

# **Draft CCC Guidelines**

Submission from Mandalong Community Association March 2016

## **Introduction**

Mandalong is a rural community with a population of just 388. In recent years Centennial Coal has purchased more than 50 properties in the Mandalong Valley. This represents more than 30% of the landholders.

For more about Mandalong visit [www.mandalong.net.au](http://www.mandalong.net.au)

The Mandalong Community Association has taken a very active role in the Centennial Coal Mandalong CCC since its inception.

The MCA welcomes the new Draft Guidelines and recognises the many improvements and added flexibility it offers.

We do, however, have a number of comments we ask be considered. These comments are the outcome of observations and experiences as CCC members over the years.

## **Community Members**

- 1) We believe that Community Members must truly represent the Community. We understand the process for appointing members but, in reality, residents are approached/encouraged to make the application and out-of-area Chairpersons cannot be expected to know the applicants.

We recommend the Guidelines disallow the Company from influencing the appointment of Community Members as once appointed to the CCC these members seldom act in the interests of the Community, in fact they take up valuable seats on the CCC and reduce the ability of the community in voicing its concerns.

- 2) We are of the opinion that the 3-5 Community Members allowed is too restrictive. Also we note that recently our community association's representation on our CCC has been reduced from 3 to 1. We believe that where an active community association exists it should be able to nominate up to 50% of the representatives on the committee. This is to ensure that the community is able to work more effectively in representing its issues. Community Members need to be across corporate practices, environmental, land use, social and mining matters including

the impacts of mining on surface infrastructure. The work load cannot be over- estimated. Nominating the best people available to concentrate on specific areas allows the Community to have the best quality representation. By way of example, over the years our committee has had to work hard to make progress in the following areas:

- To get the miner in the early days to issue PSMPs in a timely manner;
- To teach the miner the difference between issuing newsletters and consultation;
- To push the mine to include notice of drilling to adjacent properties, not just the immediate properties effected;
- To push the mine regarding the reinstatement of drilling sites after they had completed drilling;
- To push the mine to use noise baffles to reduce the noise impact of their drilling program;
- Teach the miner that a complaint is a complaint and should be reported even when the mine disagrees with the nature of the complaint;
- To push the miner to alert the community to mining impacts on natural and public infrastructure before they occur;
- To push the miner to adopt better land management practices;
- To push the mine on the quality of water being pumped from the mine;

Further, our association has found it invaluable to have its key executives fully engaged with the CCC. When the miner and chairman cherry pick representatives, the community is unable to develop a representative voice and this reduces the value and effect of the CCC process.

Our recommendations are:

- i. The number of Community Members is increased to 7 or the Chairperson is given the authority to increase the membership number as deemed appropriate.
- ii. The miner should have no right to nominate anyone.
- iii. Where there is an active association, it be invited to recommend up to 50% of the membership.

## **Combined CCC in an area**

As the above paragraphs indicate, the work of the community in a CCC is very significant and wide-ranging. The suggestion in the proposed guidelines that CCCs in an area might be combined would significantly reduce the ability of individual communities to voice their issues. It would bias the CCC process towards the miner and reduce the effectiveness of the CCC process.

We recommend that this possibility be removed from the document.

## **Minutes**

Since one of the key roles of the Committee is to communicate to the wider community, the quality and timeliness of CCC minutes are vitally important.

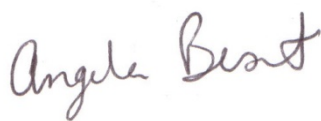
- 1) We believe it is inappropriate that the minutes are taken by the Company.

Our recommendation is that the Chairpersons provide their own minute-takers, as Mandalong has experienced in past years.

- 2) There are times when the availability of the minutes is critical.

We recommend that the minutes be published on the Company website within 14 days.

Regards

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Angela Besant". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Angela Besant

President

MCA