

## Poitrel Coal Mine Project

INITIAL ADVICE STATEMENT

PROJECT REFERENCE NUMBER: 214 161

- 26 July 2004



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## Document history and status

Revision	Date issued	Reviewed by	Approved by	Date approved	Revision type
Draft		D. Welsh	D. Welsh		Draft

## Distribution of copies

Revision	Copy no	Quantity	Issued to

<b>Printed:</b>	18 September 2012
<b>Last saved:</b>	13 October 2004 01:49 PM
<b>File name:</b>	I:\QENV\Projects\QE06262\102 - Referral_EPA_To\EPA Submission\QE06262 EPA Submission.doc
<b>Author:</b>	David Welsh
<b>Project manager:</b>	David Welsh
<b>Name of organisation:</b>	BHP Mitsui Coal
<b>Name of project:</b>	Poitrel Coal Mine Project
<b>Name of document:</b>	Initial Advice Statement
<b>Document version:</b>	Final
<b>Project number:</b>	QE06262.100



# 1 Introduction

This Initial Advice Statement (IAS) is a submission about the Poitrel Coal Mine Project (“the Project”) to the Chief Executive of the Queensland Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to meet the requirements of Section 41 of the Queensland *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (‘the EP Act’).

The Poitrel Coal Mine Project is situated on the existing Poitrel Mining Lease (ML) 4749 and Red Mountain Mining Lease (ML) 70116. The Project Number is 700105. There are transitional environmental authorities existing for the Project – numbered T2303 (Poitrel) and T3879 (Red Mountain).

This IAS was prepared after pre-lodgement consultation with the EPA and supports an ‘*application for amendment of an environmental authority (mining activities)*’. This application has been given **Project Reference Number 214 161** by the EPA.

## 1.1 The Project

BHP Mitsui Coal Pty Ltd (“the Proponent”) proposes to develop of a 3.4 Million tonne / annum (Mt/a) open cut coal mine (“the Project”) at Poitrel, about 35 km east south-east of Moranbah and approximately 170 km south-west of Mackay, Queensland (**Figure 1**). The Project involves open cut coal mining, including clearing of vegetation, waste rock removal and rehabilitation and coal mining using a conventional excavator and truck fleet.

A diversion of New Chum Creek will be necessary to divert the flood waters away from the pit and allow access to the coal. Levee banks will also be constructed beside the Isaac River, which is to the south of the mining area, and not to be disturbed by the Project. Water management, including sediment dams to control runoff, will be integrated with the mining operation. The release of surplus water may be necessary from the site.

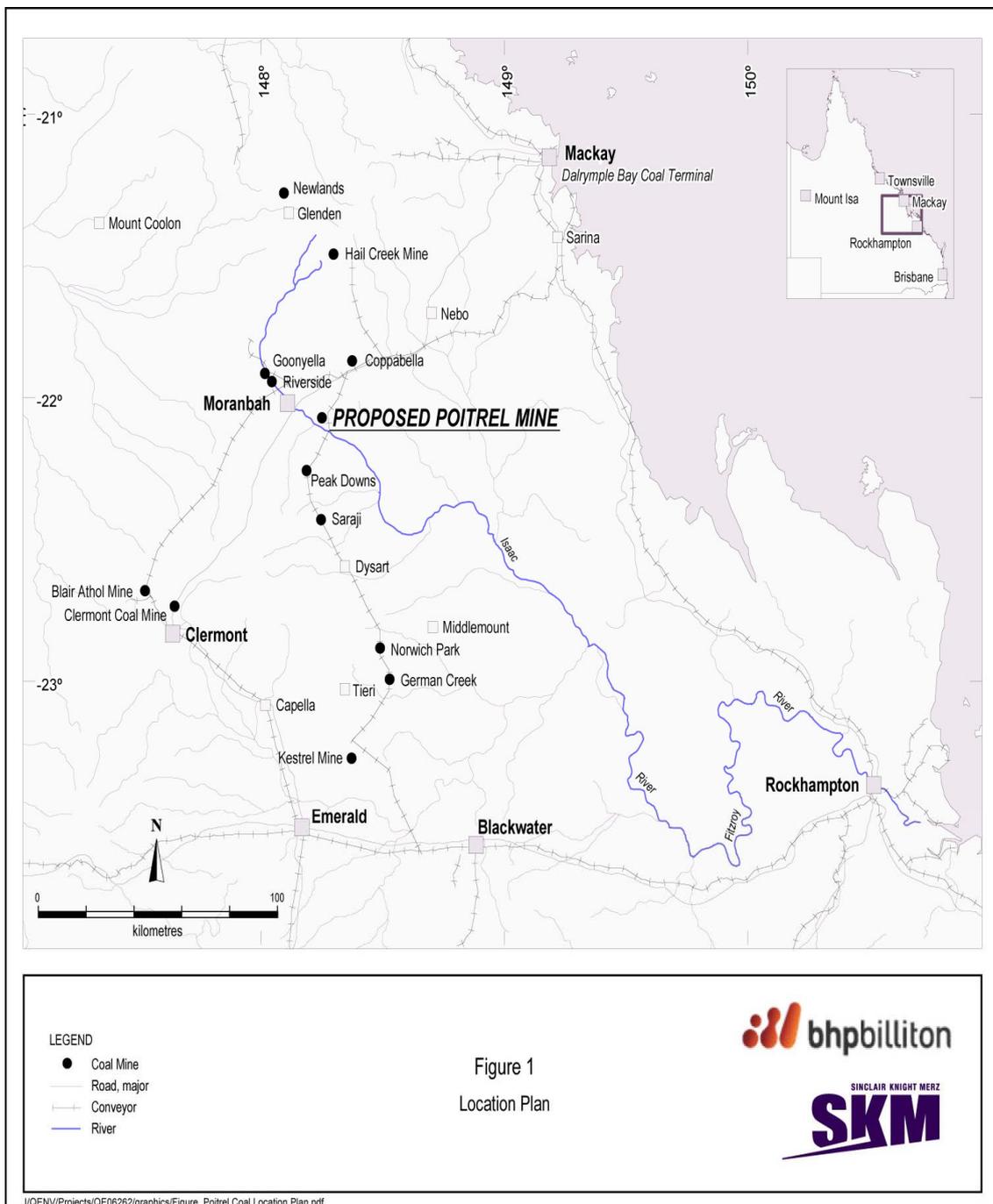
The Proponent is considering the option of a ‘stand-alone’ coal processing plant (CPP) and associated Process Residue Storage Area, a rail loop and rail loadout facilities, or the alternate option of sharing such facilities with the Millenium Coal Mine Project, which is proposed to be located immediately to the north.

## 1.2 The Proponent

The Proponent for the Project is:

BHP Mitsui Coal Pty Ltd  
GPO Box 1389  
Brisbane QLD 4001.

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■ **Figure 1 Locality Plan**

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### 1.3 This Submission

This submission addresses Chapter 3 of the EP Act – Environmental Impact Statements, Part 1 – EIS Process, Division 2 – Terms of Reference Stage, Subdivision 1 – Draft Terms of Reference.

After this Introduction (**Section 1**) this submission includes:

- 1) a written description of the Project and the operational land (**Section 2**);
- 2) a list stating the name and address of each person the Proponent proposes as an ‘interested person’ for the Project (**Section 3**);
- 3) a statement of how the Proponent proposes to consult with the interested person (**Section 4**);
- 4) a list of the names and addresses of the affected persons for the Project (**Section 5**); and
- 5) draft terms of reference (ToR) for the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) that allows the purposes of the EIS to be achieved for the Project (**Appendix A**).

### 1.4 Interested Persons

Section 39 of the EP Act states that an ‘interested person’ means an interested person proposed by the Proponent under Section 41(3) (b) of the EP Act. This section of the EP Act leaves it to the Proponent to propose the interested person, but provides an example that an interested person may be ‘*an incorporated community or environmental body with a .....interest in the local government area that the operational land is in*’.

In the broadest sense, this is taken to be ‘local community stakeholders’. The names and addresses of these persons are listed in **Section 3**.

### 1.5 Affected Persons

Section 38 of the EP Act states who is an ‘affected person’ for the Project.

- (1) *A person is an ‘affected person’ for the Project if the person is –*
  - (a) *a person mentioned in subsection (2) for the operational land or any land joining it;*  
*or*
  - (b) *any of the following under the Native Title Act 1993 (Cwlth) for the operational land or for an area that includes any of the land—*
    - (i) *a registered native title body corporate;*
    - (ii) *a registered native title claimant;*



- (iii) *a representative Aboriginal/Torres Strait Islander body; or*
    - (c) *a relevant local government for the operational land.*
- (2) *For subsection (1)(a), the persons are as follows—*
  - (a) *for freehold land—a registered proprietor;*
  - (b) *for land that is held from the State for an estate or interest less than fee simple and for which the interest is recorded in a register mentioned in the Land Act 1994 (“**Land Act**”), section 2765—a person recorded in the register as the registered holder of the interest;*
  - (c) *for land subject to a mining claim, mineral development licence or mining lease—a holder of, or an applicant for, the tenement;*
  - (d) *for land subject to an authority to prospect or a lease or licence under the Petroleum Act 1923—*
    - (i) *a holder of the authority; or*
    - (ii) *a lessee under the lease; or*
    - (iii) *a licensee under the licence;*
  - (e) *for land under the Land Act or the Nature Conservation Act 1992 (“**NCA**”) for which there are trustees—a trustee of the land;*
  - (f) *for Aboriginal land under the Aboriginal Land Act 1991 (“**ALA**”) that is taken to be a reserve because of section 87(2) or 87(4)(b)6 of that Act—a grantee of the land;*
  - (g) *for DOGIT land under the ALA or the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991— a trustee for the land;*
  - (h) *for land held under a lease under the Local Government (Aboriginal Lands) Act 1978, section 67—a relevant local government;*
  - (i) *for Torres Strait Islander land under the Torres Strait Islander Land Act 1991 that is taken to be a reserve because of section 84(2) or 84(4)(b)8 of that Act—a grantee of the land;*
  - (j) *for land under a lease from the State under the Aborigines and Torres Strait Islanders (Land Holding) Act 1985 that has been excised from land granted in trust for*

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*Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander purposes under the Land Act—a trustee of the land;*

- (k) for land that is any of the following, the State—*
  - (i) unallocated State land;*
  - (ii) a reserve under the Land Act for which there is no trustee;*
  - (iii) a national park, national park (Aboriginal land), national park (scientific), national park (Torres Strait Islander land), national park (recovery) or forest reserve under the NCA;*
  - (iv) a conservation park under the NCA for which there are no trustees;*
  - (v) a State forest or timber reserve under the Forestry Act 1959;*
  - (vi) a State controlled road under the Transport Infrastructure Act 1994;*
  - (vii) a fish habitat area under the Fisheries Act 1994.*
- (l) another person prescribed under a regulation.*

The names and addresses of these persons, where relevant, are provided in **Section 5**.



## 2 Project Description and Operational Land

The Project involves open cut coal mining using a conventional excavator and truck fleet. Mining activities will include the clearing of vegetation, waste rock removal to waste rock dumps, coal mining and progressive rehabilitation over the 20-year life of the Project.

A diversion of New Chum Creek will be necessary, to divert the flood waters away from the pit, and allow access to the coal. Levee banks will also be constructed beside the Isaac River, which is to the south of the mining area, and not to be disturbed by the Project.

Water management, including sediment dams to control runoff, will be integrated with the mining operation. A water balance will be developed for the Project. Water will be reused on site in the CPP. Any surplus water may be released downstream.

### 2.1 Mining Operations

The mining method will use traditional open cut excavator and truck strip mining methods, with in-pit waste rock dumping after the initial box-cut dumps are completed. There is the potential to introduce a dragline later in the Project.

The mining sequence will generally entail:

- progressively clearing of any vegetation occurring on areas to be mined;
- stockpiling topsoil from disturbed areas for storage and use in future rehabilitation of the site;
- blasting for fragmentation of waste rock;
- removal of waste rock, using a combination of dozers, excavators and trucks;
- coal removal by excavators and trucks after dozer ripping; and
- rehabilitation of the site by re-shaping the waste rock dumps, topsoiling and revegetation using native vegetation.

Mining will occur seven days per week to depths from 30-80 m, with up to two pits open at any time. The Poitrel and Red Mountain MLs cover a combined area of about 4718 ha in total. A total area of approximately 1800 ha will be disturbed over the life of the Project. The disturbed areas will be progressively rehabilitated.

### 2.2 Diversion of New Chum Creek

New Chum Creek will need to be diverted to enable the exploitation of the coal resource. Flood levee banks will be constructed adjacent to the diversion beside New Chum Creek and adjacent to the Isaac River.

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### **2.3 Supporting Site Infrastructure**

In addition to coal mining activities, the Project will also include:

- a CPP and associated loading facilities for Run-Of-Mine (ROM) coal;
- a Process Residue Storage Area;
- a water supply, using a combination of site water reuse and a raw water supply via pipeline from the existing Braeside borefield; with consideration of alternate options such as supply via a pipeline from the proposed Millenium Coal Mine Project water supply;
- an all weather access road from the Peak Downs Highway, probably shared with the owners / operators of the proposed Millenium Coal Mine Project;
- a power supply via a 66 kV /11 kV main substation on site supplied from a new 66 kV transmission line originating from the Moranbah substation; or alternatively taking power from the proposed Millenium Project power transmission line;
- a mine water management system, including clean water diversion, disturbed area runoff collection and treatment, pit water management, water reuse and water disposal if there is surplus water at any time;
- sewage and wastewater treatment by packaged sewage treatment plant (STP);
- site offices, workshop and stores area, which would include diesel storage, portable power generator, and storage for tyres and other material; and
- a rail loop with associated product coal loading facilities.

### **2.4 Coal Handling and Processing Activities**

The CPP will process up to 5 Mt/a of ROM Coal to produce about 3.4 Mt/a of product coal. The plant will operate seven days per week.

ROM coal will be transported to the CPP by trucks via on-site haul roads. Handling and processing of ROM coal at the CPP will most likely include:

- a truck dump hopper, crushing by feeder breaker and sizers and stockpiling prior to transfer to the CPP;
- a modular wet coal processing design with a capacity of about 800-1000 tonnes per hour (t/hr) of ROM Coal giving a total ROM capacity of about 5 Mt/a;
- stockpiles for ROM and product coal;
- reclaiming systems using dozer fed stockpile activators and conveyor, with coal transferred into the train loading bin; and
- fine and coarse rejects from the CPP discharged to a Process Residue Storage Area, with supernatant wastewater reused in the CPP as makeup water.

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The product coal will be railed approximately 150 km to the Hay Point and/or Dalrymple Bay coal terminals for distribution to domestic and international market.

## **2.5 Mine Waste Management**

Initially, the waste rock produced by mining will be placed in box-cut waste rock dumps, most likely located immediately to the east of the mining area. This will require the diversion of New Chum Creek.

When sufficient space is created within the mined-out areas, subsequent waste rock will be placed within in-pit waste rock dumps. Some waste rock will be used to level the industrial area and provide levee protection adjacent to the Isaac River and New Chum Creek.

Water management, including sediment dams to control, will be integrated with the mining operation. The release of surplus water may be necessary from the site.

## **2.6 Workforce**

The Project will employ about 200 persons during construction and operation. The construction and operational workforce is expected to be housed in the district, in the vicinity of Moranbah.

## **2.7 Operational Land**

The Project is located on a property known as Poitrel, approximately 35 km east south-east of Moranbah and approximately 150 km south-west of Mackay, Queensland (**Figure 1**). The Project is situated on the existing Poitrel ML 4749 and Red Mountain ML 70116, which have a combined area of 4718 ha. The Project area is south of the Peak Downs Highway and adjacent to the Peak Downs / Hay Point railway line. Coal will be transported by rail to Hay Point and/or Dalrymple Bay Coal Terminals.

The Project footprint is likely to involve a combined area of about 1800 ha, including the pit, waste rock dumps external to the pit, CPP and associated Process Residue Storage Area, water management and mine infrastructure.

The Project area straddles a low ridge line which runs roughly north-south and forms the catchment divide between New Chum Creek on the east and an unnamed creek to the west. The ephemeral New Chum Creek passes through the eastern section of the Poitrel ML and the ephemeral Isaac River passes adjacent to its southern boundary. About 5 km of New Chum Creek will be diverted to allow access to coal. Levee banks will be constructed beside the Isaac River.

The area to be disturbed for mining has been extensively cleared previously for cattle grazing with some scattered regrowth and fragmented remnants of open Eucalypt woodland and brigalow scrub

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in the northern extremity. Land adjoining the Project site is used for coal mining and agricultural / grazing purposes.

Two threatened ecological communities on the site are listed on the EPBC online Protected Matters Search Tool as endangered: Bluegrass (*Dichanthium spp.*) dominant grasslands of the Brigalow Belt Bioregions and Brigalow (*Acacia harpophylla* dominant and co-dominant).

**Figure 2** shows the location of the Poitrel deposit, an outline of the mining plan, the approximate location of coal handling and processing facilities, and the extent of endangered regional ecosystems at the site.

The Project has been referred to the Department of Environment and Heritage as a ‘controlled action’ under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*. The controlling provisions are considered to be Section 18 and Section 18A – Threatened Species or Ecological Communities, due to the potential impacts upon the Bluegrass and Brigalow communities.



- **Figure 2 Mine Plan and Vegetation**



## 4 Statement about Consultation

An explanation of each of the consultation strategies is outlined below

### 4.1 Meetings with Key Stakeholders

Meetings with key stakeholders will be held on the initiative of the Proponent, the EIS Project Team or stakeholders. The meetings may involve individuals that are directly affected by the proposed development (ie landowners), stakeholder groups that have an interest in the proposed development (ie environment groups, regional development board, etc) or local government.

The purpose of the stakeholder meetings is to provide information on the Project and the EIS process to stakeholders and identify issues for consideration in the EIS. These meetings may also take the form of “community information sessions”.

### 4.2 Advertisements

Advertisements will be run in appropriate daily newspapers as necessary throughout the Project to provide information on consultation activities, and invite people to participate in consultation including public displays and community information sessions.

Advertisements will meet the statutory requirements of the EP Act and the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act, 1999* (Cwth).

### 4.3 Newsletters

The purpose of the newsletters is to offer:

- a project overview, including a description of the key elements of the project;
- information on the status of the project;
- advice on consultation activities;
- points of contact with the study team; and
- invitations to provide input to the study.

Two newsletters will be distributed as an insert in a weekly local newspaper and to all registered stakeholders at key stages of the EIS (ie draft ToR and EIS).

### 4.4 Public Displays and Community Information Sessions

A public display in Moranbah will be prepared to coincide with the release of the ToR and EIS. The public display will provide the community with information on the Project, the EIS process, consultation activities and key issues identified in the EIS.

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Two community information sessions will be held in conjunction with the public display for the EIS. It is proposed that these will be held on a Saturday morning during the public display period.

#### 4.5 Meetings with Referral Agencies

Meetings will be held with key referral agency representatives, including those in Mackay, at key milestones of the project (ie project initiation, preparation of the draft ToR, during EIS investigations, and prior to the release of the EIS, etc).

Meetings with referral agencies will be initiated by the Proponent, the EIS Project Team or at the request of the referral agencies.

#### 4.6 Consultation Program

The consultation program for the Project is set out below under the key stages of the EIS process.

##### 4.6.1 Consultation Planning

This stage involves the preparation of a consultation strategy for the EIS and stakeholder identification and analysis. The activities to be undertaken during this stage include:

Activities	Timing
Preparation of consultation plan	July 2004
Stakeholder analysis	August 2004

##### 4.6.2 Draft Terms of Reference and Issues Identification

The draft ToR is usually developed in consultation with key referral agencies and key stakeholders. The objectives of this stage of consultation are to:

- meet the statutory requirements of the EP Act.
- notify the community that the draft ToR have been lodged;
- obtain input from referral agencies on the draft ToR; and
- encourage community and stakeholder review of the draft ToR.

The activities to be undertaken during this stage of the consultation process include:

Activities	Timing
Public notification of the public display and community information sessions through advertisements	August 2004
Letter to adjoining landowners and invitation to meet with the EIS Project Team	August 2004

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Activities	Timing
Newsletter 1 – Draft ToR, Consultation Process, invitation for submissions on ToR	August 2004
Information Session at the Public Display (1 x Saturday morning)	August 2004
Meetings with adjacent landowners and residents (as requested)	September 2004
Meetings with key stakeholders (as requested)	September 2004
Analysis of community submissions to the draft ToR	September 2004

#### 4.6.3 Consultation on the draft EIS

The objectives of this stage of consultation are to:

- provide opportunities for community members and other stakeholders to identify issues, benefits and impacts which may occur as a result of the Project;
- ensure local community awareness of potential impacts and benefits;
- obtain community input to the EIS investigations on issues and options; and
- achieve community participation in developing mitigation strategies including design issues.

The following activities will be undertaken during this stage of the EIS consultation process:

Activities	Timing
Consultation with affected landowners (as requested)	August-October 2004
Consultation reporting to draft EIS	October / November 2004

#### 4.6.4 Public Display of the EIS

The EIS will be put on public display for four to six weeks. The objectives of this stage of consultation are to:

- notify the community that the EIS has been lodged for assessment;
- provide detailed information to interested people and targeted stakeholders to enable community and stakeholder review of the EIS and design;
- clarify input from referral agencies on the EIS; and
- meet the statutory requirements of the EP Act.



Activities and timing are as follows.

Activities	Timing
Newsletter 2 – EIS and call for submissions	December 2004
Information Session at Moranbah Public Display (1 x Saturday morning)	December 2004
Stakeholder meetings (as requested)	December 2004
Analysis of submissions and review of EIS	January 2005
Acknowledgement letter to stakeholders who provided comment on the EIS	January 2005

#### 4.6.5 On-going Activities

Activities that will be on-going during the course of the consultation process includes:

Ongoing Activities throughout the study
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Consultation monitoring</li> <li>■ Consultation reporting</li> <li>■ Provide community input to EIS processes</li> </ul>

#### 4.6.6 Consultation Team

The following provides an overview of the consultation team members and their roles and responsibilities for delivering the EIS consultation program.

Team Member	Role	Responsibility
Dee Elliott	Consultation Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Design all consultation processes and QA reporting</li> <li>■ Assist the Consultation Manager on consultation strategies</li> </ul>
Sue Marszalek	Consultation Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Lead consultation</li> <li>■ Manage all consultation processes</li> <li>■ Liaise with the Project Team on community issues</li> <li>■ Report on consultation outcomes to Project Team &amp; BHP MC</li> </ul>
David Welsh	Project Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Liaise with the Poitrel Project Manager on scheduling</li> <li>■ Assist the Consultation Manager on consultation activities.</li> </ul>

The consultation team will be supported by other members of the EIS Project Team. Project Team members will participate in stakeholder meetings and community information sessions as required.



## Appendix A Draft Terms of Reference