

Annual Report

Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee
July 2012 – June 2013

This publication has been compiled by John Kabel of Safety and Health, Department of Natural Resources and Mines.

© State of Queensland, 2013.

The Queensland Government supports and encourages the dissemination and exchange of its information. The copyright in this publication is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia (CC BY) licence.



Under this licence you are free, without having to seek our permission, to use this publication in accordance with the licence terms.

You must keep intact the copyright notice and attribute the State of Queensland as the source of the publication.

For more information on this licence, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au/deed.en>

The information contained herein is subject to change without notice. The Queensland Government shall not be liable for technical or other errors or omissions contained herein. The reader/user accepts all risks and responsibility for losses, damages, costs and other consequences resulting directly or indirectly from using this information.

1. Background

The Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee (the Committee) is required to be established under *Part 6 – Industry consultative arrangements of the Coal Mining and Quarrying Safety and Health Act 1999 (the Act)*.

An annual report on the Committee's operations must be prepared by the chairperson as soon as practicable, but within 4 months, after the end of each financial year and given to the Minister.

The Minister must table the report in the Legislative Assembly within 14 sitting days of receipt of this report.

2. Role

The primary function of the Committee is to give advice and make recommendations to the Minister about promoting and protecting the safety and health of persons at coal mines.

The Committee must discharge its function by periodically reviewing:

- the effectiveness of the Act, regulations and guidelines; and
- the effectiveness of the control of risk to any person from operations.

In periodically reviewing effectiveness the Committee must have regard to:

- the risk management performance of the mining industry;
- the appropriateness of guidelines;
- education, training, and standards of competency within the mining industry;
- the implementation of recommendations from inspector's investigations, coroner's inquests, boards of inquiry, and other sources;
- the promotion of community knowledge and awareness of safety and health in the mining industry; and
- any other matter referred to it by the Minister.

The Committee also has the function of:

- Establishing, recognising and publishing the competencies accepted by it as qualifying a person to perform the stated tasks; and the safety and health competencies required to perform the duties of a person under the Act.
- Making recommendations about individuals nominated to be Industry Safety and Health Representatives, if asked by the Minister.

3. Membership

The Committee, consisting of nine members representing the mines inspectorate, coal mine workers and coal mine operators, are appointed by the Minister. The chairperson is the Commissioner for Mine Safety and Health. The membership term is three years. Members of the Committee are not entitled to any remuneration, other than the reimbursement of reasonable expenses and a travel allowance to attend meetings.

Table 1: Members as of 30 June 2013

Name	Membership	Organization
Stewart Bell (Chairperson)	Commissioner for Mine Safety & Health	Department of Natural Resources and Mines
Mr Gavin Taylor	Inspectors' Representative	Department of Natural Resources and Mines
Mr Tim Watson	Inspectors' Representative	Department of Natural Resources and Mines
Mr Greg Dalliston	Workers' Representative	Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union - Mining and Energy Division
Mr Stephen Smyth	Workers' Representative	Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union - Mining and Energy Division
Mr Glenn Hall	Workers' Representative	Communications Electrical Plumbing Union - Electrical Division
Mr Lee Smith	Operators' Representative	Queensland Resources Council (Xstrata Coal Australia)
Mr Brett Garland	Operators' Representative	Queensland Resources Council (Caledon Coal Pty Ltd)
Mr Steve Rae	Operators' Representative	Queensland Resources Council (BMA)

4. Meetings held

During the reporting period, the following meetings were held:

Meeting Number	Date	Location
56	26 September 2012	Brisbane
57	27 November 2012	Brisbane
58	27 March 2013	Brisbane
59	26 June 2013	Brisbane

5. Issues reviewed

Advisory Committee Membership

Final approval of new nominations for membership occurred in August 2012.

Health Improvement and Awareness Committee (HIAC)

The Committee received regular updates from HIAC on its activities during the year, including on dust, (on which the Committee stressed the need for continued data collection and analysis), noise, mental health issues, diesel particulate matter, whole body vibration and musculoskeletal issues.

HIAC representatives also reported on:

- the International Agency for Research on Cancer declaring diesel exhaust to be carcinogenic to humans, how this is an issue in metal and coal mines, and how regulators are looking at methods to control exposure
- toxic and flammable gases from blast fume and spontaneous combustion
- hearing loss and correct usage of hearing protection
- how this information is disseminated, e.g. industrial seminars and safety alerts.

National Mine Safety Framework

Regular updates were provided to the Committee on the progress of the National Mine Safety Framework. The Committee expressed concerns over the consultation and time-line and an extraordinary meeting of the Committee will be arranged to review and discuss the RIS when it is released for the public consultation period.

Recommendations from Coroner's Inquiry into the death of Jason Blee

From the Coroner's Inquiry into the death of Jason Blee in September 2009, recommendation 10 asked whether regulations and regulatory bodies governing modification to design of machinery are unnecessarily prohibiting or delaying the implementation of innovation.

Responses were collected from a 14 June 2013 letter sent to four major coal mining equipment manufacturers by the Committee Chair, asking if they believed that innovation is being prohibited or delayed as described, and these responses will be discussed and actioned.

Recommendation 16 from the same inquiry concerned the 'place change' mining method in underground coal mines, and the Committee agreed to and has begun the drafting of a Guidance Note on Place Changing by a tripartite subcommittee.

Recommendations from Coroner's Inquiry into fatal motor vehicle collisions

The Committee also responded to the Coroner's Inquiry into fatal motor vehicle collisions in the Bowen Basin in 2005, including Recommendation 14 that the matter of fatigue be referred to the Ministerial Advisory Council (MAC) for the Council to consider –

- the appropriateness or otherwise of "competency based" fatigue training for the mining industry; and
- any other measures considered appropriate by the Council to further enhance the mining industry's contribution to fatigue management.

The Committee provided input into publication of QGN 16 Guidance note for fatigue risk management, in February 2013. The Committee also raised concerns as it began looking into competency based fatigue training for the mining industry, including what was available and how appropriate it was.

It was also decided that the Committee Chair will write to industry 6 months after publication of QGN16, seeking views on whether it is working, are changes needed, and how it is being used. The letter will also enquire about the effectiveness of fatigue education programs, and on the value of additional information or workshops that may assist mine sites in managing the risk of fatigue to an acceptable level.

Competencies Recognised by the Advisory Committee

Changes to Advisory Committee requirements and updated competency unit designators led to several amendments to the web based table of competencies recognised by the Coal Mining Safety and Health Advisory Committee.

The Committee recognised seven new competencies required for diesel engine systems maintenance for underground coal mines and two brake testing competencies for all coal mines, which will become mandatory on 1 January 2014.

The Committee has also expressed concerns about the provision of the S1, S2 and S3 coal mining competency units (covering risk management, safety and health investigations and

communications) and will look at the outcome of a review of the adequacy of these units with a view to further action.

Synthetic Drugs

The Committee was provided an overview of the synthetic drug seminars being conducted by Queensland Police Service in Moranbah, Dysart, Mt Isa, Brisbane, Toowoomba and Townsville.

Issues concerning the mining industry are the increasing availability of these substances and the perception they are 'safe' because they're available from retail outlets and the internet. Drug tests that can be used by mine operators to detect recent use of these substances are also lacking.

Diesel Engine Exhaust

The Committee was briefed by the Occupational Physician on the change in classification of diesel engine exhaust from a probable carcinogen to a class 1 carcinogen by the International Agency for Research on Cancer. He mentioned that diesel particulate matter (DPM) is an issue in metal and coal mines.

The Senior Inspector of Mines (Occupational Hygiene) also briefed the Committee on DPM monitoring and data collection, and a DNRM Safety Bulletin published on changes to DPM exposure limits.

Noise and Hearing Loss

The Committee was briefed by the Occupational Physician on hearing loss, including discussion on noise measurement, quieter equipment and instruction on how to use personal protective equipment, and that in the 2010-11 Queensland Mining Industry Safety and Health Performance report, 44% of permanent incapacities were due to hearing loss.

The Committee agreed that a submission be put to the Australian Coal Industry's Research Program (ACARP) to undertake further research into this data.

Other Issues

Other Issues raised but yet to be finalised include:

- a proposal to allow use of certain common Standard Operating Procedures across multiple mine sites rather than having unique procedures for each site
- the Committee's decision to convene an out of session, tripartite working group to review emergency seals in underground coal mines
- the Committee's decision to review NSW requirements for polymeric products in underground coal mines and look at the possibility of producing a Queensland Recognised Standard.

6. Expenses incurred

During the July 2012 to June 2013 period, the following expenses were incurred:

Member	Expense Description	Amount
Communications Electrical Plumbing Union - Electrical Division representative	Four return airfares, Mackay – Brisbane	969.20
Total expenses incurred		\$969.20

Call: 13 QGOV (13 74 68)

Visit: www.dnrm.qld.gov.au

