal Crusher parked at 10am</li> <li>• Toll Trucks reduced to 10km/hr on ROM circuit</li> <li>• Dozer 822 re-tasked from priority work that was generating dust at Ramp 4 at 9:30am</li> <li>• Excavator 530 relocated from Ramp 6 to Ramp 4 to replace Excavator 2500 which was parked at 10:15am</li> <li>• Excavator 532 relocated from priority dig face that was generating dust at 9:50am</li> <li>• Additional water cart mobilised</li> </ul> <p>Environmental Manager reviewed dust levels from locations surrounding the mine from 11:30am and found dust levels to be minimal and that the actions taken were effective. Advice was issued to the EPA to this effect.</p>	Email advice issued to EPA confirming actions taken.
2	EPA on behalf of anonymous complainant	10/01/2013 6:00am	Complaint relating to excessive noise from Tarrawonga mine this morning. Sounded like dozer was in complainant's front yard.	<p>Advice issued to the EPA that Tarrawonga was not operating between 2:30am and 7am on the morning of the complaint, and that to our knowledge, Boggabri Coal was also not operating a production shift. Review of noise files from the real time noise monitor at around 6am did not identify any low frequency or equipment related noise.</p> <p>EPA then responded indicating that the complainant now thought it may have been from the period 7am to 9am. Review of the data from the noise monitor indicated low levels of low frequency noise throughout this period, with wind speeds generally in the normal range &lt;3m/s and from the west/northwest. Review of noise files between 7am and 9am again could not identify any significant equipment and/or dozer noise. This advice was issued to the EPA, together with copies of noise files and the noise data chart for the 10<sup>th</sup> January.</p>	Email advice issued to EPA outlining noise conditions at the time of the complaint and a copy of noise files and noise chart identifying no excessive operational noise. The EPA agreed via a follow up phone conversation that the mine may not have contributed to the noise heard at the complainant's property at the time of the complaint.
3	EPA on behalf of FLAC. Downer EDI complaint to Operations manager	13/02/2013 1:32pm	Complaint relating to blast fume and dust, as well as rotten egg smell and metallic taste drifting across Downer EDI workshop and protester camp in Leard State Forest.	<p>Environmental Manager requested details from site in relation to the blast, including timing weather conditions, and in particular wind speed and direction.</p> <p>The Environmental Officer and Operations Manager had reviewed the weather forecast for the next 7 days which indicated conditions for blasting on Wednesday 13/02 were suitable for the blast. Wind speed and direction was monitored throughout the morning, and at the time of the blast, wind was from the east-south-east at 3.9m/s which is equivalent to a moderate breeze but</p>	Orica ICAM investigation complete. Email advice issued to EPA outlining blast photographs and forecast conditions. EPA responded that sufficient evidence had been provided and no further action

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				<p>still well under the &gt;6m/s wind speed cut off.</p> <p>The blast video was reviewed and indicated no visible blast fume and photographs and forecast conditions supplied in response to the EPA.</p>	required.
4	Email message to Environmental Manager	18/02/2013 4:46pm	Complaint relating to dust drifting across their property from a blast held at 12:00 that day, impacting on their health and lifestyle. Requested that blasting impacts be retained within the boundary of the Tarrawonga mine.	<p>Environmental Manager requested details from site in relation to the blast, including timing, weather conditions, and in particular wind speed and direction.</p> <p>The site Environmental Officer provided details of the blast and weather conditions. The Environmental Officer and Operations Manager had reviewed the weather forecast for the next 7 days which indicated conditions for blasting would deteriorate throughout the week, and that Monday was the most suitable day for the blast. Wind speed and direction was monitored throughout the morning, and at the time of the blast, wind was from the east-south-east at 2.3m/s which is equivalent to a light breeze. With the wind from this direction, any dust plume from the blast would have been carried in north-north-west direction, predominantly to Leard State Forest. The site sentries for the blast confirmed that the dust associated with the blast dispersed in a northerly direction, and not towards the east.</p> <p>This advice was issued to the complainant in an email response.</p>	No further contact undertaken.
5	EPA on behalf of anonymous complainant. Email message to Environmental Manager	22/04/2013 7:00-7:30am	Complaint relating to dust from both Tarrawonga and Boggabri Coal Mines and from the Manilla-Boggabri Road as a consequence of excess truck movements.	<p>Environmental Manager requested details from site in relation to conditions and provided the following advice:</p> <p>Tarrawonga did not operate on Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> April, and only commenced operations from 6:40am on Monday morning. Water carts were active on the Monday morning from 6am prior to equipment starting. It was noted that there was dust trapped in an inversion layer early that morning prior to work commencing, with a significant proportion from adjacent gravel roads. On checking truck movements from Tarrawonga, there were no trucks received at site until 8:50am that morning for domestic coal, and this truck travelled the Tarrawonga haul route. During the day, the site was monitored for dust, with a dust check completed by the Environmental Officer at 2:25pm that afternoon due to increase in wind speed. The dust check found operations were minimising dust lift off with no significant individual dust sources from within pit operations.</p> <p>Tarrawonga recognises the issue of temperature inversions impacting on the capacity for dust to disperse. To minimise dust lift off at site start up, the water carts, which are activated in advance of the remaining fleet will remain in pit during the pre-start meetings to ensure adequate dust control is in place, and will catch up with the OCE's later in the shift/</p>	Advice was issued to the EPA in an email response.
6	Phone call to Environmental Officer	23/04/2013 8:30am	Complainant was concerned with the amount of dust around the area from Tarrawonga. He asked if we were still using the full water cart capacity as he believed with recent cut backs, the water carts may have been underused.	At the time of the phone call, the Operations Manager and Environmental Officer were inspecting dust levels and discussing measures to reduce dust. Dust was elevated due to a temperature inversion up until 8am. All water carts were in use during the morning from 6am. Equipment was monitored throughout the morning as were the weather conditions. At the start of day shift, water carts will continue to water haul and access roads in the pit 30 minutes prior to commencement of the shift to limit dust emissions.	Monitor water cart usage and dust emissions from nearby gravel roads between 5 and 9am.

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7	EPA on behalf of anonymous complainant	31/05/2013 9:46am	Complaint relating to dust from the mines at 6am on Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> May.	<p>The Environmental Manager requested advice from the Tarrawonga site Environmental Officer as to conditions at the time of the complaint and relevant mitigation measures being undertaken to reduce dust lift off. The Environmental Officer confirmed that 1,632,000L of water was used on site over the preceding period (6am 30<sup>th</sup> May to 3am 31<sup>st</sup> May). On entry to site on the morning of 31<sup>st</sup> May the Environmental Officer noted slightly elevated dust levels in the general area, and put this down to general mining and road dust being trapped in an inversion layer. Subsequent site based inspections of dust levels was taken throughout the morning with no evidence of individual pieces of mining equipment generating significant dust loads. The Environmental Officer noted that by 10am, upon breakup of the inversion layer, the visible dust had generally dispersed.</p> <p>The Environmental Officer had also noted during the day on 30<sup>th</sup> May that farming activities on the "Ambardo" property was generating significant dust from farming equipment, with this dust travelling in a generally north-north east direction.</p>	Photographs of the site over the time of the complaint were provided to the EPA as part of the response.
8	Phone call to Tarrawonga site (spoke with Operations Manager)	12/07/2013 12:50pm	Complaint relating to what the complainant believed to be vibration from the blast earlier in the day. The complainant said he felt the vibration through the ground and it shook the whole house. He noted that he had been noticing blasts more and more lately.	<p>The Operations Manager advised the complainant that the blast wasn't out of the ordinary in terms of the size and type of blast however the overcast conditions on the day likely contributed to the effects of the blast being experienced at the complainant's property. The Operations Manager also explained that the complainant would have noticed airblast overpressure rather than ground vibration however the complainant was adamant it was ground vibration. The Operations Manager committed to investigating the blast with the view of improving blasting in the future.</p> <p>The monitor results showed no trigger on noise, however did trigger at Templemore and Tarrawonga Station on vibration, below exceedance levels. (Templemore: 1.42mm/s and 101.4dB, Tarrawonga: 0.45mm/s and 80.5dB).</p> <p>Following receipt of the complainant's concerns, Whitehaven sought specialist advice in relation to this blast from Orica's vibration specialist, who indicated that the blast effects may have been exacerbated by an initial presplit hole that was not fully contained. This could have caused airblast like effects (without necessarily triggering) a significant distance past the radius of the blast monitors. Environmental factors (low cloud, still day) would have amplified the effects of the blast. Orica also indicated vibration would not have propagated the distance to the complainant's property, and that the effects of rattling windows would have been as a consequence of blast overpressure.</p> <p>Alternative options for blasting, relating to presplit shots and possibly the direction of firing, will be considered in consultation with Whitehaven.</p>	Letter issued to the complainant detailing the blast investigation outcomes.
9	EPA on behalf of anonymous complainant	25/07/2013 12:10pm	Complaint relating to noise and vibration from unspecified mine blast. Caller was working inside 48	Tarrawonga did undertake a significant blast at 12:08pm on the 25/7/13. The Environmental Manager requested advice from the Tarrawonga site Environmental Officer as to conditions at the time of blast and if monitoring results were complaint. Monitoring results were compliant,	Environmental report formulated and reported to the EPA. No further action required.

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			Laidlaw Street Boggabri and at 12:10 this afternoon the house shook, the cornice loudly cracked and the windows rattled. Caller said the effect was not mild. House is a 1960s vintage and has not suffered major damage in previous 50 years. Suspect either Whitehaven Coal or Boggabri Coal mines.	(Tarrawonga monitor, SW of the mine and towards alleged impact area did not trigger) and weather condition were clear and were well under the criteria applied in the blast management plan for adverse weather conditions. Whitehaven sought specialist advice from qualified Orica personnel. An investigation stated that with data available from the blast monitoring, geological and weather conditions, no conclusion could be ascertained as to the cause or an explanation formulated in regards to the complaint.	
10	Phone call to Tarrawonga Environmental Officer	5/08/2013 10:00am	Complainant concerned about dust in area.	Message received by the Environmental Officer at 10am. On the returning call at 11:00am, a complaint was made in regards elevated dust levels during the morning. The complainant was not sure if it was emanating from Tarrawonga or IBC. The environmental officer stated that Tarrawonga had not been fully operation during morning due to equipment issues and toolbox talks regarding a recent incident. At 930am, it was noted that Tarrawonga dust levels were satisfactory but IBC did had slightly elevated dust levels. It is was also noted at by the site survey when checking water levels at 10am, that a cattle truck headed East along Goonbri Rd had caused significant dust lift off.	Continue to monitor dust levels and water cart usage.
11	EPA on behalf of identified complainant	14/08/2013 4:00pm	Complainant concerned about dust in area from mine personnel and mine related vehicles travelling on gravel roads, particularly from 4pm onwards. Complainant requested mines talk with their staff to again reiterate that they should use sealed roads wherever possible.	It is impossible for Tarrawonga Coal to stipulate that its employees cannot use public roads, and it would be most likely that the only employees for Tarrawonga that would utilise gravel roads in the area are those that have no alternate option. Notwithstanding this, site will be requested to toolbox this issue with personnel and encourage them, wherever possible, to limit travel on gravel roads.	Nil required.
12	Email to Health and Safety Advisor	3/10/2013 8:26am	Potential near miss on the Kamilaroi Highway near Blue Vale Road intersection with Whitehaven employees, approximately 5pm on the 2/10/13. The complainant was travelling east towards Gunnedah approaching the Blue Vale Road intersection when a blue Holden ute turned left onto the Highway in the turning lane and veered into the complainant's lane without looking. The complainant veered	The driver of the ute, who works at Tarrawonga, was counselled by site personnel in regards to his driving, in particular merging onto the Kamilaroi Highway.	Nil required.

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			<p>slightly onto the wrong side of the Highway and the ute pulled back into the turning lane and the proceeded to follow the complainant to town. The complainant turned right onto Quia Road and took a photo of the ute that was involved in the incident.</p>		
13	Phone call to Environmental Manager	7/11/13 12:25pm	<p>Complaint in relation to a blast that had just been initiated at the Tarrawonga site. Complainant indicated that it resulted in significant dust from site being sent onto his property which he should not have to accept.</p>	<p>Tarrawonga site was requested to provide details of the blast. Information obtained confirmed that a review of the weather forecast was undertaken prior to setting the blast date. The forecast indicated mild conditions with light winds generally from the north-west. There was no indication in the forecast that conditions would be unsuitable for blasting. Confirmation of conditions at the blast time 11:59am indicated winds at 4m/s generally from the west. These conditions were generally lighter than earlier in the day. These conditions are suitable for blasting in accordance with the Blast Management Plan. No fume was present in the shot, with general dust travelling in an easterly direction. Both blast monitors confirmed the blast was within compliance parameters. Conditions are currently extremely dry and it is not possible to undertake blasting activities without the generation of dust. Site observations confirmed the dust plume travelled in an easterly direction but generally dispersed as it travelled across Whitehaven owned property. It is accepted that dust would have travelled to the complainant's property, however, it had substantially dissipated by the time it reached the property, as indicated by site photos taken by the Environmental Officer. Tarrawonga regrets any inconvenience caused by the blast, however was unable to undertake any additional mitigation measures in the current dry conditions.</p>	Letter issued to complainant.