

**TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT & SAFETY CONSULTANTS**

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**MUSWELLBROOK COAL COMPANY (MCC) – SANDY CREEK COLLIERY EIS**

**TRAFFIC CONDITIONS REVIEW**

TPK & Associates Pty Ltd (TPK) were commissioned by HLA Envirosiences Pty Ltd (HLA) to undertake a review of the Traffic Impact Assessment (TIA) contained in the Sandy Creek Colliery EIS (1988) and to assess the status of that report relative to present and proposed operating conditions at Mcc's No.1 and No.2 Open Cut Mines. To assist in this review HLA also provided a copy of a recent TIA for the expansion of Cumnock No 1 Colliery contained in the Cumnock Mine Life Extension EIS (2001).

Mr T Keating, Director with TPK, undertook the review; Mr Keating has in excess of 35 years experience in the road safety and traffic management profession including extensive involvement in the assessment of traffic generating developments.

The review process undertaken was:

- Site Inspections of surrounding road network undertaken on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2002
- Consideration of current traffic flows on New England Highway
- Review of documents:
  - a). TIA for MCC by C Hallam & Associates Pty Ltd – 1996 (Appendix to 1998 EIS).
  - b). TIA for Cumnock Mine Life Extension by R Humble – 2000 (Appendix to 2001 EIS).

**SITE INSPECTION**

The travel route for coal trucks and conditions at key intersections were inspected on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2002 and the adjoining land use noted. The points noted during inspection were:

1. Coal Trucks to/from the MCC Private Coal Haul Road, entering & leaving Muscle Creek Road, encounter very little opposing traffic, as it was evident that low volumes of local traffic used the route. Coal was being transported from the mine to the Ravensworth Coal Terminal (RCT) on the day of the inspection

2. A new intersection is being constructed on Muscle Creek Road for a residential subdivision, just west of the rail-bridge and between the New England Highway (NEH). The intersection layout was not evident at time of inspection but it would be logical to assume that council ensured the appropriate design was to be provided at the development application stage.
3. The Muscle Creek Road and Pikes Gully Road intersections with the NEH have channelisation appropriate to the heavy vehicle activity; Pikes Gully Road and Liddell Station Road form the access route to the RCT from NEH.
4. This route carries traffic to the RCT. During inspections very low volumes of local traffic were noted and satisfactory visibility existed at the intersection.
5. The Thomas Mitchell Drive – NEH route has reduced coal truck traffic due to the operation of the Antiene Joint User Rail Facility. Bayswater Colliery and Mt Arthur North Mine (now collectively called Mt Arthur Coal) now transport by rail to Newcastle from this facility rather than transporting to Ravensworth.

## **TRAFFIC FLOW**

The Roads and Traffic Authority of NSW (RTA) monitor traffic flow on the major road network. A permanent counting station exists on The New England Highway to the south of Muswellbrook and included in the data outputs is a figure indicating the Annual Average Daily Total for vehicle trips (combined directions). Table 1 shows the latest figures available and discloses minimal growth allowing previous calculations on intersection capacity to be reflective of operating conditions expected from the revised Sandy Creek Colliery proposal.

**TABLE 1 – AADT FOR RTA STATION 05.244**

<b>1992</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1998</b>	<b>1999*</b>	<b>2000*</b>
<b>10707</b>	<b>10255</b>	<b>10114</b>	<b>10311</b>	<b>9948</b>

\*1999 and 2000 figures supplied by RTA, Newcastle

## **DOCUMENT REVIEW**

The Hallam Report:

- Used 1995/6 base traffic data as part of their analysis
- Adopted increased traffic generations higher than expected by the current MCC proposal
- Modelled intersections in the surrounding road network based on road layouts as they exist today for the existing scenario, with the MCC traffic and then added the Muscle Creek Road subdivision traffic (under construction as noted in Site Inspections)
- Confirmed all intersections were and would continue to operate at a high Level of Service in all scenarios modelled

The Humble Report:

- Was not directly related to the MCC site
- Confirmed operating conditions at other New England Highway intersections were at a satisfactory operating level

## **CONCLUSION**

Based on the facts that:

1. New England Highway traffic growth is stable.
2. The Hallam Report modelled all scenarios and disclosed high levels of service
3. The current proposal for the No 1 Open Cut Extension will generate less traffic than the Sandy Creek Colliery Extension proposal
4. Additional rail facilities in the surrounding areas has reduced road coal transport demand

It is reasonable to assume that the analysis and conclusions of the Hallam Report are appropriate to include as relevant documentation for the consideration of the No 1 Open Cut Extension proposal.

A new detailed traffic analysis at this time would only utilise the identical intersection layouts and lower traffic flows for modelling.

*T Keating*

T Keating  
Director, TPK & Associates  
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