

ADANI – WATER LICENCE

The \$21.7 billion Carmichael Coal mine, rail and port project has been granted water licences that ensure the safe and efficient operation of the mine.

The licences provide the mine with a volume of water about 1 per cent of what farmers are able to use in the Burdekin catchment now.

Adani has to pay the government more than \$20 million before they can use the surface water, and about three times what farmers pay in the area.

And they have to have *make good* agreements in place with landholders whose existing water might be affected.

This project has been through extensive scrutiny by State and Federal Governments.

The community and many of these groups have had their say, many times.

There are now almost 270 conditions on this project to protect the natural environment and the interests of landholders and traditional owners.

More than 100 of these conditions relate to groundwater.

These safeguards will ensure that water resources are protected, and that this critical project progresses sustainably.

This project will generate thousands of jobs, as well as business opportunities in northern and central Queensland as well as royalties that will benefit the state as a whole.

BACKGROUND:

DNRM has granted Adani two licences – one for surface water, which is limited and has a cost, and one for groundwater, which allows for sufficient water to make the mine safe.

Media are reporting community group claims that the water is unlimited.

DNRM has considered a range of information in granting the licence, including Adani's application, the Coordinator-General's evaluation report, the Land Court hearing, the environmental authority, the EIS and its supplementary reports, and the findings of the expert panel established by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection and chaired by the Government's Chief Scientist.

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Abbot Point investigation update

The Environment Department is continuing its investigation into the Abbot Point water releases during TC Debbie.

Adani Abbot Point Bulkcoal was authorised to release water under a temporary emissions licence, from 27 to 30 March, to assist with site water management during and after TC Debbie.

The temporary licence authorised sediment releases of up to 100 milligrams per litre.

Adani's own test results from the Caley Valley wetlands indicate that the release into that environment was within the temporary licence's limits.

However, Adani has further advised there was a second release of water on the northern side of the terminal, containing 806 milligrams per litre of sediment.

Adani has advised the department that none of the water from this second release point reached the Caley Valley wetlands and that the use of sediment traps prevented coal from entering the ocean.

EHP has taken sand samples on the beach below the release point to determine if there was coal present as a result of the water release.

Those results are expected by the week beginning 8 May 2017.

There are serious penalties for non-compliance with environmental authorities or temporary emissions licences that causes environmental harm.

This includes fines of up to \$3.8 million if the non-compliance was wilful, or \$2.7 million if the non-compliance was unintentional.

Katharine Wright – sch4p4(6) Personal Infor

ABBOTT POINT FINE

The Environment Department has fined Abbot Point Bulk Coal for an unauthorised stormwater release from its coal handling facility that occurred during Tropical Cyclone Debbie in March this year.

The \$12,190 penalty infringement notice was for breaching the conditions of a temporary emissions licence that was issued during the storm.

In the event of major rainfall and flooding, mines and associated sites can apply for a temporary emissions licence, which is a permit that temporarily relaxes or modifies the conditions of an environmental authority in response to a major event such as a flood or bushfire.

A temporary emissions licence does not authorise environmental harm.

However, the release at Abbott Point exceeded the amount of suspended solids permitted.

Abbott Point argue most of that exceedance was captured by sediment traps and did not enter the ocean.

Background

The stormwater released that is the subject of the PIN did not enter the adjacent Caley Valley wetlands. EHP's investigations into releases into the wetlands is ongoing.

Abbott Point Bulk Coal Pty Ltd has until 17 August 2017 to elect to contest the PIN in court.

The temporary emissions license permitted an elevated suspended solid limit (100 mg per litre) on stormwater releases from the terminal during the high rainfall associated with the event.

However, the company advised EHP on 6 April that a non-compliance with the conditions of the TEL had occurred with a release of stormwater from the terminal containing suspended solids recorded at 806 mg per litre.

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Department of Environment and Heritage Protection — Briefing Note

To Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef

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