

APPENDIX B: ADDITIONAL AGENCY RESPONSES



Office of Environment & Heritage

DOC17/97450
SSD 6764

Mr Stephen O'Donoghue
Team Leader – Resource Assessments
Department of Planning and Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

Dear Stephen

Wilpinjong Extension Project – Regent Honeyeater Breeding Program

I refer to your request, dated 17 January 2017, for information requested by the Planning Assessment Commission regarding evidence to demonstrate that the proposed Regent Honeyeater breeding program is operational, or if not operational, that agreements are in place with relevant stakeholders, and that the program would become operational in less than five years.

A captive breeding program for the critically endangered Regent Honeyeater has been in place at Taronga Zoo, supported by other zoological institutions, since 1995. The first release of 27 captive-bred Regent Honeyeaters was undertaken in 2008. This was followed by further releases in 2010, 2013 and 2015. A total of 189 captive-bred Regent Honeyeaters have now been released at Chiltern in north-east Victoria with 11.6% of these known to be alive more than 12 months after release. This compares favourably with a figure of approximately 10% of banded wild birds resighted. A further release is planned at Chiltern in 2017 and in NSW in 2019 and 2021. The captive-breeding and release program is an integral part of the National Recovery Plan for the Regent Honeyeater.

The Regent Honeyeater captive breeding program continues to have strong support from Taronga Zoo. The program has been supported through various funding sources. Since 2013 the breeding program and associated releases have been supported by OEH through the Saving our Species (SOS) program. The breeding for release program is, and will remain, an integral part of the SOS Regent Honeyeater conservation program.

Memorandums of Understanding have previously been established between OEH and Taronga Zoo for upgrades to breeding facilities and to undertake health screening of birds selected for release. Similarly, BirdLife Australia was contracted to implement the all releases, including post-release monitoring, and will implement future releases.

Releases to date have been constrained by the number of birds Taronga Zoo has been able to breed and hold prior to release. It has been identified that a purpose-built facility at Taronga Western Plains Zoo in Dubbo would provide a capacity to breed larger numbers and greater flexibility to hold these birds prior to their release. This facility is being funded through a one million dollar cash contribution to OEH's SOS – Regent Honeyeater conservation program as part of the offset package for

Warkworth Coal Mine. Once aviary designs and costings are finalized OEH and Taronga Western Plains Zoo will enter into a Memorandum of Understanding to construct the facilities.

It is envisaged that this facility will be ready to house Regent Honeyeaters bred in the 2017/18 breeding season with breeding likely to commence in Dubbo in 2018/19 with planning underway for a release of these birds at a yet to be determined site in NSW in 2019.

OEH notes that Condition 35 of the Draft Conditions of Consent for the Wilpinjong Extension Project states that "*The Applicant must contribute funds to OEH towards the Regent Honeyeater Recovery Plan captive breeding and release programs, or alternate recovery initiative agreed by OEH*". While OEH will rely on advice from the National Recovery Team, of which OEH and Taronga Zoo are members, it is envisaged that these funds will support the on-going operation of the breeding facility at Taronga Western Plains Zoo and fund three release programs in NSW over the next 10 years.

Should you require further information please contact David Geering on 02 6883 5335 or david.geering@environment.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



PETER CHRISTIE
A/ Director North West
Regional Operations Division

14 February 2017

Contact: David Geering
02 6883 5335



Your reference :
Our reference : EF13/3856; DOC16/56010-17
Contact : Ms Sheridan Ledger; (02) 6332 7608

Mr Matthew Riley
Senior Planning Officer
Department of Planning & Environment
GPO Box 39
SYDNEY NSW 2001

13 February 2017

Dear Mr Riley

WILPINJONG COAL MINE – EXTENSION PROJECT (SSD 6764)

I refer to your email of 3 February 2017 requesting the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) provide comment regarding the draft conditions of consent for the proposed Wilpinjong Coal Mine Extension Project (the Project) and the SLR letter dated 21 June 2016 provided to the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) by the Wilpinjong Coal Mine (the Letter).

As indicated to you in the email of 10 October 2016, the EPA is satisfied with the proposed approval conditions and further, the proposed approval conditions satisfactorily resolve issues raised by the EPA.

In relation to the Letter, the EPA advises that in relation to the component of the assessment that relies on daily log mean values (columns 2 and 3 of Table 1A), there is no provision in the NSW Industrial Noise Policy (INP) to derive C minus A levels from daily log means.

For the intrusive noise limits that apply at the Wilpinjong Coal Mine, the C minus A levels should be calculated from individual fifteen minute values. On this basis, as stated in the second page of the Letter, approximately eighteen percent of individual measurements (26 of 147) had C minus A levels greater than 15, and for about half of these the A-weighted levels were greater than 30dB. This confirms EPA's concern throughout the environmental assessment process for the Project that the low frequency modifying factor in the INP would apply.

The EPA does not have concerns with the concluding advice in the independent assessment in relation to the Draft Industrial Noise Guideline.

Should you have any further enquiries in relation to this matter please contact Sheridan Ledger at the Central West (Bathurst) Office of the EPA by telephoning (02) 6332 7608.

Yours sincerely


DARRYL CLIFT
Head Central West
Environment Protection Authority