

Incident Control Centre Hazelwood

22/2/14

Hazelwood open cut mine fires - update

Foam: A two-day trial of the use of compressed air foam in the mine has been completed by the Tasmanian Fire Service with good results. Compressed air foam has less water in it than normal firefighting foam and is used as a thick layer to blanket the fire.

"The trial showed that compressed air foam significantly reduces the amount of oxygen available to the coal fire which allows us to slow its growth and, ultimately, extinguish it. It also reduces the amount of smoke being released which is obviously important," Incident Controller Bob Barry said.

"We are in the process of ramping up the use of this foam as a suppression tactic and will be utilising interstate resources from Tasmania, NSW and the ACT."

Cracks: A number of cracks in the coal have opened up along the southern batters in the fire zone.

"As a precaution we have removed firefighters from that area and will work around any openings while we determine the best way to manage the cracks in the coal," Mr Barry said.

"The development of cracks at a coal mine is a common occurrence and treatment strategies are developed to address these. They are not posing a threat to the community or critical infrastructure.

"We are gaining ground on the Hazelwood fire and will keep making progress but things come up on occasion that we will have to manage."

Community Information: People concerned about the fire and their health should visit one of the information points available or refer to these sources (this information was already provided to local media this morning):

- Information points:
 - Moe Town Hall respite centre, Albert Street, 9am - 7pm
 - Community Health Assessment Centre, Ambulance Victoria Gippsland Regional Office, 2 Saskia Way in Morwell, next to the Mid-Valley Shopping Centre, 8am – 8pm.
 - Static CFA information bus, Elgin Street between Tarwin Street and Chapel Street (near the Morwell Coles), from until 5pm today.
 - Static information points will also be set up for short period in 9 locations in Morwell.
 - Mobile information points will be at the following locations:
 - Traralgon near Bunnings, 10-11am.
 - Hazelwood North Fire Station, Jeeralang North Road, 1-2pm.
 - Mid Valley Shopping Centre, Morwell, 3-5pm.
- cfa.vic.gov.au and the Victorian Bushfire Information Line 1800 247 667 (for general information)
- National Relay Service 1800 555 677 (for callers who are deaf, hard of hearing, or have a speech/communication impairment: general situation)
- www.health.vic.gov.au (for smoke and health)
- NURSE-ON-CALL 1800 60 60 24 (for health)
- www.epa.vic.gov.au or 1300 372 842 or 1300 EPAVIC (for air quality)
- www.emergency.vic.gov.au (for fire information, warnings and advice)

For more information: CFA ICC Traralgon 5177 3286

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