

NOVEMBER 2016

The following is a monthly update for the Narrabri Community Consultative Committee (CCC) regarding activities undertaken by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) relating to PEL 238, PAL 2 and PPL 3 (Narrabri Gas Project).

It includes activities undertaken relating to regulation of Environment Protection Licence (EPL) 20350 and the EPA functions conducted under the NSW Gas Plan.

Attachments to this month's update:

- Running Log – Old Investigations of PEL 238 Outcomes
- Inspections undertaken by EPA – October 2016
- Feature Article – Who we are and what we do
- EPA Site Inspection Map – October 2016

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EPA ACTION ITEMS SINCE LAST NCCC

The EPA has now introduced a subscription capability, allowing subscribers to be emailed the Narrabri CCC newsletter. A link to the subscription form has been placed on the NSW EPA website, on the 'Community Involvement' page.

INVESTIGATIONS

Background

On 19 February 2013 the EPA became responsible for investigating environmental incidents that occurred during coal seam gas activities under the provisions of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO) and issuing Environment Protection Licences (EPL).

On 1 July 2015 the EPA commenced its new role as the lead regulator for compliance with, and enforcement of, conditions of approval for gas activities in NSW. This includes regulating consent conditions and activity approvals issued by other agencies (excluding work health and safety). In carrying out this role the EPA will work with the relevant experts and NSW Government agencies.

Gas activities must comply with a broad range of regulatory controls, including Acts, regulations, codes of practice, titles, approvals and other controls.

The prioritisation of investigations is determined using a risk assessment for investigations that considers the level of environmental impact and the likelihood of environmental harm occurring.

Recently Completed Investigations

There were no incident report investigations in October.

Running Log – Old Investigations PEL 238 Outcomes

Incident	Outcome
<p>September 2016 <u>Leewood (PAL002)</u> Report alleging Leewood produced water dams were overflowing.</p>	<p>The EPA officers visited the site and all ponds were observed to be operating with adequate freeboard. There was no evidence of any overflow or spill from the ponds.</p>
<p>September 2016 <u>Bohena 2</u> Report alleging Santos were using produced water from Leewood for watering program at Bohena 2 salinity site.</p>	<p>Environment Line complaint alleging Santos were using produced water from Leewood for the watering program at Bohena 2 salinity site following a Namoi Waste truck seen leaving Leewood and heading to Bohena 2 salinity site. EPA Officers attended the site, investigated and took water samples. Lab results indicate that the source of water is not consistent with produced water. The EPA sent a response letter to complainant advising this.</p>
<p>April 2016 <u>Bohena Creek Road</u> Methanol Drum on road</p>	<p>Santos staff located a 44 gallon drum labelled 'Methanol' dumped on Bohena Creek Road near the Leewood Water Treatment Facility. Police and HAZMAT attended and secured the item. The drum was not on the Santos site, nor related to its activities as per media Tweet by the EPA.</p>
<p>March 2016 <u>Leewood Pond</u> Alleged leaking</p>	<p>EPA officer inspected storage ponds and met with Santos staff. No evidence that produced water was leaking. No further action was required.</p>
<p>March 2016 <u>Bohena Creek Road</u> Report that a vent had been left open, unattended and emitting methane gas</p>	<p>Santos has approval to vent gas from high and low point vents along the water gathering lines for safety and operational purposes – this is performed manually by a field operator. Santos has amended the manual venting operating procedure. The procedure clearly notes that a high point vent is not operated without an operator present.</p>
<p>March 2016 <u>Santos Pilliga</u> Report received that there was a "foamy residue" left along Beehive Road. The complainant returned to the site some days later with a Geiger counter and recorded a reading allegedly linked to the high and low point vents</p>	<p>An EPA Officer spoke to the complainant who advised that the location they took the Geiger counter reading was a few kilometres away from the area of concern and there was no evidence to support the initial claim. No further action required.</p>
<p>March 2016 <u>Leewood Water Treatment Facility</u> Report alleging a truck was spraying produced water between the internal fence and the property boundary fence for dust mitigation</p>	<p>An EPA Officer viewed available data confirming raw water from an on-site bore was used for dust suppression at the time of the allegation. The EPA supports dust suppression which is a requirement of the Santos EPL. No further action required as at 15 March 2016</p>

<p>February 2016 <u>Santos Pilliga</u> Report of 35,000 litre spill at unmanned Santos facility</p>	<p>Investigations proved minor water run off with no environmental or health risks. Media release: Water Run-off From Leewood Water Treatment Facility in Narrabri Cleaned Up</p>
<p>January 2016 <u>Leewood Water Treatment Facility</u> Alleged discharge of sediment laden water</p>	<p>The rainwater discharge followed heavy rain. Santos undertook immediate works to prevent further discharge from the site installing coir mats and construction of bunding. The EPA inspected site and determined no environmental harm had occurred and that no regulatory action was required.</p>
<p>January 2016 <u>Santos Pilliga</u> Report a 'foamy caramel coloured' material on the roadside near operation site</p>	<p>The EPA inspected the site and collected samples. Analysis determined it was a natural event, likely due to the decomposition of organic material. No further action was required.</p>
<p>September 2015 <u>Bohena Creek</u> Piezometer located in creek</p>	<p>No regulatory action required.</p>
<p>January 2015 <u>Santos Dewhurst Southern</u> Water flow line</p>	<p>No breach of EPL 20350 identified. Santos varied operational practices for high point vents following negotiations with the EPA. Media release: No environmental harm but improvements needed</p>
<p>February 2014 <u>Namoi Waste</u> Storage of Santos drilling mud onsite</p>	<p>6 May 2014 The EPA issued Namoi Waste Corp with a Penalty Notice for breach of s145 of the POEO Act. Note - The Penalty Notice issued was not related to the original complaint regarding waste from coal seam gas, rather other waste material identified during the course of the investigation. Media release: EPA issues Naracor and Namoi Wastecorp with penalty notices for unlawful waste transport and storage</p>
<p>March 2013 <u>Biblewindi Water Treatment Facility</u> Pond liner failure</p>	<p>11 Feb 2014 The EPA issued a Penalty Notice for s120 Pollution of Waters. A Pollution Reduction Program (PRP) was added to EPL 20350 (Environment Protection Licence) requiring the development of a Remediation and Monitoring Plan and the implementation of this plan.</p>
<p>March 2013 <u>Tintfield Ponds</u> Detection of elevated levels salinity and metals</p>	<p>Insufficient evidence to determine if the changes detected in groundwater were the result of leaks from the Tintfield ponds or were from natural factors. A PRP was added to EPL 20350. Media release: No environmental harm but improvements needed</p>

EPA ACTIVITIES

Inspections undertaken by the EPA – October 2016

Inspections					
Site ID	Date Inspected	Reasons	Action/Outcome	Site Status	Statutory Document
Dewhurst 24	5/10/2016	General Inspection (past drilling fluid spill)	No evidence of impact on vegetation	Shut In	PEL 2382
Bohena 2 Legacy Site	21/10/2016	General Inspection	Site rehabilitation is being monitored	Rehabilitating	PAL 2
Bohena 7 Legacy Site	21/10/2016	General Inspection	Site rehabilitation is being monitored	Rehabilitating	PAL 2
Biblewindi Legacy Site	21/10/2016	General Inspection	Site rehabilitation is being monitored	Rehabilitating	PAL 2
Tintsville Ponds	10 and 31 October	General inspection	EPA will continue to inspect works as they progress.	EPA will continue to inspect works as they progress	EPL 20350
Tintsville Flare	31 October	General inspection - proposed pipeline works for Wilga Park Power Station modification application	NIL	Operational	EPL 20350
Wilga Park 3	31 October	Leak detection monitoring	No reportable leaks identified	Permanently sealed	EPL 20350
Tintsville 4	31 October	Leak detection monitoring	No reportable leaks identified	Shut In	EPL 20350
Tintsville 5	31 October	Leak detection monitoring	No reportable leaks identified	Shut In	EPL 20350
Jacks Creek 1	31 October	General inspection. Opportunistic leak detection monitoring at well marker. Site currently on EPL until relinquished.	No methane detected.	Rehabilitating	EPL 20350

FEATURE ARTICLE

Who we are and what we do?

New members of the Narrabri Community Consultative Committee were interested in learning more about the NSW EPA staff who regularly attend the Narrabri Community Consultative Committee meetings and the following has been compiled to provide an overview of these staff and their roles.

From 1 July 2015, the NSW EPA was appointed as the lead regulator for compliance with and enforcement of conditions of approval for gas activities in NSW, including consent conditions and activity approvals issued by other agencies. The NSW Gas Plan authorised this appointment. Part of

fulfilling its role as lead regulator was to create a number of new positions, which are based regionally, close to gas operations.

The NSW EPA is committed to effective community engagement, and a dedicated Connected Communities Team has been established within the Gas Regulation Branch. This will allow the EPA to facilitate and participate in a variety of community and stakeholder engagement activities, and aim to consult early and often on significant issues. Through engagement and consultation, the EPA seeks a better understanding of community interests and concerns, and the operating environments of gas activities. This information will contribute to the development and improvement of policies, best practice and our role as regulator of the industry.

Four NSW EPA staff currently attend the monthly CCC meetings; Carmen Dwyer, Samantha Wynn, Addy Watson and Bridie George. Each of these EPA representatives have different knowledge and value to offer the members of the CCC and the broader Narrabri Community. This article presents an overview of their skills and roles within the EPA.

The EPA's Gas Regulation Branch is led by the Director, Carmen Dwyer, a highly experienced regulator with 20 years of regulatory experience. Carmen holds a Bachelor of Applied Science (Environmental Science) and a Masters of Applied Science (Environmental Restoration, Rehabilitation and Management). Carmen was instrumental in implementing the EPA's transition to being the lead environmental regulator of coal seam gas. As Director, Carmen is a member of the EPA executive, and also sits on the inter-agency Gas Communication Group and Gas Working Group at executive level.

Carmen leads a team responsible for ensuring compliance with and enforcement of statutory conditions related to the efficient and environmentally safe operation of the NSW gas industry. Passionate about bridging the gap between the community and information surrounding coal seam gas regulation, Carmen is committed to helping the community obtain the information it is after in order for the community to make informed decisions.

Samantha Wynn is a Senior Operations Officer in the EPA's North Branch and has been working for the OEHL/ EPA since 2009. Samantha has been involved in the regulation of the gas industry since the NSW Government increased the requirement for gas operations to hold an Environment Protection Licence in 2013. Samantha, and the North Branch team are responsible for the administration of Santos' Environment Protection Licence 20350 which contains environmental controls with which Santos must comply.

The Connected Communities Team build and strengthen the EPA's commitment to proactive communication, active dialogue, community relationship development and responsiveness. They also facilitate community engagement that assists with informing options, rather than decisions.

Addy Watson heads up the Connected Communities Team, consisting of two Connected Communities Officers. As Connected Communities Supervisor, Addy sets the strategic direction for engagement and consultation activities in the Gas Regulation Branch. Addy also works to communicate and collaborate effectively with community groups, other government departments, and industry.

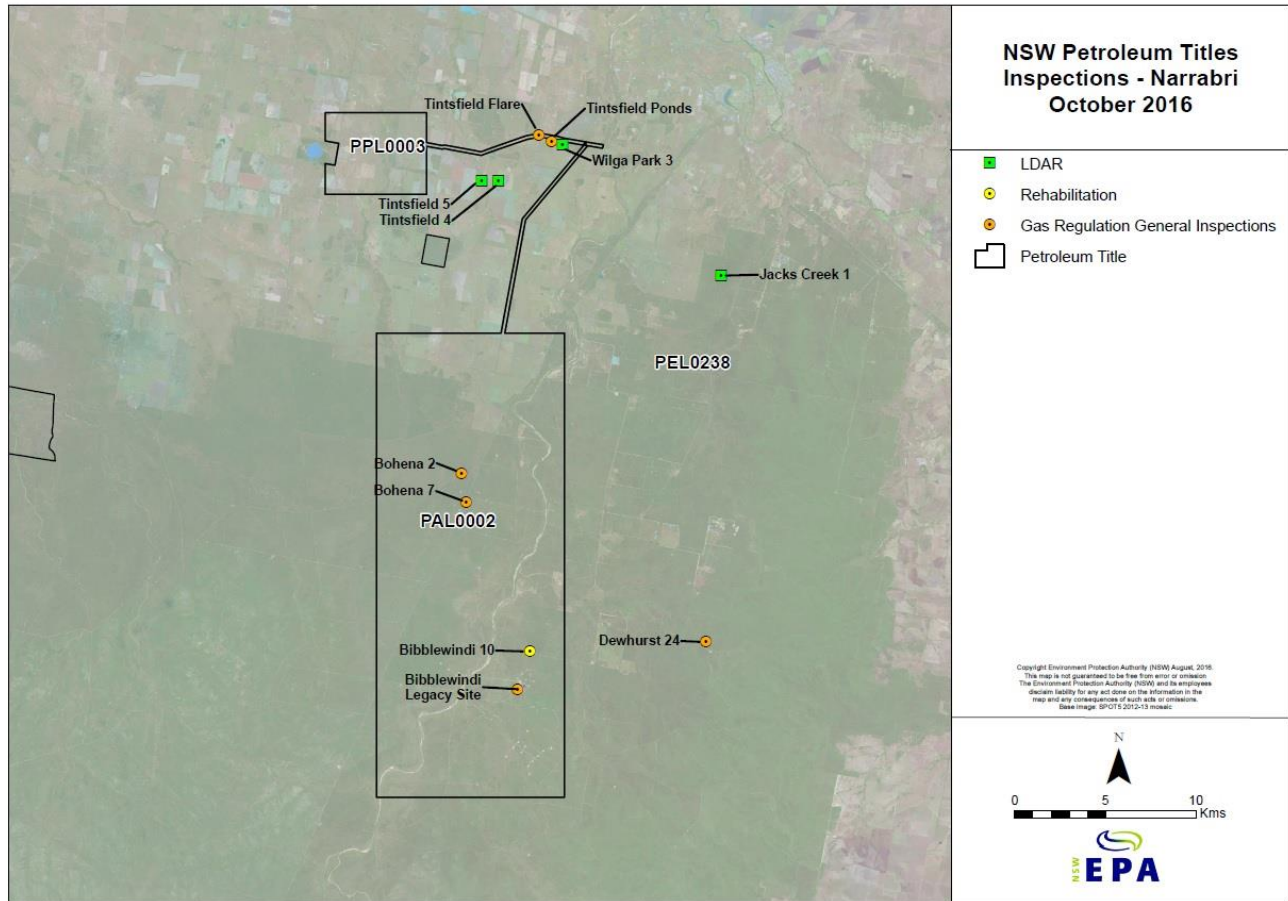
Addy, an experienced communicator, also comes from a scientific background having completed a Bachelor of Environmental Science, and having previously worked as an EPA Operations Officer. This gives her a thorough insight into the investigative process, which enables her to deliver informed and accurate communication surrounding gas regulation in NSW. Addy has extensive experience communicating with members of the community in a range of situations, and ensuring that technical information is presented in an audience-appropriate way. She also has experience liaising with local and international institutions and diverse multidisciplinary teams.

Bridie George is based in Narrabri and focuses on the Pilliga area. As a Connected Communities Officer Bridie works under the guidance of Addy to implement the goals and strategies of the branch. Bridie also does project specific research, planning and delivery to continually improve our stakeholder engagement works to present timely and accurate information to those who seek it.

Bridie has a strong background in roles concerning communication and community engagement, including locally at Gunnedah Shire Council. She is an effective communicator and her presence in the Narrabri community aims to strengthen communication channels between local community groups, Government and industry.

SITE INSPECTION MAP

EPA site inspections undertaken at Narrabri during October 2016



Every effort has been made to ensure that the information in this document is accurate at the time of publication. However, as appropriate, readers should obtain independent advice before making any decision based on this information.

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