



**What is important to you when you think about the rehabilitation of the Latrobe Valley coal mines?**

Safety, stability, managing fire and dust hazard, timeframe, pay structure/model and economic opportunities are all important when considering rehabilitation.

We recognise the analysis in the LVRRS Geotechnical Study Synopsis found that filling the mine voids with water would provide a safe and stable solution. We note also that a dry alternative, may not offer the same protection against land movements. This could expose the region to heavy earthworks with infinite and uncertain on-going maintenance required alongside safety exposures.

Given the expert advice suggests filling with water is the likely the most stable and passive solution, it is important it is delivered in a timely way to avoid risks to the community if the filling is prolonged over decades. This is not only a risk to the community in terms of safety, but also the risk that a potential community amenity in the form of a rehabilitated mine is delayed dragging out the ability of the community to transform and use the amenity for new purposes.

Gippsland wants to get on with generating new sources of economic activity and we want the mines rehabilitated quickly so we could see the land and lakes put to new uses.

It is critical that we find a solution that delivers a high flow rate of water and fills voids in a timely fashion. We need to see leadership from the government to coordinate all feasible sources of water across the various mines in the Latrobe Valley given their interconnected nature, with due consideration of alternative sources of water, beyond those that may have been typically looked at. For example, treated water, desalination and other alternatives that may be sourced from other localities.

There is a willingness from the mine operators who are members of C4G to work with the government to find a coordinated solution to deliver this, but they will need the government to drive it. Left to their own, each may pursue their own pathway which may not lead to the most efficient solution for them, the Latrobe Valley basin or the community.

**What do you feel are the most important things Government can do as part of the planning, rehabilitation, and post-rehabilitation stages of the Latrobe Valley coal mines?**

As noted above, it beneficial to the region that the Government facilitates due consideration of alternative water sources that would allow for fast pit filling and the near-term potential for the region to make active use of the land. Alternative water sources may seem too costly if viewed through the lens of a single stakeholder, but the cumulative effect of shared interests may allow for a more efficient solution than the painfully slow fill rates currently noted in the LVRRS Overview.

We ask that you be open and transparent in the methodology, timeframes and costs. Actively engage regional stakeholders (industry-local government-community etc) to test thinking and methodology. Demonstrate the practical application of filling the mine voids and associated timelines (risks that could impact timelines - scenario planning). The water option will need some ongoing active management (it will be connected to river (Morwell river in Hazelwood and Yallourn



cases) and the connection points will need regular (annual likely) inspections and maybe some maintenance.

**What do you feel are the most important things the coal mine operators can do as part of the planning, rehabilitation and post rehabilitations stage of the Latrobe Valley Coal mines?**

Scenario planning and engagement with key stakeholders clearly communicating methodology, time frame and costs. Working with the government to find a coordinated solution that can be applied to all mines to deliver a Latrobe Valley basin solution.

**What do you feel are the most important things community and stakeholders can contribute as part of the planning, rehabilitation, and post-rehabilitation stages of the Latrobe Valley coal mines?**

To be engaged in the process and future planning (early stages of planning through to options). Committee for Gippsland provides the conduit to business and industry who have a diverse level of knowledge and expertise which should be leveraged by Government.

**How would you like to be engaged in the rehabilitation process for the Latrobe Valley Brown Coal mines?**

Committee for Gippsland would like to be an active member of future Government working groups and share insight with members (to provide feedback and validation). We would also welcome senior government personnel participating in roundtables with C4G members.

**Are there any changes you would suggest to the proposed principles outlined in Section 4 of the LVRRS Overview? If so, please provide a short explanation as to why you have suggested these changes.**

Economic modelling is required to provide a level of confidence to future investors and the local community. Local procurement policy is really important to ensure that the local business capability and knowledge is leveraged - Latrobe Valley continues to face economic and social hardship as a result of major structural adjustment. Engaging local business will activate the regional economy. Cost structures and who pays for what work. Contingency planning - what if water is not available in the projected timeframe what happens next?

**Are there any specific elements of the LVRRS Overview that were not clear, or need further information to be provided in the LVRRS**

The balance between earth and water resources (and associated works) required to deliver a solution that is safe, stable, cost effective etc.

The Latrobe river system floods periodically. It was unclear in the LVRRS Overview how floods would be treated in the context of mine remediation through filling with water. We would ask that measures are defined to allow for more rapid filling when water surges are available such that the



community can access the rehabilitated areas with the least possible delay. We acknowledge that some flood waters should be retained for environmental flushing benefit, but they present a shared opportunity.

### **Do you have any further comments on the LVRRS Overview?**

The technical and economic solution needs to be based around risk, opportunity and timeframes. These big holes in our backyard pose risks and require active controls to mitigate them.

Yallourn Mine has had two significant batter collapses and poses dust/fire risks even with 'Active Controls'. Hazelwood caught on fire twice in the last 10 years and had a batter collapse that shut off a major freeway for months with 'Active Controls'.

The mines pose risks (even with active controls in place) for example, they have deluge systems in place defined by a risk assessment framework. Learning from the Morwell mine fire (45 days to put that fire out), in terms of the effectiveness of response systems and infrastructure along with more broadly consequential impact, response and cost analysis, has undoubtedly been used to inform the LVRRS strategy (be great to share this insight with key regional stakeholders). Future technical and economic options should not be done in isolation of a corresponding risk assessment. To minimise risks the solution needs to be one that delivers timely stability of the mines, with minimal on-going passive controls required.

Economic modeling is an opportunity to demonstrate to regional stakeholders the long-term value between the various options. It may be possible that an earthworks solution has a greater upfront cost but has a better return of investment over time (environmental impact, active control management and cost etc) compared with filling the void with water.

Another critical question is who pays for the rehabilitation? Is it likely funds will run dry at some point negatively impacting the project? A possible scenario could be if there is not sufficient water, there could be a blow out in costs associated with additional management controls required along with additional earth works and therefore project is at a stand-still.

### **Purpose of the Survey**

The Department of Jobs, Precincts and Regions is seeking your views on the *LVRRS Overview*. This will help inform the finalisation of the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy.

### **How your information will be used**

This survey is voluntary, and all information requested by the Department of Job Precincts and Regions (DJPR) is optional for you to provide.

Information about your age, gender, the area you live in, and what stakeholder group you belong to help DJPR understand you. Questions about your views on the *LVRRS Overview* help DJPR understand your concerns and priorities. If you choose not to answer some or all of the questions, it may affect the overall value of the survey results.



Information provided by survey participants will be aggregated and de-identified by DJPR. The results will be compiled into a report prepared by the LVRRS Project Team and shared with LVRRS project partner the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning. This will provide an overview of the demographics (age, gender, postcode and stakeholder group) along with a narrative of the feedback to the key questions answered.

A summary version of the report will also be made available via Engage Victoria. This report will then be used to assist the Victorian Government's development of the final Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy. Individual responses will not be published.

Providing DJPR with your name and/or email address is optional. These details will only be used to keep you updated about the development of the Latrobe Valley Regional Rehabilitation Strategy.

DJPR will not disclose your personal information outside of the department without your consent, except where required to do so by law.

You may contact us to request access to your personal information at [lvrrs@ecodev.vic.gov.au](mailto:lvrrs@ecodev.vic.gov.au). Please note, if you do not provide your name/email address we will not be able to identify your submission if you wish to access it, make a correction, or require technical support.

### **Next steps**

The LVRRS Project Team will publish a report of feedback and themes received through Engage Victoria following the conclusion of this consultation. This report will be emailed to the LVRRS distribution list and those who participate in this process and provide email contact details.

### **Timeline**

- Timeline item 1  
Consultation Open  
20 November 2019
- Timeline item 2  
Consultation Closes  
17 January 2020
- Timeline item 3  
Final LVRRS and Consultation Report  
June 2020



### Links

- [LVRRS Geotechnical Synopsis Report](#)
- [LVRRS Water Synopsis Report](#)
- [Preliminary Draft Land Use Vision](#)

### Contact Us

Have questions or want to learn more about a project, contact us below:

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