

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **Wilpinjong Coal Mine produces clouds of polluting dust**

Monday 14 October 2013

Wild and windy weather last Thursday and Sunday (10 Oct & 13 Oct) saw Wilpinjong Coal Mine, near the village of Wollar generating clouds of polluting dust.

Mudgee District Environment Group (MDEG) is greatly concerned by the photographs taken by Wollar residents showing high levels of dust pollution leaving the mine site and blowing through the village.

'Wilpinjong Mine, owned and operated by Peabody Energy, USA largest coal company, has strict environmental pollution management requirements', said MDEG Chairperson, Bev Smiles.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) grants all coal mines an Environmental Pollution Licence (EPL) with strict conditions and guidelines.

'The issue of dust pollution and health has been highlighted in communities in the Hunter Valley. This has caused the EPA to develop pollution reduction programs with stricter conditions', said Ms Smiles.

'MDEG is concerned that Wilpinjong Mine has not complied with conditions of their EPL which requires the cessation of handling of overburden material during adverse weather conditions.'

'The wind has been so wild, no amount of water will suppress dust caused by large mine vehicles,' said Ms Smiles. 'Wilpinjong Mine is required to cease the operation of mining activities during these type of conditions.'

The incident has been reported to the EPA.

**Contact: Bev Smiles 0428 817 282**

EPL conditions – quotes and links below  
Photos attached

## **Wilpinjong EPL conditions**

(<http://www.peabodyenergy.com/mm/files/Operations/Australia/Wilpinjong/approvals-plans-reports/Wilp%20licence.pdf>)

# **4 Operating Conditions**

## **O3 Dust**

- O3.1 All operations and activities occurring at the premises must be carried out in a manner that will minimise the emission of dust from the premises.
- O3.2 All trafficable areas, coal storage areas and vehicle manoeuvring areas in or on the premises must be maintained, at all times, in a condition that will minimise the generation, or emission from the premises, of wind-blown or traffic generated dust.

## **U2 Particulate Matter Control Best Practice Implementation – Disturbing and Handling Overburden in Adverse Weather Conditions**

- U2.1 The licensee must alter or cease the use of equipment on overburden and the loading and dumping of overburden during adverse weather conditions to minimise the generation of particulate matter from 22 March 2013.