

**Murray Mallee Community Consultative Committee
(Mineral Sands)**

**Summary of Meeting No 3
Held at East Murray Community Centre
10:00 am Wednesday, 6 October 2004**

Attendees: Pru Freeman (Minerals & Energy), Garry Wardle (M&E), Gale Pfitzner (landowner), Grant Dixon (landowner), Gerard Bosch (STN), Peter Hinner (STN), Kevin Burdett (Mayor - DCKEM), Peter Smithson (CEO – DCKEM), Brenton Lewis (Murraylands Regional Development Board), Darren Eatts (landowner), Kevin Heidrich (landowner).

Apologies: John Berger (landowner), Trent Mader (Riverland Development Corp), Darryl McNeilly (Murray Mallee Soil Conservation Board), Paul Heithersay (Minerals and Energy).

Pru Freeman, Acting Director - Mineral Resources Group, chaired the meeting on behalf of PIRSA Minerals and Energy Directorate.

1 Minutes

- The distributed minutes were accepted without change.

2 Business Arising

- A letter was sent on 11 August 2004, to Kevin Heidrich, inviting him to reconsider his participation in the Committee.
- PIRSA has sent letters to all landowners outlining the mining lease rent regime proposal. STN also sent a letter to all landowners outlining their undertakings to guarantee a minimum payment equivalent to three years rent.

3 Comments on Information Meeting with Balmoral meetings.

- An information meeting was held at Karoonda Council Chambers on Wednesday 15 Sept 2004 with landowners affected by the mining of the Balmoral strand.
- Presentations were given by; PIRSA Mineral Resources on the Mineral Lease application and assessment process, Southern Titanium on the details of the project and the Dept of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation of the affect of mining on local aquifers.
- Feedback from committee members from people present at that meeting;
 - Landowners overwhelmed by process and pressure to sign up at early stage – tend to resist everything,
 - Landowners feel excluded from initial consultation,
 - Landowners concerned about a commitment being required now for something that will not take place for several years,

- Major concern over affect on lifestyle where the pit passes in close proximity to residence,
- Landowners and STN are still some distance apart on communication and agreement.

4 General Business

Discussion took place around the table on issues of general concern.

These included:

- Mining in close proximity to residence, dust and noise issues, compensation, relocation, house to be “wrapped in plastic”, suggested STN take affected landowners to Wemen minesite to see situation there.
- People can't comprehend that PIRSA has no role in compensation issues (this resides with Wardens Court or ERD Court). PIRSA should explain this position to landowners.
- Balmoral strand discussions – generic issues have been discussed at the Karoonda meeting on 15 September 2004, specific issues to be discussed on an individual basis.
- Native vegetation clearance issues have not been discussed with landowners. Mining operators may only clear native vegetation in accordance with a management program approved by the Native Vegetation Council. This will be incorporated with the approved Mining and Rehabilitation Program (MARF) for that lease. Issues such as shade, shelter, windbreaks and compensation issues to be dealt with on an individual basis.
- The feeling was expressed that detailed rehabilitation management should have been worked out with landowner consultation before approaching landowners to sign agreements.
- With most developments the initial focus is on working to secure tenure i.e. to identify the resource, confirm the economics and obtain mining leases and financial backing. After this money can be expended on research for detailed mining and rehabilitation programs.
- Farmers seek assurance that if issues are not covered, or the situation changes, then MARF is flexible to manage those changes.
- PIRSA needs to reinforce commitment to best practice compliance and monitoring to give the community confidence that PIRSA can act to oversee the project and protect landowners rights. The Acting Director Mineral Resources provided reassurance of that commitment. STN have committed to its objective of achieving as good if not better conditions of rehabilitated farming and bush land.
- There is an opportunity to use the rehabilitation to restore the land to a better than original condition. This is a positive message that should be conveyed to the community.
- The level of landowner involvement in the development of the MARF was questioned. The rehabilitation section of the MARF will largely be based on studies already undertaken by specialist environmental scientists. Consultation with local conservation groups and landowners will be ongoing. Consultation with specific landowners to identify the specific

issues and management strategies relevant to their properties will be undertaken prior to mining operations commencing on their land.

- Issues that landowners want investigated to be identified. PIRSA to regulate. Some have been mentioned, eg regeneration of native vegetation, how STN will provide for “Significant Environmental Benefit” - where will land come from for ten to one SEB ratio, wind breaks etc.

5 Mineral Lease rental proposal

Pru Freeman told the meeting that the letter relating to the mining lease rent regime proposal for the Mindarie Project was sent to all landowners on the 27th September 2004. An accompanying letter from STN outlining its undertakings regarding a minimum payment equivalent to three years full rent to landowners was sent later in the week.

The following points were raised in the ensuing discussion:

- How long does the rehabilitation bond remain in force? The lease may not be surrendered until the Minister is satisfied there are no outstanding issues relating to rent, royalties or rehabilitation.
- Do landowners get involved in determining that there are no outstanding obligations? Usual practice is for an inspection to take place on the lease to check all lease conditions have been met and rehabilitation complete. Landowner consultation takes place at this stage.
- Rights of appeal/ conflict resolution.
- Query on GST applicable to rental return to freehold landowners. **Pru Freeman to provide explanation on how this is calculated.**
- It was suggested a meeting be held with all affected landowners to discuss the rent relief proposal. Best time is before November on a weekday evening at the Community Centre.
- A suggestion was made about a visit to the site of the rehabilitation trial site. Chris McDonough of PIRSA Rural Solutions is monitoring progress. Gerard Bosch to provide information on the modus operandi of the trial rehabilitation on cropping land.
- Compensation for all landowners to be in line with the general principles of the Wardens Court rulings.

7 Next meeting

The next meeting will be held at the East Murray Community Centre @ 10.00am on Wednesday, 2nd February 2005.

Meeting closed at 12:00 pm.

Signed.....
Chair

Date...../...../.....