

6 July 2018

Rix's Creek Pty Limited
PO Box 4
East Maitland NSW 2323
Attention: Garry Bailey

Dear Garry,

Regarding: Rix's Creek - Noise Criteria

1 INTRODUCTION

This letter provides a brief outline of the development of noise criteria applicable to Rix's Creek Mine (RCM) and the various regulatory processes involved.

2 CURRENT CRITERIA

RCM was in operation before many receptors existed and has long been part of the local acoustic environment, however, at levels higher than would now be approved.

Also, their current approval is from 1995 and has L_{A10} criteria. The currently relevant descriptor is L_{Aeq} . The approval specifies night period L_{A10} criteria of 40 dB for all but Maison Dieu during neutral atmospheric conditions.

Given the large number of receptors in relatively close proximity the noise complaint history can be considered to be low. As an example, the majority of complaints in 2016 and 2017 were from only 2 residents.

3 ADOPTED CRITERIA

In 2012 the EPA instigated a pollution reduction program (PRP) with RCM. This was because RCM did not have a contemporary noise impact assessment (NIA) from which criteria could be derived for inclusion in the site's EPL (the previous NIA predated the Industrial Noise Policy (INP)). The EPL did not include noise limits at that time.

Following that, an NIA of RCM was prepared by Global Acoustics to support an application to extend the mine. As part of this contemporary noise criteria were developed that took into account the total noise environment around the mine, which is quite complex.

Discussions were had with both DP&E and EPA as part of the criteria development process. DP&E accept that the values determined are appropriate and have stated in their document 'STATE SIGNIFICANT DEVELOPMENT ASSESSMENT Rix's Creek Continuation of Mining Project (SSD 6300) Secretary's Environmental Assessment Report' that:

Despite its existing and proposed mitigation measures, Bloomfield would be unable to reduce its proposed noise levels to fully meet its Project Specific Noise Levels (PSNLs) under the Industrial Noise Policy 2000 (INP). However, under the INP, alternate achievable noise criteria (ANC) may be considered for existing operations with predicted exceedances of their PSNLs, following the implementation of all reasonable and feasible noise mitigation measures. ANC have been proposed for the Project and the Department and EPA accept that Bloomfield has already applied all reasonable and feasible noise mitigation measures and therefore endorse the proposed use of ANC instead of PSNLs as noise limits for the Project. Importantly, the ANC are significantly lower than the existing approved noise criteria.

These same criteria have been included in the DP&E approved noise management plan (NMP) for the site (table 5-7 of the plan) and the EPA EPL. Additionally, the noise PRP was removed from the EPL in 2017.

While the site approval still has the old L_{A10} criteria, the regulators have adopted and approved the criteria derived for the expansion project on the basis that these are in fact more stringent than those in the approval. These limits are now in both the site EPL and NMP.

4 CLOSURE

I trust this information meets your requirements. If you have any questions or need further details please contact me.



Prepared: Tony Welbourne
Director



QA review: Jeremy Welbourne
Consultant