

Muswellbrook Coal

MP 36

Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan

Prepared by	Environmental Superintendent	Signature	<i>Julie Thomas</i> <small>6C399D38E6A94E0D49D0EA10F39F0930 ready2sign</small>	Date:	08/09/2025
Approved by	Head of Muswellbrook Site	Signature	<i>Brett O'Kane</i> <small>E4A746C0EDF8CD4C6A7180407A7BBC90 ready2sign</small>	Date:	08/09/2025


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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Muswellbrook Coal Company (MCC) is a wholly owned subsidiary of the Idemitsu Kosan Company Ltd. Group. MCC has a long association with coal mining at Muswellbrook, with underground coal mining commencing in 1907 and open cut operations in 1944. The site is located on Muscle Creek Road, approximately 3 kilometres to the north-east of Muswellbrook.

On September 1, 2003, Development Consent for DA 205/2002 was granted by Muswellbrook Shire Council (MSC) to extend the former MCC No.1 Open Cut. The No.1 Open Cut Extension commenced operations in March 2005 and has a capacity to produce up to 2,000,000 tonnes coal per annum. This approval has subsequently been modified on several occasions with the latest modification granted in 2016 to allow mining in an area known as the “Continuation Project” and to extend the life of the mining operations to 2022. Rehabilitation activities will continue past this date. A modification to the approval was granted on 20 December 2022 to allow the storage, handling and transport of coal to continue until the end of March 2023. An additional modification to the consent was granted on 27 February 2024 to align rehabilitation requirements with updated mining lease conditions and other administrative changes.

Mining activities ceased at MCC in December 2022 with the last coal hauled from site in March 2023. Most of the site has been rehabilitated with minor areas still to be completed.

1.1 SCOPE


The Development Consent requires the preparation, approval and implementation of an Environmental Management Strategy (EMS) and subordinate Environmental Management Plans (EMP). One of these EMPs is the Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan (SCMP). Whilst this plan specifically addresses issues related to the management of spontaneous combustion, it should be read in conjunction with other EMP's.

This SCMP has been prepared by MCC to the satisfaction of MSC (see **Appendix 1** for copies of correspondence). Previous versions of the SCMP have been reviewed by a suitably qualified expert. As the SCMP no longer applies to management activities for mining operations and the control measures have been significantly reduced, endorsement by a suitably qualified expert is no longer required.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The main objective of the SCMP is to minimise the occurrence and manage the effect from spontaneous combustion in rehabilitation areas across the site.

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2.0 LEGISLATION AND STATUTORY REQUIREMENTS

The relevant approval and licence conditions are shown in **Table 1** along with information on where they are addressed in this plan.

Table 1: Statutory Requirements

Approval/ Licence Condition No.	Condition	Section
Development Consent		
31	The applicant must prepare a detailed Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan to the satisfaction of Council, and carry out the development in accordance with this plan. The plan must:	This plan
31(a)	Be prepared or reviewed by a suitably qualified expert/s;	Appendix 1
31(b)	Describe what measures are to be undertaken to minimise the occurrence of spontaneous combustion. Should spontaneous combustion occur, describe what methods would be employed to extinguish, or reduce the size and duration of the outbreak. This is to include details of the times, areas, locations etc. that will trigger actions, and criteria provided to indicate success or further works being required. The plan must break these activities up to be specific to the following areas: i. Pit 1; ii. Pit 2; and iii. Elsewhere with the disturbance area.	6.0
31(c)	Defines what constitutes a spontaneous combustion incident, and includes a protocol for notifying Council and other relevant stakeholders of spontaneous combustion incidents.	8.0
31(d)	Defines what will trigger a review of the Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan. This is to include a Trigger Action Response Plan resulting from a spontaneous combustion incident that has as one of its outcomes a review of this Management Plan.	10.0

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3.0 REFERENCES

- *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979.*
- *Protection of Environment Operations Act 1997.*
- Development Consent DA 205/2002.
- Continuation Project Statement of Environmental Effects (EMM) 2016.

4.0 DEFINITIONS/ACRONYMS

DA	Development Application
MCC	Muswellbrook Coal Company Ltd
MSC	Muswellbrook Shire Council
NSW	New South Wales

5.0 SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- Development Consent DA 205/2002.
- MP 30 Environmental Management Strategy.
- MOP 15-01 Complaint Handling Procedure.
- F1553 Community Complaint Record Form.

6.0 MANAGEMENT MEASURES

If an unexpected outbreak of spontaneous combustion occurs in any area within the mine disturbance area (including Pit 1 and Pit 2) a specific action plan will be developed to manage the outbreak. This plan will be developed within 5 business days of the outbreak being detected.

7.0 COMPLAINT MANAGEMENT


Spontaneous combustion related complaints by the community can be directed to the 24-hour toll-free telephone Environmental Contact Line 1800 600 205. Complaints shall be recorded and responded to in accordance with the Environmental Management Strategy.

8.0 INCIDENT MANAGEMENT

A spontaneous combustion incident at MCC is defined as an uncontrolled event that is not managed by the TARP process.

In the event that an initial investigation concludes that a spontaneous combustion related incident has occurred the incident will be reported to MSC within 24 hours of confirming the incident.

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Within seven days of confirming the incident, MCC will submit a written report to MSC that:

- Describes the date, time, and nature of the incident,
- Identifies the cause (or likely cause) of the incident,
- Describes what action has been taken to date, and
- Describes the proposed measures to address the incident.

9.0 EXTERNAL REPORTING

Within 2 weeks of approval of this SCMP, a copy will be made available for public viewing via the MCC website.

The performance of MCC's SCMP will be reported through a number of external reporting requirements, which include;

- Annual Environmental Management Report (AEMR); and
- Annual Rehabilitation Report (report on management of any spontaneous combustion outbreaks in rehabilitated areas).

The last AEMR for MCC will be the 2027 AEMR.

10.0 REVIEW OF THE SCMP

The SCMP will be reviewed:

- Within 6 months of changes to Development Consent or licence conditions relating to spontaneous combustion management,
- Following reportable incidents at MCC relating to spontaneous combustion management, and
- Following an independent environmental audit which recommends changes to the SCMP.


11.0 ACCOUNTABILITIES

Table 2 outlines the responsibilities relating to the SCMP.

Table 2: Organisational Responsibilities

Role	Accountability
Suitably Qualified or Experienced Person	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide adequate resources to implement the requirements of the SCMP Oversee the implementation of the SCMP Coordinate reviews of the SCMP Coordinate reporting as required in SCMP

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12.0 LIST OF APPENDICIES

Appendix 1: Correspondence Regarding Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan

13.0 REVISION DETAILS

Revision No.	Date	Reviewed By	Details/Reason for Revision
1	February 2005	MCC Technical Services Department, Carbon Based Environmental	Original Management Plan
2	December 2010	MCC Technical Services Department, Carbon Based Environmental	5 Yearly Review
3	December 2015	MCC Environmental, Technical Services and Production Departments	5 Yearly Review
4	June 2017	MCC Environmental, Technical Services and Production Departments Peer review by approved Technical Expert	Update following modification for Continuation Project
5	October 2020	MCC Environmental Department	3 Yearly Review
6	April 2023	Environmental, Production, Administration and Maintenance Departments	End of mining operations (not approved by Council due to consent modification process and additional updates required)
7	April 2024	Environmental, Production, Administration and Maintenance Departments Peer review by suitably qualified expert	Consent modification 9
8	August 2025	Environmental Department	Completion of bulk rehabilitation activities

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Appendix 1: Correspondence Regarding Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan



Enquiries
Please ask for Tracy Ward
Direct 02 6549 3778
Our reference 25/60088

03 September 2025

Julie Thomas
Environmental Superintendent
Muswellbrook Coal

Dear Ms Thomas,

Muswellbrook Coal Mine Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan v8 – Approval Letter.

Reference is made to the '*Muswellbrook Coal Mine Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan v8.*'

Staff have carefully reviewed this document and are satisfied with all aspects proposed.

Accordingly, Council Staff approve the '*Muswellbrook Coal Mine Spontaneous Combustion Management Plan v8.*'

Please ensure that the approved plan is placed on the project website at the earliest opportunity.

Should you need to discuss the above, please contact Tracy Ward (Sustainability Officer) on 02 6549 3778 or email tracy.ward@muswellbrook.nsw.gov.au.

Yours faithfully



Theresa Folpp
Environmental Planning Officer

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