



FINAL REPORT

*IPRH Mine Coal Fire
December 2005*

30th December 2005



Panel Of Inquiry:

Ian Quail	- Production Manager
Romeo Prezioso	- Mine Operations/Fire Service Co-ordinator
Martin Raun	- Mine Planning / Engineering
Peter Chisholm	- 2x12 C Roster H&S Rep.

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Thursday December 29th 2005

Friday December 30th 2005

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1. Peter Barr and Phil Glover -- CFA
2. Tony Basile –MINE OPERATOR
3. John Beamish – MINE OPERATOR
4. Ron Bernardi – – MINE OPERATOR
5. Rod Fleming – MINE SHIFT MANAGER
6. John O'Bryan – MINE F/SERVICE SUPERVISOR

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7. Luke Alexander – OPERATOR STATION
8. Bill Bakker – MINE F/SERVICE
9. Ron Bennett –STATION
10. Peter Brimblecombe – MINE MAINT ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
11. Russel Camier – MINE MAINT MECHANICAL ENGINEER
12. Paul Connolly – MINE OPERATOR
13. Geoff Crisp – MINE OPERATOR
14. Joe Dickason – MINE OPERATOR
15. John Janiw – MINE OPERATOR
16. Stan Kemsley – MINE MAINT MECHANICAL ENGINEER
17. Nick Koumis – MINE OPERATOR
18. T. Koostra - MINE OPERATOR
19. Kevin Lovett – MINE SHIFT MANAGER
20. Terry McDonald – MINE SURVEYOR
21. Scott Meadows – MINE OPERATOR
22. John Morgan – MINE F/SERVICE
23. Tim Nolan – MINE OPERATOR
24. Shaun O'Neill – MINE SHIFT SUPERVISOR
25. Bill Pedder –MINE F/SERVICE SUPERVISOR
26. Ian Quail – PRODUCTION MANAGER
27. Maurice Rice – MINE OPERATOR
28. Gil Risk – MINE OPERATOR
29. Daryl Ross – MINE OPERATOR
30. Trevor Shaw – MINE F/SERVICE
31. Peter Smith- MINE SHIFT SUPERVISOR
32. Lloyd Welch- MINNE OPERATOR
33. Shane Williams – MINE OPERATOR
34. Ian Wood --MINE F/SERVICE

1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

At around 3pm on Friday 30th December 2005 a major fire had established itself in the South East corner of the Hazelwood Mine fanned by strong NW winds of 35kph gusting up to 70kph and a temperature of 40 Deg C. Fire conditions were extreme.

The fire took hold on the worked out Coal batters between levels 3-5 in the South East Field (SEF), extending down onto the Operational level of D24 which was supplying coal to E/Brix from 7 level.

Whilst on routine patrol and attending to various conveyor faults the C-Roster mine operators (roadrunners) spotted smoke on the South East corner of the mine. (Some 2km away).

Upon closer investigation it appeared to be a fire originating from an old fire hole area between the levels 3 and 5. This coal face is some 30 metres in height and difficult to reach.

F/service were notified via radio immediately, and in turn the fire tanker was dispatched.

With the prevailing weather conditions and as a precautionary measure the tanker was left at the "Ridge Area" a further 5-10mins away from its normal location at the control centre. A fire had started at the "Ridge Area" 2 days prior and had re-ignited a small grass fire from the previous day. Although extinguished this fire still managed to spot and create other smaller fires within its vicinity, which was later discovered to be burning inside the trunk of a tree.

With tanker en-route and fire service personnel on the way from M520 beltshift, the road runners were re-directed to West field conveyors to assist with a conveyor fault due to the urgency of low coal stocks.

The weather at this stage continued to worsen, with the temperature reaching a high of 42 Degrees Celsius, winds averaging 35km/hr gusting at 70km/hr in a North Westerly direction. (See Appendix 2 Report 2B)

With tanker approaching and with fire in sight it was evident to the fire services personnel that the fire was spreading quickly and outside assistance would be required.

The CFA were notified immediately and message broadcast over the open radio channel for all non-essential operational personnel to assist with fire fighting.

CFA, RTL and mine personnel responded quickly but due to Xmas/new year holiday period, personnel numbers were very limited at first.

Calls were then made to employees at home or on leave and gradually fire crews and relief crews were established.

Attempts were made to fight the fire with a helicopter (Water Bomber) but after the third attempt this proved to be futile and was called off.(See appendix 1 Mine Fire Photos)

CFA Fire crews along with IPRH personnel continued to fight the fire for the rest of the day and into the night with the main objective being containment.

The weather conditions for Saturday were still unfavourable (See Appendix 2 Report 2C) and with the fire fighting resources well established the fire was contained but still required rotation of Fire Crews over the next 3 days. By late Saturday the fire fighters managed to contain the fire within a designated area until it was fully extinguished. The CFA withdrew their resources at 1515 hrs on Sunday 1 January 2006, after 48 hrs fire fighting.

Due to an ongoing fire in the states Region 10 (Stradbroke) CFA crews from the Latrobe Valley who are familiar with Coal Mine Fires could not attend and CFA crews from the states Region 8 Western district were sourced. These crews although very competent on fighting bush and scrub fires appeared a little unsure and hesitant at how to attack a coal fire.

At its peak, approx 100 men were fire fighting (50 CFA, 50 Mine, Station and RTL) as well as 15 CFA fire trucks and 4 IPRH/RTL Fire tankers.

Crane mounted monitors were very successful in fighting fires especially in the high coal batters. They proved to be a vital asset although difficult to initially set up and get running they enable fire-fighting crews to attack the fire high up in the coalface and allow access to some areas, which were restricted to fire tankers due to narrow coal benches.

Plant damage was minimal with 6.6kv cable burnt and various percolating hoses either burnt or damaged.

Fire fighting continued for the next 3 days from the initial outbreak and mopping up exercises extended for a further 4 days by IPRH employees.

Although extensive the fire did not threaten the Operational Faces of the West Field impacting only on the coal supply to E/Brix. This was quickly overcome with the use of Haul trucks road loading until the fire was extinguished and minor repair to plant completed.

E/Brix dredger dug coal supply resumed on the 3/1/06 with de-commissioning of M241 and M20's series coal conveyors starting on the 4/1/06.

IPRH employees are to be commended for their efforts in responding and fighting the fire over a prolonged period.

2: PRECAUTIONS TAKEN PRIOR TO THE FIRE

- Annual fire training to all Mine Personnel and relevant contractors had been carried out and completed by late DEC 2005.
- Completion of Annual Fire Mitigation works, slashing, grazing layout , and mulch mowing was 90% complete.
- Inspection and monitoring of “slip on” fire tankers is occurring on a fortnightly basis during the fire season.

- Visual inventory of fire fighting equipment was completed before the fire season.
- All maintenance had been carried out on all critical fire service pumps and major pipelines prior to the fire season.
- Mobile water tanker units are available and provision made for additional back-up mobile water supplies during days of extreme weather conditions.

3: PROBABLE CAUSE

A Fire Hole on the worked out Coal batters between levels 3-5 in the SEF proved to be the probable cause of the ignition. The fire hole, a known hot spot, was fanned by strong NW winds and extreme temperature..

4: CONSEQUENCES

4.1 Safety of Personnel

The most important outcome regarding the fire was that it was fought in a safe manner and that as a consequence there were no serious injuries apart a few minor first aid treatment injuries. i.e. dust in eyes-fatigue and two CFA Fire Fighters were taken to hospital suffering fatigue.

4.2 Plant Damage

D24 conveyor power cables – minor electrical damage
 Numerous Percolating were either burnt or damaged during the fire.

4.3 Lost Revenue

There was no loss of coal supply to Hazelwood Power Station resulting from the fire. Revenue Losses incurred were Coal supply loss to E/Brix and requirement for road carting for three days at approx

Costs associated with fighting the fire –Supplies, Equipment and Additional Personnel and overtime are estimated at

5: FINDINGS

5.1 Emergency Response Protocol

Initial delays and lack of communication between the CFA commander and IPRH incident controller led to confusion amongst the fire fighting crews in the early stages of the fire fight –this was quickly resolved within the first few hours of the emergency.

Support over a prolonged period was maintained and in line with the IPRH Emergency response plan.

The Emergency Control Point was set up at the Mine Control Centre which for a small event would be sufficient. In this case there were too many distractions with the day to day operations and the Emergency Control Point should have been set up away from the Control Centre.

Senior management, media, employees and Government were kept regularly updated via emails from the Mining Director.- see Appendix 4.

Overall the Emergency Response Plan worked well.

5.2 Water Supply

Water supply was reliable and ample within the designated fire area, although further consideration should be given to ease of access, location and reliability of water supply in other worked out sections of the mine, specifically the northeastern batters of the mine.

5.3 CFA

CFA response was quick, effective and well organised.

Comments from many of the witness statements referred to inexperience of CFA in fighting coal fires – mainly attributed to the Region 8 volunteers, who many had never seen a coal mine.

6: RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Improve Emergency Response Procedures

6:1.1 Emergency Control Point

The Emergency Control Point is to be set up away from the Mine Control Centre. Suitable locations are Mine Training Centre, or Fire Service Office.

6:1.2 Radio Communications

A fully equipped multi-channel communications system currently exists within the mine but is still creating confusion amongst many operators. To be reviewed and updated if required and additional training for employees. Also an open channel should be investigated such that all responding can hear what is going on.

6:1.3 Communications with the CFA

Communications with the CFA whilst they are on site is via a mobile phone which creates difficulty for those at the fire front. As part of the communications review, evaluate if an open channel could be used by all CFA and IPRH personnel.

6.2 Improve Fire Fighting Ability

6:2.1 Vehicle Access

All access roads internal to the mine and on the perimeter should at all times be kept clear for emergency use and accessible to all fire fighting plant.

6:2.2 Crane Monitors

Review of exist crane monitors to be conducted with the possibility of Improving or upgrading their current use and function. Requirement to have sufficient crane monitors to reach from top of coal to base of coal faces (worst case) which can be fitted to any crane.

6:2.3 Soaker Hoses

Investigate the possibility of canvas soaker hoses which could be layed down the length of batters and used as soaker hoses assisting fire fighting crews prior or during a fire emergency.

6:2.4 Mobile Tankers –“Slip On” Tank -Mercedes

The small “slip on” tanker experienced various problems throughout the fire emergency breaking down on numerous occasions and frustrating fire crews. Although very effective when in operation it cannot undergo any further maintenance and will require replacing in the very near future.

The water pressure of the larger Mobile Fire Tanker normally stationed at the Control Centre was incapable of reaching the high batter faces. Existing pump to be reviewed and upgraded accordingly.

6:2.5 Mutual Aid Arrangements

Due to the propensity of a coal mine fire to last for several days, and the need for additional resources once all IPRH resources have been used, mutual aid agreements need to be up to date. Specifically assistance from Loy Yang B should be included in the Emergency Response procedures.

6:2.6 Training of CFA

Increased awareness training of CFA incident controllers for fighting a coal fire. Specifically need to brief neighboring regions (8,9 &10) who will be used when during a prolonged event.

6:2.7 Mutual Teams

Discuss with the CFA of setting up mutual teams consisting of CFA and IPRH resources. The aim is to ensure familiarity of the fire fighting crews and ensure site conditions and safety issues are well understood by those who are not familiar.

6:2.8 Use of Helicopter

The use of the helicopter dumping water on the fire proved to make the situation worse and spread the fire due to fine coal dust present along the coal faces. Discuss with the CFA and advise the use of a helicopter is no good on a coal fire.

6.3 Fire Threat Reduction

6:3.1 Clay Covered Batters / Worked Out Coal Batters

Where ever practically possible fire break zones extending down the full depth of each batter may be utilised such that the length of exposed coal in any one batter is not greater than 500m. These zones can be in the form of metallised vehicle access ramps or clay covering a minimum of 8m wide.

6:3.2 Improved Fire Training

Develop a Fire Training Facility with the capacity to annually train all IPRH Mine employees, Mine Alliance partners and contractors in practical fire fighting. This facility could also be utilised by CFA officials for training of their members.

7: ACTION PLAN

The recommendations are to be reviewed by management and agreed recommendations will be implemented.

For each action and “Opportunity for Improvement” will be raised in Paradigm.

An appropriate IPRH manager will be assigned responsibility for the implementation of the required action. Agreed deadlines for completion will be set.

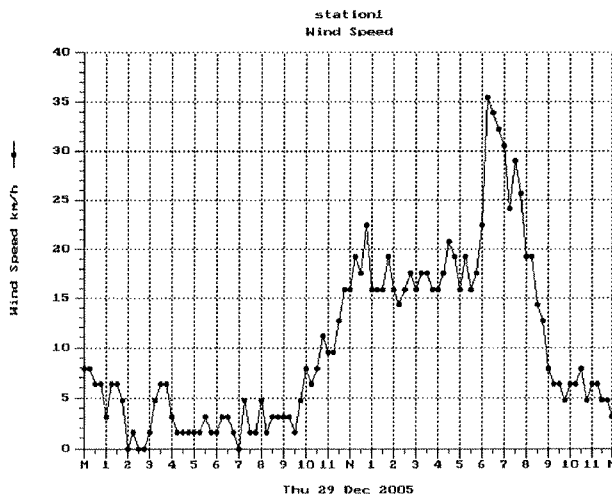
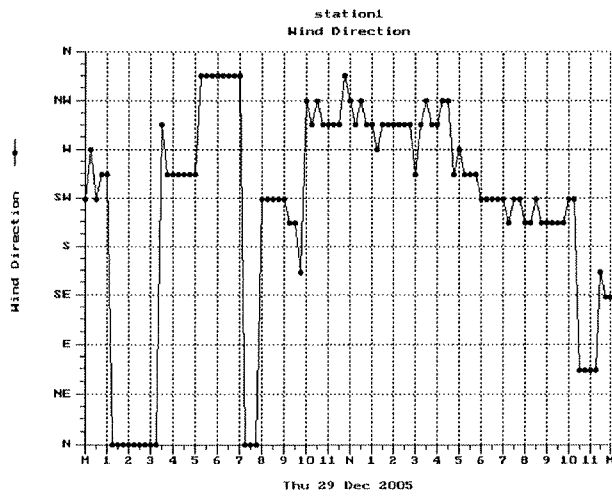
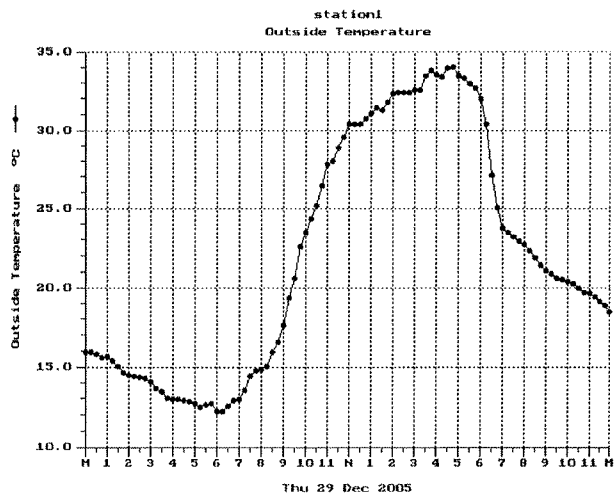
The Safety Management Audit Committee (SMAC) will monitor progress on the implementation of the agreed actions.

APPENDIX 1 – Mine Fire Photos

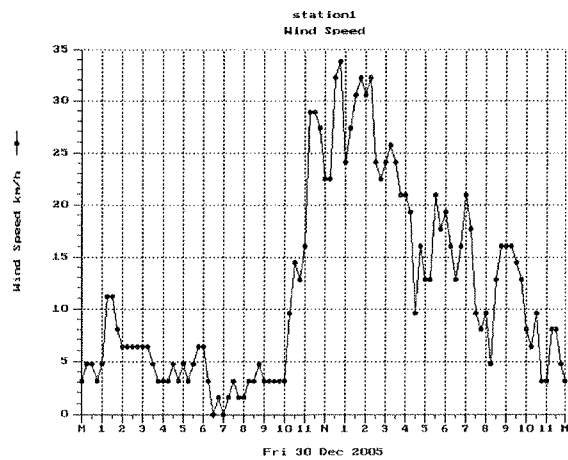
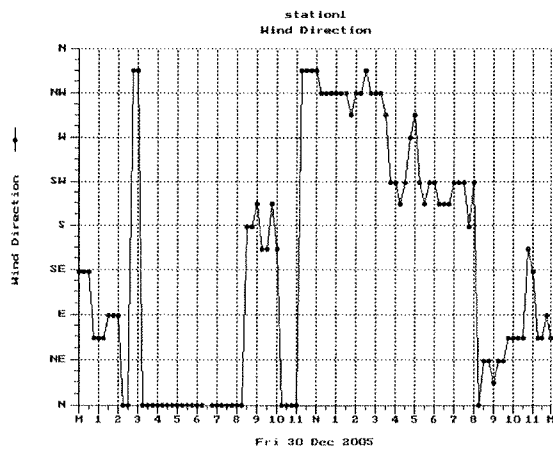
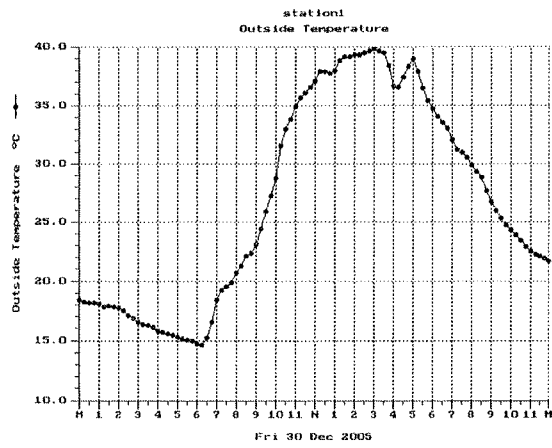


APPENDIX 2 – Weather Logs

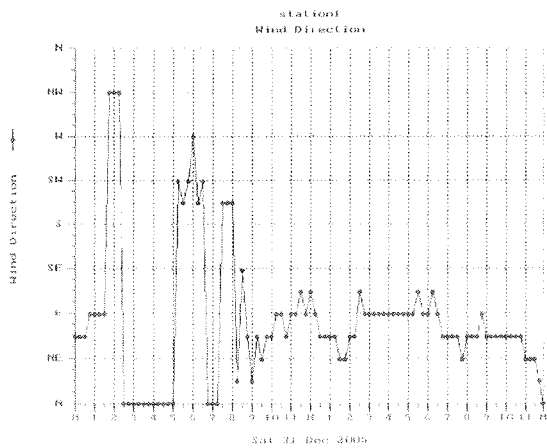
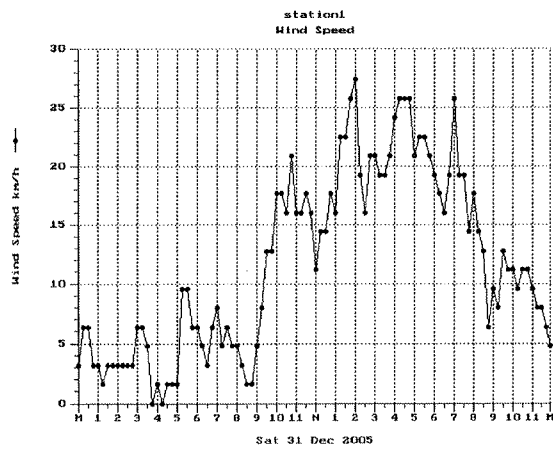
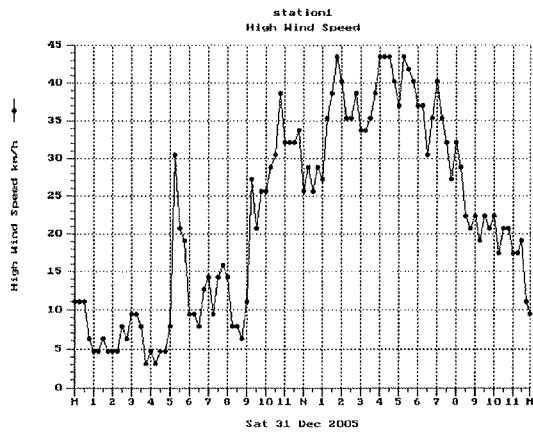
Weather Report 2A – Thursday 29th December 2005



Weather Report 2B – Friday 30th December 2005



Weather Report 2c –Saturday 31st December 2005



APPENDIX 3 – Fire Report Sheets

Thursday December 29th 2005 - Appendix 3A

COLOURED - Original - Section Records
 GREEN - Duplicate - Contracts/Fire Engineer
 PINK - Trace/Copy - C.F.A.

HAZELWOOD POWER STANDARD FIRE REPORT FORM

A 0852

AREA/DIVISION: HAZELWOOD DISCOVERED BY: [Signature] TIME ATTENDED: 12:45
 DAY/DATE: 29/12/05 HIS/HER CONTACT No: [Signature] TIME EXTINGUISHED: [Signature]
 DISCOVERY/ALARM-TIME: 12:45 FIRE SERVICES/EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTIFIED AT: [Signature] HRS: [Signature] TIME COMPLETED: [Signature]

PRELIMINARY FIRE REPORT		LOCATION		Item No. or Nos.		Plant Item No.		Description or Standard Plant Abreviation No.		
WHERE WAS THE FIRE?	1	Dredger No./Bldg.	9	Control Room/Building	17	Store				
	2	Conveyor No. Frame/Unit No.	10	Transformer No.	18	Workshop				
	3	Raw Coal Bunker	11	Power Pole No. Line No.	19	Machinery/Plant Room				
	4	Crusher/Transfer House	12	Ancillary Installation, Open Cut	20	Mess Room/Canteen/Kitchen				
	5	Station Bunker	13	Ancillary Installation, Power Station	21	On or Near Roadway				
	6	Boiler Plant No.	14	Auxiliary Fuel Installation	22	Vehicle or Mobile Plant				
	7	Turbine/Generator Plant No.	15	Transmission Facility	23	ICR/LOCOMOTIVE				
	8	Electrical Annex/Cable Chamber	16	Office	24	OTHER (SPECIFY)				
WHAT WAS THE PROBABLE CAUSE?	MATERIAL ON FIRE		Item No. or Nos.		Description					
	25	Coal/PPF	27	Cabling	29	Oil, Flam. Liq.	31	Rubbish	33	Elect. Equip.
	26	Briquettes	28	Berling	30	Gas	32	Furnishing	34	Lagging/Insulation
	35	Grass/Scrub	36	Other (Specify)						
WHAT WAS THE PROBABLE CAUSE?	PROBABLE CAUSE		Item No. or Nos.		Description					
	37	Hot Work (Welding, Cutting, Grinding)	41	Friction (Belt/Machinery Rubbing)	45	Smoking				
	38	Friction Brake (Vehicle, Loco, Conv. Drum)	42	Hot Plant Contacting Combustibles	46	Sparks from Boiler				
	39	Hot Engine or Exhaust	43	Electrical Fault (Short/Arcing/Overload)	47	Unknown				
WHO EXTINGUISHED THE FIRE?	Number of HP Personnel attending fire		No. of CFA Personnel attending fires		Name of CFA Incident Controller					
	No. of other personnel attending fire & their organisation's name									
DAMAGE?	Yes		No		Description					
	This Section of Report Completed by <u>[Signature]</u> Contact No. <u>8777</u>									
SUPERVISORY REPORT	WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WAS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR (IF MORE THAN ONE CAUSE, EXPLAIN)									
	49	Human Action (Hot Work, Smoking, Incorrect Plant Operation, Deliberately Set etc.)								
	50	Human Inaction (Insufficient Precautions, Spill Not Removed, Poor Housekeeping, Poor Maintenance etc.)								
	51	Equipment Malfunction (Seized or Collapsed Bearing, Control Failure, Short Circuit etc.)								
	52	Design (Engine Exhaust/Loco Brakes, Coal Dust Ignited by Heat from Light Fixtures etc.)								
53	Environmental (High Winds, Rain, Lightning, Spontaneous Combustion in Briquettes etc.)									
MANAGEMENT REPORT	Item No.		Details							
	HOW WAS THE FIRE EXTINGUISHED <u>FIRE TANKERS, FIRE SERVICE PERSONNEL, GPH CAPS</u>									
	CHECK LIST (Tick)		YES	NO	PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE (APPROXIMATION ONLY)					
	Fire Equip. Suitable, type, Quantity, Location?				Suppression Manhours <u>20x 8.75 hrs</u>					
	Fire Equip. Replaced, Reset, Refurbished?				Vehicle/Mobile Plant Hours <u>2 Tanks x 4.75 hrs</u>					
Appropriate People Notified				Expend. Suppression Materials						
Emergency Procedures Followed				Restoration Materials						
Fire Report Forwarded				Restoration Manhours						
Comments:		Comments: <u>39 CFA TANKERS & 5 CFA TANKERS</u>								
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER		Title	Contact-Phone	Name	Date					
ACTUAL COSTS		FOLLOW UP ACTION REQUIRED								
PASSPORT W/O N°										
LABOUR										
MATERIALS										
PLANT										
PRODUCTION										
TOTAL										
TARGET COMPLETION DATE										
ACTUAL COMPLETION DATE										
RESPONSIBLE SHIFT LEADERS, NAME										
RESPONSIBLE SHIFT LEADERS, SIGNATURE										
DATE		<u>29/12/05</u>								

Friday December 30th at 3:15pm2005 Appendix 3B

HAZELWOOD POWER STANDARD FIRE REPORT FORM

COLOURED - Original - Section Records
GREEN - Duplicate - Contracts/Fire Engineer
PINK - Typicals - C.F.A.

A 0854

AREA/DIVISION: HAZELWOOD DISCOVERED BY: 2412 TIME ATTENDED: 3:30
 DAY/DATE: 30/12/05 HIS/HER CONTACT No.: 581 TIME EXTINGUISHED:
 DISCOVERY/ALARM TIME: 3:15 FIRE SERVICES/EMERGENCY SERVICES NOTIFIED AT: 3:15 HRS. TIME COMPLETED:

PRELIMINARY FIRE REPORT		LOCATION		Item No. or Nos.	Plant Item No.	Description or Standard Plant Abreviation No.						
WHERE WAS THE FIRE?	1	Dredger No./Brig.	9	Control Room/Building	17	Store						
	2	Conveyor No. Frame/Unit No.	10	Transformer No.	18	Workshop						
	3	Raw Coal Bunker	11	Power Pole No. Line No.	19	Machinery/Plant Room						
	4	Crusher/Transfer House	12	Ancillary Installation Open Cut	20	Mess Room/Canteen/Kitchen						
	5	Station Bunker	13	Ancillary Installation Power Station	21	On or Near Roadway						
	6	Boiler Plant No.	14	Auxiliary Fuel Installation	22	Vehicle or Mobile Plant						
	7	Turbine/Generator Plant No.	15	Transmission Facility	23	ICR/LOCOMOTIVE						
	8	Electrical Annex/Cable Chamber	16	Office	24	OTHER (SPECIFY)						
WHAT WAS THE MATERIAL ON FIRE?	25	Coal/PF	27	Cabling	29	Oil, Flam. Liq.	31	Rubbish	33	Elect. Equip.	35	Grass/Scrub
	26	Brquettes	28	Beltng	30	Gas	32	Furnishing	34	Lagging/Insulation	36	Other (Specify)
	PROBABLE CAUSE		Item No. or Nos.	Description								
	37	Hot Work (Welding, Cutting, Grinding)	41	Friction (Belt/Machinery Rubbing)	45	Smoking						
38	Friction Brake (Vehicle, Loco, Conv. Drum)	42	Hot Plant Contacting Combustibles	46	Sparks from Boiler							
39	Hot Engine or Exhaust	43	Electrical Fault (Short/Arcing/Overload)	47	Unknown							
40	Collapsed or Seized Bearing	44	Spontaneous Combustion	48	Other (Specify)							
WHO EXTINGUISHED THE FIRE?		Number of HP Personnel attending fire:				No. of Contract Emergency Services personnel attending fire:						
DAMAGE?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>				Description: <u>COAL</u>						
This Section of Report Completed by: <u>OD</u> Contact No: <u>570</u>												
WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING WAS A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR: (IF MORE THAN ONE CAUSE, EXPLAIN)												
49 Human Action (Hot Work, Smoking, Incorrect Plant Operation, Deliberately Set etc.)												
50 Human Inaction (Insufficient Precautions, Spill Not Removed, Poor Housekeeping, Poor Maintenance etc.)												
51 Equipment Malfunction (Seized or Collapsed Bearing, Control Failure, Short Circuit etc.)												
52 Design (Engine Exhaust, Loco Brakes, Coal Dust Ignited by Heat from Light Fixtures etc.)												
53 Environmental (High Winds, Rain, Lightning, Spontaneous Combustion in Brquettes etc.)												
Item No. Details: <u>High wind (Coal dust)</u>												
HOW WAS THE FIRE EXTINGUISHED: <u>Water, Tracing, Containment, Use of hose</u>												
SUPERVISORY REPORT												
CHECK LIST (Tick)				YES	NO	PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE (APPROXIMATION ONLY)						
Fire Equip. Suitable, Type, Quantity, Location?				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Suppression Manhours						
Fire Equip. Replaced, Reset, Refurbished?				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vehicle/Mobile Plant Hours						
Appropriate People Notified				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Expanded Suppression Materials						
Emergency Procedures Followed				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restoration Materials						
Fire Report Forwarded				<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Restoration Manhours						
Comments: <u>ICG setup</u>						Comments:						
RESPONSIBLE OFFICER Title: <u>SUPERVISOR</u> Contact-Phone: <u>570</u> Name: <u>W. O'Brien</u> Date: <u>31/1/06</u>												
MANAGEMENT REPORT												
ACTUAL COSTS						FOLLOW UP ACTION REQUIRED						
PASSPORT W/O N°												
LABOUR												
MATERIALS												
PLANT												
PRODUCTION												
TOTAL												
TARGET COMPLETION DATE												
ACTUAL COMPLETION DATE												
RESPONSIBLE SHIFT LEADERS, NAME												
RESPONSIBLE SHIFT LEADERS, SIGNATURE												
DATE: / /												

Appendix 4 - Communications

FOR INFORMATION

All,

- Today at approx 3pm a fire was encountered in the Mine.
- The fire is in the SEF (old part of the Mine) where Dr 24 is digging supplying EBAC.
- The fire is along the coal level for approx 100 metres.
- The CFA are in attendance fighting the fire along with IPRH and RTL employees.
- The temperature is currently 37Deg C with a SW wind of 25kph.
- The smoke will be visible across Morwell.

I will provide a further update later today.

steve

8:30pm UPDATE.

- The fire will require lots of water and manpower as it is smouldering up coal faces in difficult areas to access
- The fire is over three coal faces and levels approx 60 metres high and approx 200 metres long.
- Approx 15 CFA units are on site as well as 4 IPRH/RTL water tankers
- Approx 100 men are fighting the fire (50 CFA, 50 IPRH Mine & Station & Contractors)
- The fire is under control and the smoke has eased substantially across the Morwell township
- There is no threat to loss of coal supply to Hazelwood Power Station as the fire is away from the operating faces
- Coal supply to EBAC has ceased and road carting will commence tonight
- IPRH & CFA crews will continue firefighting throughout the night
- At this stage there is no obvious plant damage
- Several fire fighters have suffering from heat exhaustion
- The fire has attracted local and Melbourne media interest
- Senior management and Govt have been briefed

I will provide a further update tomorrow morning.

steve

UPDATE 0830 am 31 December 2005

All,

- Safety issues - one CFA firefighter treated for heat exhaustion, several firefighters treated for smoke inhalation
- Approx 60 men (CFA, IPRH, RTL) continued fighting the fire overnight
- The fire is now subdued and contained with no visible smoke
- The fire is still smouldering and several hot spots are present on all of the three levels.
- Hot spots are still present in the coal faces which are proving hard to get to - requires a cage mounted on a crane to gain access
- Five CFA units are on site with another 5 commencing at 11am
- From 11 am there will be approx 60 men fire fighting, 3 IPRH strike teams, plus 8 CFA strike teams
- Current conditions are 25deg c with no wind
- The forecast weather conditions are 42deg c with strong NW winds later in the day
- The major concern is the fire flares up when the wind pick up later in the day
- The strategy is to saturate the affected ares with as much water as possible
- The plan is to have the affected area extinguished before the wind picks up
- Plant damage is a burnt 6.6kv supply cable to Dredger 24
- Dredger coal supply to EBAC has ceased.
- Road carting to EBAC has commenced and will continue indefinitely
- There has been no loss of coal supply to Hazelwood due to the fire

I would like to praise the efforts of all personnel - IPRH, CFA who have assisted in difficult conditions

A further update will be provided later today.

Regards

steve

UPDATE 5PM 31 December 2005

All,

- Safety Issues - several treatments for heat stress during the day
- We are now entering the "Mop Up" phase
- The fire is contained and under control with several hot spots half way up the face causing some difficulty to extinguish because of access
- Seven CFA units remain (40 men) at the front with five on standby, in addition 25 IPRH employees are at the front
- Five CFA units will remain (25 men) mopping up extinguishing hot spots during the night in addition to approx 12 IPRH employees
- CFA units from as far as Lilydale, Narre Warren, Mt Evelyn are now on site, relieving the local brigades
- Crews (CFA & IPRH) will continue wetting the area and will continue during the night
- Additional specialist high reach equipment has been called in to help suppress the fire
- An additional crane rig is also on site to reach the fire in the batter (25 m high)
- No loss to production at Hazelwood Power station - 8 units operating with prices [redacted] during the day
- Road carting to EBAC continues
- Additional labour has been requested to be on standby if required from Loy Yang B as IPRH labour resources have been, and are, exhausted
- Weather conditions are 35 degC with a SE wind - (different to forecast 42Deg C NW Winds)
- Concerns are for strong NW winds forecast later today.
- The plan is still to extinguish all the spot fires in the batters during the rest of today and during the night
- The effort is very time consuming and labour intensive - typical of a coal fire of this type, location and size
- The resources will be reviewed tomorrow morning

I would like to thank all employees who have assisted at the coal face and support personnel for organising supplies, meals, drinks, materials, equipment, vehicles etc.

I will provide a further update tomorrow morning, after I inspect the site and receive a briefing from the CFA and IPRH personnel

Wishing you all a Happy New Year!

Regards

Steve

UPDATE 0700Hrs 1 January 2006

All,

- Safety Issues – Nil
- Mopping up continued overnight
- Several hotspots continue to flare up when fanned by strong winds
- A westerly wind of 35kph fanned the hotspots this morning @ 0500 hrs
- Today's focus is to dig out several of the hotspots and extinguish, as they are burning into the coal face and provide the re-ignition source
- Resources in attendance are 5 CFA units (40 men) plus approx 25 IPRH resources
- Weather conditions currently 25deg C wind from the NW. Late morning we expect the wind to change from the SW which will help or cause. Max forecast temp is 35deg C at midday before the change.
- We expect the CFA activities to wind down later today if we can extinguish several of the hotspots as planned. We will then be on high alert with patrols and wetting of the area with our own resources.
- Coal supply to Hazelwood remains unaffected
- Road Carting to EBAC continues
- The CFA in conjunction with IPRH, RTL resources have done an outstanding job

Once again, a big thank you to all who have assisted, especially last night with employees giving up their New Year celebrations to assist.

I will provide a further update on progress later today.

Regards

steve

UPDATE 1530hrs Sunday 1 January 2006

All,

- Safety Issues - Nil
- The fire is now officially "under control" meaning it will still require constant monitoring
- The improved weather conditions have now arrived currently 18deg C SW wind and rain
- After discussions with the CFA incident controller, the CFA will be withdrawing their resources as from 1515 Hrs
- Two hotspots approx 15 meters up the coal face remain and will continue to be suppressed using monitors mounted on a crane (2 off) over the next 24-48 hrs
- Regular patrols of the area by IPRH personnel will continue

Once again, a big thanks to all employees who have assisted in any way.

Regards

steve

APPENDIX 5 - INTERVIEWED WITNESS STATEMENTS

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Interview of Witness Statement

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, M.Raun

Name: Peter Barr and Phil Glover

Date: 13/01/2006 (Romeo and Martin)

What did you think started the fire?

Where do you think the Fire Started?

How were you made aware there was a fire?

What did you do when you were advised?

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Difficult to communicate with / between CFA and IPRH eg Fire Bombing alert to get away water supply was our main problem and access.
Fire Bombing – was effective where direct hit but spread fire on the peripherals.
Needed local knowledge.

Was the CFA response adequate?

CFA Units at Stradbroke that day and Churchill tanker had returned previous night, crew where exhausted.

Was there sufficient resources available?

Managing 2 x 4 and 4 x 4 logistics as new crews came in. Wash down of CFA vehicles after Fire Fighting. Haymen Reece hitched monitor to CFA for duplication. Adjustment of tripod and monitors.

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Guides or Pilots required to guide change – over crews in. Push button voice intercom to get in worked well until the gate shut again behind first vehicle.

What do you think worked well?

Treat cool fires as a mop up operations so that it is technique – oriented message given to volunteers to modify training / conditions.
Brief / inductions verbally given to change over crews. Eg Cigarette's and 2m edges etc.

What do you think could have been improved?

CFA hose damage, Access to Mine Management to answer Ministerial Question

Any other comments?

Control point set up earlier.

Local intimate knowledge initially would help set up and orientation of crews.

Region 8 CFA firefighters were called to assist with fire and were unfamiliar with fighting coal fires. Our Region 10 CFA fire fighters had limited resources due to an ongoing fire outbreak at Stradbroke. Total of 8 CFA tankers were on site.

Initial communication difficult – improved for the following 2 days. Location of command centre could have been in a more suitable location ie:F/Service control centre as apposed to Operations Control Centre.

Minor damage to Truck Tyre, which caught fire, and a emergency light melted on another truck due to the radiant heat.

Mop up work requires a lot time and patience.

Hoses were damaged due plant driving over is it possible have temporary crossings.

2 CFA firefighters taken to hospital suffering fatigue

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Interview of Witness Statement

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, I. Quail, M.Raun and P.Chisolm

Name: Tony Basile

Date: 10/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot in batter with clay around it

Where do you think the Fire Started?

On side of batter between 3 and 5 level – 2 terraces down from top of batter at approx 2pm

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Patrolling along M660 with Ron Bernardi and witnessed smoke from batter

What did you do when you were advised?.

Went over and rang Control centre attendant and requested tanker. Then notified by Control Centre attendant that tanker was on its way and re-directed to another job due to low coal stocks

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes – The wind took control very quickly and fire spread 100m with in 30min.

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Was there sufficient resources available?

More than enough

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

IPRH employees worked together very well but was difficult to work in with CFA

What do you think could have been improved?

CFA made more aware of fighting coal fires and better communication between CFA and operational.

Any other comments?

Better communication at fire front coal face with command centre.

Water coverage of the levels wasn't working well due to high winds

Felt as though CFA tried to brush aside HP employees and take full control

Hoses boxes at H/ends and T/ends no longer exist.

“Same level as 7 T/P access, below monitor spray that has been used in past to doves hot spot”

“ Below 3 level half way down the terrace faces (3 to 5 level batter)”

“Hot spot definitely had clay around it, so it wont spread fire too far”

“Excavator has since removed the hot spot, start point”

“14.00 is approx when fire noticed while patrolling M660 conv”

Control Centre advised Tony to do another job due to Coal stocks 880 blocked chute needed to be reset, Tanker is on its way to fire.

“Hazelwood response now fine and adequate number of people and emergency trailer”

“CFA turned up 10 minutes later as fire had spread quickly”

Hazelwood personnel were told to get off Level by CFA incident controller as helicopter was coming. Hazelwood people concerned about this technique”

“Foam was not working especially in the wind and foam does not get into coal cracks”

“Hazelwood everyone did a good job of teaming and working as a team” “But CFA vs Hwood”

Communication with CFA was contradictory, they and us

CFA people where standing too close to edge of batters at times and didn't like being advised of risk.

CFA tended to be in their own group. They should be with Hwood people in teams.

“Hwood people where being brushed aside” “Militant” “ Hwood people treated up as spectators”

Hose boxes should be reintroduced at H/ES, T/PS, etc as a “kick-start” for fire fighting.. Branches, hoses etc.

“I missed those fire service hoses boxes and nozzles and Y piece

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Interview of Witness Statement 10/1/06

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, I. Quail, M.Raun

Name: John Beamish – (was in Control Centre)

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Old Hot spot but John was in the Control Centre at the time

Where do you think the Fire Started?

3 level

C = C shaped terraces.

Fire not doused by flooding from above. Only the crane monitor could extinguish there. CFA pressure inadequate

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Tony Basil and **Ron Bernardi were the leading hands** and made me aware by radio. – 3pm

What did you do when you were advised?

Called for available men to assist Rod Fleming and road runners

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Yes

Limited amount of people @ time of initial call out because we were trying to keep dredgers digging to station

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Yes but couldn't get in the gate, they need a pilot of their own to orientate themselves at the same time as they communicate and use their own systems and procedures.

Were there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Yes John needed a 'scribe' to write, answer phones, take notes, record attendance

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes but crane sprays were not available quick enough – particularly the 2nd crane monitor. Some people were almost too keen to get stuck in without proper update status. Cars went to fire with 2 people in them rather than wait for more people.

Man slip on tanker needs up-grading / condition terrible

What do you think worked well?

The response of all available men. The response and concern of all IPRH personnel to help from all ranks to help keep hot spot in area and fight fires.

Radio channels too many to choose from (frequency variances)– 912 didn't get through to everyone

Not sure how the 912 open channel in the mine works

CFA need to have a point of contact

Leader plus 3 others would be John's recommendation as a minimum 3 Hydrant, Nozzle and Leader. No one could turn off hydrants as they are all holding hoses.

What do you think could have been improved?

CFA Knowledge of fighting coal fires pipe coverage of area because we knew hot spot in area.

Access and pipe work too small due to EBAC supply extended.

Any other comments?

More Team Leaders and 3 man crews update man tipper for slip on tank.

Do not need tandem drive, rather than be tempted to get bigger truck get 2. The truck is great 4x4 vehicle but the strip – on is in poor condition.

What does ext 912 do??

What links all frequencies? and what links each frequency??

Radio set – up was too complicated with different channels.

“Personality 3” “Personality 1” etc

“Conventional”

What number gets across all Channels??

When the chips where down – everyone was really good.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Interview of Witness Statement

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, M.Raun

Name: Ron Bernardi

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot Spot

There was only smoke contained in a small area. A fire hose was there which gave the impression that it had been attended to. We went to reset an E/S on a belt and come back by which time all hell had broken loose. Radio communication appeared to give the impression that everything was being attended to and Tanker passed us within 6 – 7 minutes of us seeing smoke.

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Half way along Eastern Face Level 3and4 - level below 7TP

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Tony Basil and I saw the smoke and Tony reported the smoke requesting a fire tanker.

What did you do when you were advised?

We drove one level above the fire seeking water outlets. And supplied some hoses from our Leading hand car. Assisted supervisor Brought down the emergency response trailer supplied water to personnel.

and Trailer was left to attend M241

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes except the fire bombing with Helicopter

1st Fire bombing created swirl of air – fed the fire and scattered embers.

2nd Worse

3rd Worse again

Were there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Ron drove around distributing equipment and supplies and saw more sufficient people, tankers etc. More 90mm hoses needed for Crane Monitor.

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

Emergency Trailer was excellent but the location where it should be left will change with every fire. More “Y pieces” branches reqd.

Opened a box at H/E of M240 and full of hoses which was good

What do you think worked well?

Mine op's. The initial event was confusing but soon became organised. Control centre operator was very good at assisting me.

Ron was in on overtime, so his familiarity with the crew was low. Ron praised the efforts of this crew.

Commentary by Supervisor over Open radio for a person to calm down seemed to help and re-assure others listening in.

901 Fire Services

907 Everything

900 All IPRH

912 Open Cut

What do you think could have been improved?

There was separate communications, Mobile hand held phone and CFA radios trying to find personnel difficult so I tended to focus solely on control centre.

However if the CFA wanted to talk to Hwood and vice – versa there was a gap in communication. On the other hand having everyone on one channel would cause other problems.

Additional Y pieces in Trailer. Overall communication worked well.

Any other comments?

Maybe a system with loud speakers so whole section can be contacted in mass. Better Food! Taps placed at end of canvas hoses to avoid having to go to the water pipes and turn water off and on to re-position hoses and monitors.

Camera on F/S office back to Control Centre. People got to close to the edge of batters a lot.

X912 Total Mine Open channel did not work when Ron needed to pass on a CFA alert that Fire Bombing was commencing and all personal need to get off the level.

X900 is apparently the entire IPRH open channel.

(Burnt brand new hoses after Chopper bombing because it spread the fire)

Initially inspection of the Fire seemed too contained in small and not threatening with tanker on its way and left to reset E/S and then returned to Fire and all hell broke loose.

Called 912 Open Channel to notify people of Chopper but it wouldn't work.

Fixed camera's around site to identify Fire locations

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement 4/1/06

Interview of Witness Statement 10/1/06

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, I. Quail, M.Raun

Name: Rod Fleming

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot flared on 4 levels above D24 on the batter.

Where do you think the Fire Started? Pointed to photo

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Travelling to D24 lazer station with T.L. (Geoff Smith) Peter Elkington and 1 x 7 Maint. crew fitters.

Called 912 over radio line

Saw it, without needing an alert. Come in from stacker end approx 3pm.

What did you do when you were advised?

Called for assistance then turn on sprays along M241, M240, and M24 (Geoff and Elky) T/end, 7T/P, then commenced organising others.

Was the IPRH response adequate?

All available men responded – to x912. “Access to everybody”

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes (except for hand over procedure)

At first instance CFA did not communicate with IPRH incident controller

John O'Bryan had already called CFA. Couldn't communicate with Paul Burr. 2nd bloke was better

When noticed CFA where already in “spotter” told Rod where controller was. Rod introduced himself to controller who was at TS2. Couldn't find controller after that.

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes (eventually)

Emergency Trailer was Brilliant

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

Because of the wind on the second day, wind strength and directions, the emergency was larger on Day 2 but easier to manage due to better communication eg. Hourly talks with CFA I.C

What do you think worked well?

Dedicated men – Emergency response procedure assistance from others ie: 1x7 maint. RTL. Hire crane, ESLO, Engineering, Diamond Protection, Stores, Dean Mac P/Station, Surveyors, Quail, and Rieniets.

The cranes were the key tool and 2nd day seemed like we had “practised ‘and reliefs changing over and Food / Drinks

Emergency response trailers

What do you think could have been improved?

Communication was a problem as was access and water supply however these were not insurmountable

Communication, Access, Water Supply – These problems would be an issue today too. Having any more crane monitors would have required more drivers.

Any other comments?

Looking forward to inquiry and thanking all of their efforts

The fact that we continued to supply P/S during this emergency was in my opinion an exemplary effort. The people responsible should be very proud of their efforts. They are easily recognisable. They pride themselves in their ability to work under extreme pressure with minimal supervision. I was very impressed with all involved. My role as emergency commander was very intense however very satisfying at the end of the day.

First day difficult to find people initially due to public holidays

Second day fire got worse and more dangerous due to wind change

Stores required M/R prior to releasing equipment

Observers on site looking for falling material from batters.

Difficult to manage Fire and Coal Supply. Stores wanted M.R's!!! First Aid centre just evolved and was terrific.

Very intense, but very satisfying in hindsight. Observers, Zone Leaders,

This fire occurred on the worst possible day with New Years and Friday.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Interview of Witness Statement 13/1/06

Panel Members: R.Prezioso, I. Quail, M.Raun,

Name: John O'Bryan

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot 3 level mid section

Where do you think the Fire Started?

3 level mid section

'Definitely directly below the Hotspot'

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Radio message from F/service office

First fire was at noon, Fire Report completed.

Had to use tanker @ Noon, no water in pipe. Then they wind came.... And it flared up again.

What did you do when you were advised?

Left M220 Tail end and headed to the ridge fire to get tanker

John attended a fire at the Ridge and left tanker there had lunch went to M520 Belt Shift – 13.45 to give blokes a drink.

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Response was good

All people from Belt shift were called to fire. Peter Reid put blank on the pipe. The blank was on within 10 minutes. Left over from a week ago. Perhaps if Pipe was charged John would have initiated sprays from the pipe. Combination of Ridge fires wind and temperatures and the tanker volume of water would normally have sufficed. But the combination meant the fire flared up again.

Was the CFA response adequate?

They responded quickly 2:30 – 3pm Access from stacker end.

Delays were change overs / de-briefs

CFA is a scrub fire tactical response – hit smoulders early and kill them as you go.

But they didn't listen.

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

There seemed to have enough when required

Headers at permanent batters should remain. Existing header needs extending. D24's relocated.

What do you think worked well?

Crane monitors, digging out the hot spot – clay cover needs to continue. Foam slows down coal fires, A – Class foam works best if there is no wind to blow it away.

What do you think could have been improved?

Up grade equipment tanker, crane monitors, standardise equipment (hose fittings)
CFA Incident Controller was at 5 levels.

Fire Service office was perfect location to command and view. Woody's position is covered 7 days. Initiate get together of Hazelwood and CFA controllers early.

CFA Incident controller was at 5 levels. Rod was at D24, protecting it with Terry McDonald.

Any other comments?

No command centre where you could contact both agencies to discuss plans.

Once ridge fire was extinguished tanker was left at ridgeline and returned to f/service office.

At approx 1pm I went across to M520 b/shift activities upon arriving was called again by f/service office that hot spot had flared up – this was approx between 2 and 2:30pm. Immediately left to get f/tanker at top of ridge. On the way to fire was noticeably spreading quickly and requested that CFA were notified.

F/service crew was called off b/shift and directed to re-instate water to pipeline located between levels 3and5.

Tanker was left at ridge Fire because it need regular inspections throughout morning leading up to major fire in SEF.

CFA tactics for fighting fires are for scrub fires and totally unfamiliar with coal fire and totally conditioned to fighting bushfires and not accustomed to our conditions.

51283 ___ Individual Radio

From telephone x 901 – Entire Mine

X 907 – All services group

APPENDIX 6 – WITNESS STATEMENTS

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Luke Alexander

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot internal combustion

Where do you think the Fire Started?

3 level

How were you made aware there was a fire?

radio

What did you do when you were advised?

Followed control centre instructions, which was to stay on D11 dredg & S94 to continue digging coal.

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Were there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

Teamwork between operations and CFA

What do you think could have been improved?

More water pipes charged around open cut

Any other comments?

I don't think the helicopter was effective enough – mobile cranes were good for fighting batter fires.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Bill Bakker

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot Spot 3 level (old M225)

Where do you think the Fire Started?

3 level

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Called on Radio

What did you do when you were advised?

Manned the Cat Tanker

Was the IPRH response adequate?

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Were there sufficient resources available?

No

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

No

What do you think worked well?

Crane Mounted monitors

What do you think could have been improved?

The command & control

Any other comments?

No information to the man in the field

Name: Ron Bennett

Date:04/01/2006

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Questionnaire

1. What did you think started the fire? **Hot Spot**
2. Where do you think the fire started? **Half way along eastern face Level ¾ Level below 7 T.P**
3. How were you made aware there was a fire? **We Tony Basille and I saw the smoke and Tony reported the smoke requesting a Fire Tanker**
4. What did you do when you were advised? **We drove one level above the fire seeking water outlets. And supplied some hoses from our L/H car. Assisted Supervisor brought down emergency trailer, supplied water to personnel.**
5. Was the IPRH response adequate? **Yes**
6. Was the CFA response adequate? **Yes except Fire bombing with Helicopter**
7. Was there sufficient resources available? **Yes**
8. Was there sufficient equipment and support available? **Yes**
9. What do you think worked well? **Supervision, Mine Op's, the initial event was confusing but become organised soon. Control Centre operator was very good at assisting me.**
10. What do you think could have been improved? **There was separate communications Mobile / Hand Held and CFA trying to find personnel difficult so I tendered to focus solely on Control Centre**
11. Any other comments? **Maybe a system with Loud Speakers so whole section can be contacted in mass. Better Food. Taps placed at the end of canon hoses to avoid having to go to the water pipe and turn water off and on to re position Hoses or Monitors**

Signed:.....

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Peter Brimblecombe

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Don't Know

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Above D24

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Saw the smoke & fire trucks later call on the mobile phone

What did you do when you were advised?.

Went to the fire to offer support. Worked hoses on 5 level with small crew as directed

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes in terms of manpower & equipment but not well enough controlled given the magnitude of the fire.

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes but not well co-ordinated in the early stages

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

The emergency trailers & hoses store at fire service. The water supply system met all demands.

What do you think could have been improved?

The communications system & the speed at which the incident should have been escalated with an appropriate control structure.

Any other comments?

The Helicopter was a waste. It is not appropriate for this type of fire. The mine personnel supporting the external resources did an excellent job. A training course for CFA on how the coal fires are best attacked & issues with working in the mines would be of value. Most have only training on wild fire & structural fires, neither of which is appropriate

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Russell Camier

Date: 2/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

An old fire hole in the coal face

Where do you think the Fire Started?

2 levels above D24 in south east field

How were you made aware there was a fire?

I saw fire from M720

What did you do when you were advised?.

Continued to work on ensuring the conveyor kept operating

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes all IPRH employees , I saw were doing their best to fight the fire.

Was the CFA response adequate?

Seemed to be OK They didn't seem very provocative however.

Was there sufficient resources available?

Not enough 64mm hoses initially

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

Working in groups of 2 or 3. Using monitors (trailer mounted or stand mounted) was easier to handle & safer.

What do you think could have been improved?

There needed to be central points of contact (people clearly unidentifiable) to co-ordinate fire fighting at different locations.

Any other comments?

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Paul Connolly

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Not known to me

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Above D24 dredger

How were you made aware there was a fire?

At home by phone

What did you do when you were advised?.

Came to work as advised

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Was there sufficient resources available?

Not at the beginning

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Not at the early stages

What do you think worked well?

IPRH work force & effort left the CFA for dead

What do you think could have been improved?

To have open cut personnel advising CFA

Any other comments?

Use slip on Fire Tanker disused at compound, by welding skids on bottoms . Be extra spray unit at the fire area

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Geoff Crisp

Date: 5/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Dont know

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Dont Know

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Phone call at home 31/12/05 at 5:45am

What did you do when you were advised?.

Came to work allocated Team Leader role

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Some holes in emergency response plan not filled.

Was the CFA response adequate?

From what I saw

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

What do you think worked well?

Crane mounted monitors & small man tanker were great items. The water capacity of the tanker is a bit small

What do you think could have been improved?

One crane per level ie: 3,5,7 levels would have been better. When we moved cranes fire broke out again.

Any other comments?

I asked for an elevated platform. I was told none were available – I drove around the power station and found 2 that would have worked. Team /leader roles not taken seriously by some people.

An aux pump fitted to large tanker to supply high pressure cannons for batter fires could be an advantage.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Joe Dickason

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Maybe hot spot 1 level

Where do you think the Fire Started?

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Was informed by Rod Fleming to west bunker down because of fire

What did you do when you were advised?.

Wet bunker

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Was there sufficient resources available?

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

To a dredger yes

What do you think worked well?

cranes

What do you think could have been improved?

Need longer reach cranes .

Monitor & list where people are.

Need longer reach excavators

Any other comments?

Not every employee got phoned – Water bombing by helicopter worsened the fire.
Otherwise the guys pulled together extremely well to get the job done.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: John Janiw

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Spark from a hot idler or travel pads throwing sparks off drive dogs.

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Around the 24 dredger area.

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Initially I was told by a friend who was passing the mine on his way from traralgon to moe.

What did you do when you were advised?.

I was on my way to work (night shift) so I came in early and reported to the control centre.

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes I believe so

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes I believe so

Was there sufficient resources available?

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes – Possibly another crane with a monitor at the height of the fire would have been an asset (one per level)

What do you think worked well?

Cranes with water monitors did a great job as high faces could not be accessed by conventional means.

What do you think could have been improved?

Access on some half levels were very poor at the foot of some batters with pipe off cuts & debris making crane access awkward.

Any other comments?

We could do with some more sprays pendant control units for the cranes as during the course of the fire we had some breakdowns which required down time of the cranes. Spare units would enable minimal down time & effective fire training.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Stan Kemsley

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

I don't know specially I was told it was due to a hot spot in the face.

Where do you think the Fire Started?

SEF on level above TS2 approx 300m from old conveyor pivot point

How were you made aware there was a fire?

I saw CFA truck going past WBM offices at approx 3:30pm. Then saw smoke when I came back onto site.

What did you do when you were advised?.

I went to the control centre and asked Rod Fleming if he wanted assistance. Initially Russell Camier , Bryan Mulconey and I concentrated on having conveyors running.

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

It seemed to be

Was the CFA response adequate?

I don't know

Was there sufficient resources available?

When I was at the fire front they seemed to be adequate.

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

When I got to the fire front there seemed to be.

What do you think worked well?

People willingness to have a go and support each other . There didn't seem to be anybody panicking or over enthusiastic.

What do you think could have been improved?

Better definition of teams & clearly identify team leaders & zones. More enforcement of rests. Some people wouldn't have a break.

Any other comments?

I believe that better / greater use of team leader identities would have been useful.

This could have provided a more clearer 'chain of command'.

It should be encouraged to get people to rest when people are available. Some people wouldn't step back & rest by handing over the hose or duty they were performing.

Use of cranes to extinguish fire on batter worked well.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Nick Komus

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Where do you think the Fire Started?

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Called at home by Supervisor Fleming

What did you do when you were advised?.

I told Fleming I'll be there in 5 Min.

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Don't Know

Was there sufficient resources available?

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

It looked like every thing was under control the whole area being wetted down.

What do you think could have been improved?

Each level should have its own water pipes all trucks re fill points on some needed at below ground level better food than sausages.

Any other comments?

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: T Koostra

Date: 4/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Don't Know

Where do you think the Fire Started?

As above

How were you made aware there was a fire?

When I reported for work Sunday

What did you do when you were advised?.

Fought the fire

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Was the CFA response adequate?

Was there sufficient resources available?

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

What do you think worked well?

What do you think could have been improved?

Some precautionary maintenance on monitors and equipment

Any other comments?

Make some attachments to empty the hoses.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Kevin Lovett

Date: 5/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Not here at the time

Where do you think the Fire Started?

N/A

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Phone call (1945) on 30/12/05. R. Fleming

What did you do when you were advised?.

Came into work

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Yes

What do you think worked well?

Crane & ops personnel in conjunction with CFA.

What do you think could have been improved?

Meals & rest area plus keeping a log where personnel were on levels

Any other comments?

Name: Terry McDonald

Date: 16/01/06

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Questionnaire

1. What did you think started the fire? **I don't know, but have heard it was an old fire hole that flared in extreme weather conditions**
2. Where do you think the fire started? **Old Sef perm batters about 4 level**
3. How were you made aware there was a fire? **Noticed smoke while working in West Field at about 3 – 3.30pm Friday 30/12/05**
4. What did you do when you were advised? **Made my way to D24 T/S M241 to ensure machine was hosed up tried to prevent EBAC coal supply from being burnt.**
5. Was the IPRH response adequate? **Yes everyone I saw worked well together**
6. Was the CFA response adequate? **To the best of their ability**
7. Was there sufficient resources available? **Yes**
8. Was there sufficient equipment and support available? **Yes but more Perm F/S pipes would have been better**
9. What do you think worked well? **Fantastic team work from IPRH / RTL people 2 x 12 1x7 RTL Managers, Office Staff all working together to fight fire.**
10. What do you think could have been improved? **Helicopter bombing was a waste of time but had to be tried. Too long b/w bombs**
11. Any other comments? **Great to see IPRH Personnel come in to help when Fire was reported on the news.**

Signed:.....

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Scott Meadows

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot so I'm told

Where do you think the Fire Started?

M241 level and above

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Television

What did you do when you were advised?.

I was called to fight fire

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Equipment wise no.

Was the CFA response adequate?

Wasn't here first day

Was there sufficient resources available?

Big tanker good for keeping dust down on roads

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Cranes were good asset don't get rid of them

What do you think worked well?

Big tanker useless fighting fires no pressure in monitors. Graet to drive cranes cranes were an asset.

What do you think could have been improved?

I think we should have our fire team and CFA under our direction we do know the area & how to fight fires.

Any other comments?

Better access & water supply to all none working areas.

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: John Morgan

Date: 3/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Hot spot old M225

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Clay hot spot M225

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Saw smoke

What did you do when you were advised?.

Take water tanker to site

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

No

Was the CFA response adequate?

Poor

Was there sufficient resources available?

Yes

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

No

What do you think worked well?

Old slip on water tanker

What do you think could have been improved?

Better fire tankers

Any other comments?

Listen to what staff require with equipment

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Tim Nolan

Date: 9/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Old firehole

Where do you think the Fire Started?

Between 3 & 5 level below old firehole

How were you made aware there was a fire?

Noticed the fire – rang fire service to report it

What did you do when you were advised?.

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

yes

Was the CFA response adequate?

Good initial response but took awhile to get going after they arrived

Was there sufficient resources available?

Generally overall No

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

No

What do you think worked well?

Crane sprays – excellent lanzone sprays on stand – great small man trailer

What do you think could have been improved?

CFA man management

Any other comments?

Water Availability – Not enough hydrants
Hydrants there but un-operational (seized broken, etc)
IPRH fire tanker pumps need checking
Irregularly for both pressure and reliability also
Labelling for operating needs to be clearer.

Communication

All radios need to be able to be reached using open air channel
There was problems between CFA and IPRH communications at the start

Investigation into Mine Fire 30 December 2005

Record of Witness Statement

Name: Shaun O'Neill

Date: 5/1/06

What did you think started the fire?

Not here at the time

Where do you think the Fire Started?

N/A

How were you made aware there was a fire?

I received a phone call from Rod Fleming

What did you do when you were advised?.

I was here within 15min of phone call from Rod Fleming

Was the IPRH response adequate?.

Very Good

Was the CFA response adequate?

Yes except for Helicopter

Was there sufficient resources available?

Crane monitors need to be more accessible

Was there sufficient equipment and support available?

Overall very good

What do you think worked well?

IPRH employees CFA – Ore own fire service personnel small fire service sprays.

What do you think could have been improved?

Easier access to water on some levels meals on last N/S that CFA was involved

Any other comments?

Overall I was very impressed with the commitment of all involved – Emergency response bibs need to be bigger.