

**BACKGROUND**

I have worked in the coal mining Industry for over 50 years including around 25 years in the Illawarra Coal fields and Management and Technical roles.

I currently work for POSCO Australia as General Manager Technical but currently have no direct role in the Hume project but very familiar with the project and mining the Wongawilli seam in this area.

I started in the coal Industry as a Trainee in April 1968 at Wongawilli Mine and my experience on the South Coast includes the following as well as managing mines in the Hunter Valley, Lithgow and Queensland.

- Wongawilli Mine – Surveying Trainee – Bord and Pillar – Wongawilli and Bulli Seams
- Nebo Colliery – Survey Trainee and Mine deputy - Bord and Pillar Mine – Wongawilli Seam
- Kemira Colliery – Surveying Trainee - Longwall Mine – Bulli Seam
- Corrimal Colliery - Surveying Trainee - Bord and Pillar Mine – Bulli Seam
- Old Bulli Colliery - Surveying Trainee - Bord and Pillar Mine – Bulli Seam
- South Clifton Mine – Undermanager and Survey (Combined roles) - Bord and Pillar Mine – Bulli Seam
- South Bulli Mine – Technical Services Manager- Longwall Mine – Bulli and Balgownie Seams
- Westcliff Mine – Deputy Manager, Technical Services Manager and Mine Manager - – Bulli Seam – Longwall and Full Extraction bord and pillar
- Avon Colliery - Bord and Pillar Mine – 8 years as Mine Manager - Full extraction
- Yellow Rock Mine - Bord and Pillar Mine – Mine Manager – Full extraction
- Dendrobium Mine – Longwall Mine - Mine Manager and Technical Services Manager)
- Tahmoor Colliery – Operations Manager – Longwall Mine – Bulli Seam
- Berrima Colliery – Mine Manager coverage for 7 weeks – Bord and Pillar full extraction Wongawilli Seam
- Metropolitan Colliery – Bord and Pillar – Full extraction Bulli Seam

Of this time 15 years' experience in mining the Wongawilli seam with many variations of bord and pillar mining methods from development, partial extraction to full extraction using the Wongawilli method of lift and fendering as well as pillar extraction. Except for Berrima Colliery, all these mines all worked under the Illawarra escarpment near Sydney supply dams.

The NSW Government submission to the IPC ignores the experience and History of Mining the Wongawilli Seam and the many reports written over the 150 + years of bord and pillar mining and this is likely to the lack of experience, knowledge and interest of those people in government and In my opinion is politically motivated.

**HISTORY OF MINING WONGAWILLI SEAM**

The Wongawilli seam along the escarpment, is a highly permeable seam with very wet mining conditions and I can remember partial workings directly under Sydney Catchment and full extraction up to the 35-degree angle of draw which was later extended to 35 degrees plus half Depth as an additional barrier. These mines also had large bodies of water stored underground and there was never any reports or risks to mine workers from water inrush

When I was Mine Manager at Avon Colliery, there was case involving a significant increase in water flows at the neighbouring Wongawilli Colliery and this report was titled the “Blue Panel” report where full extraction close to the water storage dam and from memory an increase of around 3 MI

per day and as there was also a large throw geological fault, it was suspected that the sudden increase in water make come from the surface storage dam. Many studies were undertaken involving water quality matching from dam and underground looking at over 50 species of algae as well as water dyes and it was never proven that the water came from the dam. I can remember the Mine Manager at Wongawilli Mine at the time suggesting the water was more likely to be transmitted from stored waters up dip underground through coal rather that through over 300 metres of rock between the dam floor and mine workings.

To put in prospective the average evaporation levels from the surface storage dam was 17.8 MI/day compared to the 3MI/day.

I was Mine Manager and Technical services Manager at Dendrobium in 2004 and was involved in the Longwall Mining approval process, which was at a time of severe prolonged drought and Warragamba Dam was down to around 38% capacity as the NSW Government decided to build the desalination plant in Sydney. Water supply was therefore seen as a critical issue and Dendrobiums longwalls were near the Cordeaux Dam and a lot of ground water modelling and other studies were undertaken before longwall mining approval was granted.

There are many reports on subsidence, mining and water balance studies from these Illawarra Mines which appears to be either unknown or ignored by the NSW Government regulators. These mines used every conceivable method of partial and full seam bord and pillar extraction methods from welsh Boards, through to extraction of pillars developed to the lift and fender extraction system.

The recently closed Berrima Mine operated for over 100 years using various bord and pillar methods of extraction at shallow depths and mostly full secondary extraction. This mine was considered very wet, particularly under the basalt cap but from memory around 3 MI/day water flows were recorded.

The Hume project is proposing a partial extraction bord and pillar system described as the “Pine feather” system of partial extraction designed to minimise subsidence and water make and from my experience I would consider it as No risk to ground water, surface water of to the safety of people working underground as suggested by the NSW Department of Planning. Absolute rubbish to suggest this after over 150 years of actual mining experience evidence in the Illawarra Coal measures and the use of todays modelling and testing methods.

The method of mining is not untried and unique at Hume, as suggested as I have personally been involved in many bord and pillar mining methods in the south coast as well as other mining regions of NSW and would consider the Hume proposal as small and no risk of any impact of significance to the local and greater community as well as the environment.

The Government IPC referral reports also ignore the over 100 years of mining history adjacent (South, West and North) to the Hume project.

It also ignores most of the local community who do not make the same levels of noise as the self interest anti-mining activists. Many community surveys and local community presentations have shown the local people want jobs for themselves and children in a region, when excluding the retired people has over 15% unemployment. Many local small businesses support development and the Hume Project. These key issues have also been ignored by the NSW Government regulators.

**CONCLUSION**

I would describe the Hume Project as ultra conservative with minimal negative impacts on the environment and communities and it should be evaluated based on science and history and not based on politics or social media from minority self interest groups.

I am a POSCO employee and I understand their appreciation of the need to maintain a reputation as respectful to the environment and in communities in which they operate. But regardless of my association with POSCO, I have had many years of direct experience in bord and pillar mining in the Illawarra coalfields and I get angry when I see that over 150 years of experience and history and science is not being considered and appears to be a high degree of political motivation to stop a project which clearly has minimal negative impacts, but many positives to the local community for jobs and small businesses.

If not a POSCO employee, I would still provide this same submission and only hope that history, science and the local community members who have not made the same level of public media noise as the mostly retired, anti-mining minority groups who strategy is to make as much noise as possible to influence political decisions.

I would hope that any independent expert engaged as a member of the IPC would evaluate this application based on the history and experience of over 50 years of mining in the area, Hume studies and science over what I see as clearly politically influenced recommendations of the department of Planning.

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