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## 16.1 INTRODUCTION

Waratah Coal has undertaken a Social Impact Assessment (SIA) for the project. The SIA has been prepared in accordance with the EIS TOR. The TOR also states that a Social Impact Management Plan (SIMP) will be prepared following the finalisation and approval of the SIA. Waratah SIA's objectives were to outline and define the mine's social and cultural area of influence. This chapter identifies outcomes of the community engagement process.

The SIA presents a profile of the workforce for the project and other nearby resource projects in which describes and assesses the type, level and significance of the project's social impacts (both beneficial and adverse). Social impacts mitigation strategies and measures are also discussed in this chapter. A comprehensive technical report describing the SIA is included in **Volume 5, Appendix 23**.

### 16.1.1 LEGISLATIVE PLANNING AND FRAMEWORK

A wide range of documents were reviewed as part of the SIA. While all external sources of information have been acknowledged and referenced, they can be categorised as follows:

- references on the methodology for conducting a SIA;
- census and survey data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS), including but not limited to the 2006 community profile series, which summarise results from the national population and housing census and compares selected results with data from the 1996 and 2001 censuses;
- data from other government departments and affiliated bodies;
- research on the social impacts of mining; and
- planning documents at state, regional and local levels.

### 16.1.2 STATE PLANNING POLICY

The *Sustainable Planning Act 2009* resulted in a number of changes to Queensland's planning laws, aiming to improve and streamline land use planning and development frameworks and systems. The Act emphasises the coordination and integration of planning at the three levels at which it occurs in Queensland (state, regional and local levels). Relevant regional and local plans are identified and discussed in this chapter.

## 16.2 ASSESSMENT METHOD

### 16.2.1 DESKTOP ASSESSMENT

The method for the SIA has been prepared in response to the TOR and draws on SIA guidelines and toolkits prepared by the International Association for Impact Assessment (IAIA) (IAIA, 2003), the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) (UNEP, 2004), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) (OECD, 2006) and the International Council on Mining and Metals (ICMM) (ICMM, 2005a and 2005b).

In following international best practice for SIA methodology, the assessment for the project is as follows:

- analyses the social impact of other large-scale resource projects to help predict the likely social impact of Waratah Coal's project;
- integrates social, environmental and economic impacts;
- integrates the cumulative impacts of other large-scale resource projects likely to be developed in a similar timeframe and in the same geographic area in which the project is located;
- initiates a process of community engagement to both raise awareness of the project and identify and respond to social issues that communities or individuals have (laying the foundation for ongoing community engagement and participation, which shall be outlined in the SIMP); and
- promotes sustainable development, by considering and where possible contributing to, existing development plans and priorities identified at state, regional and local levels.

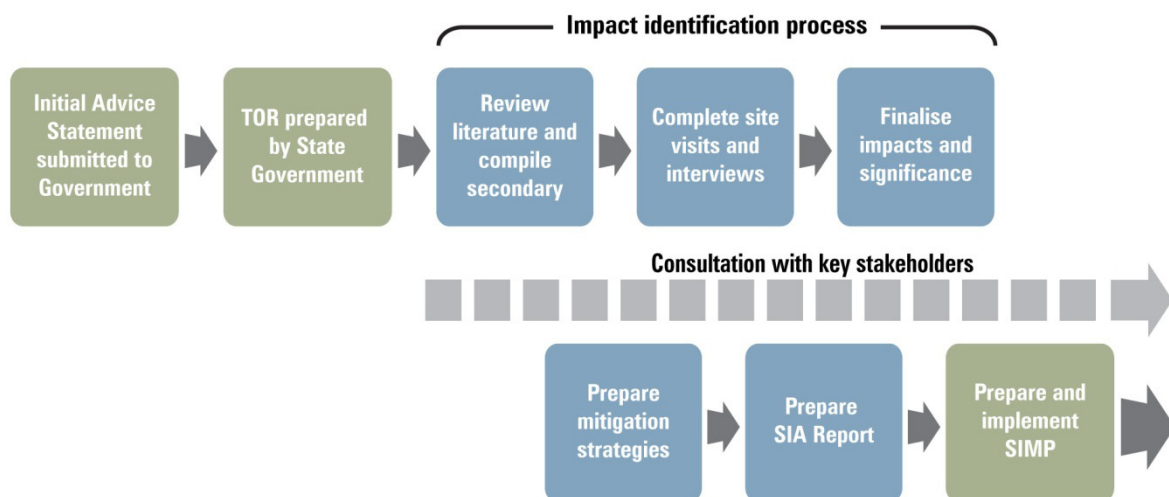
The method process for the SIA is illustrated in **Figure 1**.

The methodology has also adopted a precautionary principle, which means that an attempt has been made to identify and consider impacts even though the potential risk of an impact occurring may be low, or the actual impact difficult to predict or quantify.

### 16.2.2 OTHER PROJECTS

The mine is one of four large coal mines being developed in the Galilee Basin. Three other coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha have been identified as 'significant' by the Queensland Government: Alpha Coal, Kevin's Corner and South Galilee. Furthermore, Waratah

Figure 1. SIA Methodology



Coal has submitted an IAS for the construction of the Galilee Basin Power Station (a proposed coal fired power station).

In addition to coal mines and power plants in the vicinity of Alpha, a number of other large scale projects are being developed, and are expected to have significant impacts within the same geographical area as that impacted by the mine. These include a number of coal mines in the vicinity of Moranbah and Clermont, and the expansion of wharf facilities at Abbot Point. In addition, a number of Coal Seam Gas projects have been proposed in Central Queensland and generally involve the extraction of CSG in the Bowen and Surat Basins, the construction of gas pipelines to Gladstone, and the construction of Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) plants and expansion of port facilities at Gladstone.

### 16.3 DESCRIPTION OF EXISTING SOCIAL VALUES

The proposed mine site is located approximately 30 km north-west of Alpha and is located in the former Shire of Jericho. Referred to as the Alpha area in the EIS, it occupies 21,873 km<sup>2</sup> and contains a permanent residential population of less than 1,000. The main towns are Alpha (population 350) and Jericho (population 300).

Although the SIA focuses on the areas in which the mine, railway and port are located, impacts are also considered for Mackay and Rockhampton and at the regional and state levels. For the purpose of the SIA, the regions for the mine site are defined as the BRC, and the Central Highlands Regional Council (CHRC).

Several Indigenous groups have traditional links to areas that shall contain project facilities, including the Wangan and Jagalingou (W and J) People in the vicinity of the proposed mine site. Information is presented for Indigenous people and impacts specified separately as and when appropriate.

#### 16.3.1 SOCIAL BASELINE

An overview of the demographic and social characteristics of the Alpha area is presented below:

Alpha, like the remainder of the BRC, experienced a decline in population over the 10 years from 1996 to 2006;

- the Planning Information and Forecasting Unit (within DIP) predicts that Alpha will grow by 0.2% per annum over the next 20 years;
- 96% of Alpha’s population were born in Australia, 94% are Australian citizens, and 99% speak only English;
- the population is relatively old (a median age of 38);
- the Indigenous population comprises 3.6% of the total population, and the W and J People are traditional owners within much of the mine site area;
- there is a strong sense of community and a strong commitment to local organisations, including high levels of volunteering;
- the majority of the workforce is engaged in rural industries (predominantly beef cattle);
- there is high workforce participation and low unemployment (males 1.0%; females 1.4% in 2006), although average income levels are 8% lower than Queensland as a whole;

- the level of home ownership is high (47%) and there is only a relatively small rental market;
- house prices have risen sharply over the past three years but remain below urban areas or major rural centres (averaging above \$200,000 in 2010);
- health and emergency services are limited (Alpha Hospital is old and does not have a resident doctor, and the ambulance is operated by hospital staff and a volunteer driver);
- education facilities are limited (Alpha has prep to grade 10 and Jericho has prep to grade 6) and education levels relatively low; and
- welfare indices developed by the ABS using 2006 census data indicate that Alpha contains a high proportion of relatively disadvantaged people and few people with high qualifications or highly skilled jobs when compared to Australia as a whole.

Alpha was established in 1884 during the construction of the railway line from Rockhampton to Longreach. The cultural characteristics of the Alpha community are similar to other small, rural areas of central Queensland:

- much of the cultural identity is developed from the origin of the people (Anglo-Saxon) and their recent history, which is dominated by the development of grazing industries and commenced with the introduction of sheep in the Barcaldine area in 1863;
- there is a strong sense of community with high levels of participation in sport and cultural events;
- a strong commitment to local organisations, volunteering and helping neighbours and others;
- many of the people will be independent and resourceful (a requirement for people managing and living on large grazing properties); and
- the physical landscape is an integral part of people's identity as it provides a source of income and recreation to many; it holds memories of events and family occasions; and it's vastness influences many daily activities, such as the time taken to travel to school or work.

This does not mean; however, that the cultural characteristics of the Alpha community are not changing. Traditional forms of entertainment, recreation and socialising are being replaced by TV, video games, the internet, email and mobile phones. People have less time for communal events and local organisations

struggle from year to year. The aging and declining population and increased mobility are threats to both local organisations and local businesses.

## 16.4 WORKFORCE

The construction of the mine will extend for a three year period and require 2,500 workers. The construction workforce is expected to be sub-contracted and is likely to work 12 hour shifts on a FIFO basis (e.g. 21 days on 7 days off).

Approximately 2,000 direct employees and contractors will be based at the mine during operations. At least 28 senior managers will be permanently based in Alpha. The remainder of the operational workforce shall be engaged on a FIFO basis and is expected to work 12 hour shifts on 7 days on 7 days off roster.

In addition to the above direct mine employees, a range of goods and services will be procured locally, providing contracting opportunities for local businesses and generating additional employment.

### 16.4.1 GOVERNMENT PLANNING INITIATIVES FOR THE MINING REGION

Relevant regional and local plans are identified below for the mine site.

#### 16.4.1.1 Central West Regional Plan

Alpha is located in the Central West Region. The CWRP, which covers seven local governments, including the BRC, notes the strong agricultural base and limited mining activity to date. However, mining projects in the Galilee Basin are anticipated to be a primary driver of economic and social change in the future. As mining development lies ahead, the Regional Plan identifies the need for the resources sector to effectively engage communities and governments to maximise the economic and social benefits of development, and address community concerns over potential impacts. A number of mining-related issues have been identified in the Regional Plan:

- road and rail weight and traffic capacity;
- skill shortages and training options;
- changes to social structure;
- demand on the region's water, housing and electricity supply; and
- alignment with state and national targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

### 16.4.1.2 Community Plan

A Community Plan has been prepared for Alpha. The Community Plan states that the Alpha area has a lifestyle that is safe, comfortable and ideally suited to families. People enjoy an easy-going small community lifestyle with basic services and facilities. However, the Plan also acknowledges the importance of mining to the future of Alpha:

- mining will provide local employment and contracting opportunities;
- local people want to see Alpha as a sustainable community with a diverse economy where mining staff are integrated into the community (p.14) and environmental impacts are minimal;
- mining provides an opportunity for employment, which can increase the population, and hence, justify the provision of improved services (p.13); and
- there are; however, concerns about the potential social and environmental impacts of mining, and the community hopes to receive sufficient information and engage closely on these issues to help maintain social cohesion (and avoid becoming a 'mining town') and minimise environmental impacts (eg. protecting existing nature refuges and areas of remnant vegetation).

### 16.4.1.3 Proposal for Alpha

BRC has proposed that Alpha be developed to facilitate growth resulting from the development of coal mines in the area. Although a detailed plan has not been prepared, a preliminary town plan has been drafted, and the proposal described at several state government planning meetings. Key aspects of the proposal include:

- extending the existing airport and upgrading the airport facilities so that each mining company uses the Alpha airport rather than construct their own facility on the mining leases;
- developing a road north of the airport to allow direct access to the Waratah and Hancock mines (and improving the Alpha end of the Alpha-Clermont road);
- improving water supply (either through use of surplus water available to the mines or an alternative, new source);
- improving power supply (building on the 275 kV lines from the Lilyvale substation);

- releasing residential land (in addition to land currently being developed in Alpha);
- releasing industrial land;
- upgrading the sewerage system; and
- improving telecommunications.

In the medium to longer term, the hospital and public school would also be upgraded and services expanded. Other services, in particular child care and an expansion of police and emergency services, are seen as essential to the proposed development.

Some costs, such as upgrading the airport and developing a road from the airport to the mine sites, would be funded by the mining companies as a direct construction cost. The BRC has proposed that other costs (not required for mine construction) would be provided up front by the mining companies in lieu of subsequent royalty payments. The BRC has estimated the costs to be in the order of \$120 to \$150 million. Should all four mines be developed, this amount is likely to represent less than 20% of the royalties paid to the State Government in one year.

## 16.4.2 COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

The community engagement process for the project as a whole is described in detail (**Volume 5, Appendix 23**) in the EIS. Following is a summary of the consultation process as it relates to the SIA in the vicinity of the mine:

- **public consultations** were held in Barcaldine, Jericho, Alpha in June and September 2010, following initial meetings with the BRC and CHRC;
- **public comments** were invited at each public meeting (and a comment form provided in which people could document queries or comments and send to Waratah Coal). Comments could also be provided via email (info@waratahcoal.com) or phone (1800 085 915), while additional information was available on the Waratah Coal website (www.waratahcoal.com); and
- **field work** was completed between July and September and included further consultations with regional councils and other interested parties.

#### 16.4.2.1 Community Issues from Consultation across the Mine site

The main issues raised during the public meetings for the region of BRC are summarised below.

##### Barcaldine:

- environmental impacts, particularly, issues relating to water supply, the impact of flooding, and impacts on groundwater;
- whether one or two railway lines will be constructed;
- local development opportunities, particularly improved water and power supply;
- the role of foreign contractors and potential use of foreign staff;
- impact of the proposed mining tax;
- staff training;
- the impact of the mine on staff retention for existing businesses; and
- Waratah Coal's contribution to local infrastructure.

##### Jericho:

- the impact of the mine on groundwater and whether the mine would draw water from the Great Artesian Basin;
- how farmers would be able to assess the impact of the mine on their water supplies now and in the future;
- the impact of underground mining on the surface (particularly grazing activities), and the potential problems with coal dust (particularly air quality);
- whether one or two railway lines will be constructed, and whether the railway (or railways) will be fenced;
- the location of mine workers; and
- the status of the development proposal for Alpha, and timing of decisions relating to the proposal.

##### Alpha:

- potential benefits for Alpha (particularly improved services and employment);
- which properties will be directly impacted;
- source of water for the mine;
- impact of the mine on groundwater;
- the role of Chinese companies in the project; and
- impact on emergency services in Alpha.

##### Emerald:

- staffing numbers and potential benefits to people from Emerald (particularly relating to employment and contracted services);
- consultation process and extent of consultations undertaken to date;
- workforce issues (eg. recruitment, rosters and workforce development);
- source of power and water for the mine;
- impact of the proposed mining tax; and
- impact on community services in Emerald and Alpha.

#### 16.4.3 COMMUNITY ASPIRATIONS AND ATTITUDES TOWARDS MINING

The mineral lease occupies an area of 550 km<sup>2</sup> and includes eight beef cattle properties, although three are run as a single operation and another is managed as 'a wildlife refuge with sustainable grazing'. The six property owners have had discussions with Waratah Coal since exploration commenced and have mixed opinions over the Project. The final attitude to the project is likely to depend on the compensation offer tabled by Waratah Coal.

The major concern of property owners neighbouring the mine site has been the potential impact of the mine on groundwater, as bores provide the main source of water for cattle and domestic purposes. Dust, fences and access roads have also been raised as issues of concern.

Community aspirations vary considerably across the study area. Alpha and Jericho have not experienced large-scale mining activity and have suffered a declining population over an extended period. Heavily reliant on beef cattle and to a lesser degree tourism, many people see mining as an opportunity to redress the declining population, provide employment opportunities, and in doing so, act as the catalyst for both improved infrastructure (particularly power and water) and services. In-migration is often seen as a positive outcome, although there is considerable interest in the origin of FIFO workers; the longevity of the mine; and the role of the foreign construction companies, including whether foreign staff would form part of the workforce.

Although the majority of people from Alpha and Jericho support the development of the mine, concern has been expressed for the environment, and in particular, impacts on both surface and ground water, and potential



problems resulting from unplanned (and unrestrained) growth, culminating in a mining town.

An underlying attitude in the project area is that mining predominantly benefits the people from South East Queensland, rather than people in the areas from which coal and other minerals are extracted. There is some awareness, and support for, the Western Australian model, in which 25 % of mining royalties are distributed to regions other than the Perth metropolitan area. Similar distribution models have been introduced in a number of countries to enhance the contribution which mining plays to local development. Many people from the project area would prefer to see a proportion of royalties, or other mining benefits, allocated specifically to the local area.

Despite providing the community with various options to request information or register a complaint about the project, no complaints were received by Waratah Coal outside the public consultations between June and September 2010. The main complaint during the initial public consultations concerned the process in which people were notified of the meeting and the need to more effectively raise awareness of public forums in the future. Outside the public consultations, the only contact with Waratah Coal was made in relation to the consultation process (i.e. checking meeting dates and venues) and employment and contracting opportunities.

## 16.5 POTENTIAL IMPACTS

### 16.5.1 ECONOMIC IMPACTS

As described in the project's Economic Impact Assessment (refer to **Volume 5, Appendix 24**), the mine will:

- result in a net increase in employment during the construction period of 1,975 (which is lower than the actual construction workforce due to the anticipated draw of labour from other sectors as well as other construction projects in a constrained labour market);
- result in a net increase in employment during mine operations of 1,252 (again, reflecting a draw of labour from other sectors);
- employ around 300 local residents during construction and operations, with the balance working on a FIFO or DIDO basis; and
- increase industry output by \$200 million per annum during the construction period, and by \$5 billion per annum during mine operations.

As noted earlier, wage and salary levels in the mining industry are already substantially higher than any other industry, but will increase further:

- there is low unemployment levels at present and a skills shortage (limiting supply); and
- the mining and construction workforce will increase substantially as a result of the large number of very large resource projects being initiated within a similar timeframe (increasing demand).

The cumulative impacts of multiple resource projects will substantially boost income levels in the mine area. The majority of mine employees will be men. However, there has been steady growth in female employment, and in particular, the proportion of women working in non-traditional roles in Queensland's mining sector (see **Figure 2**).

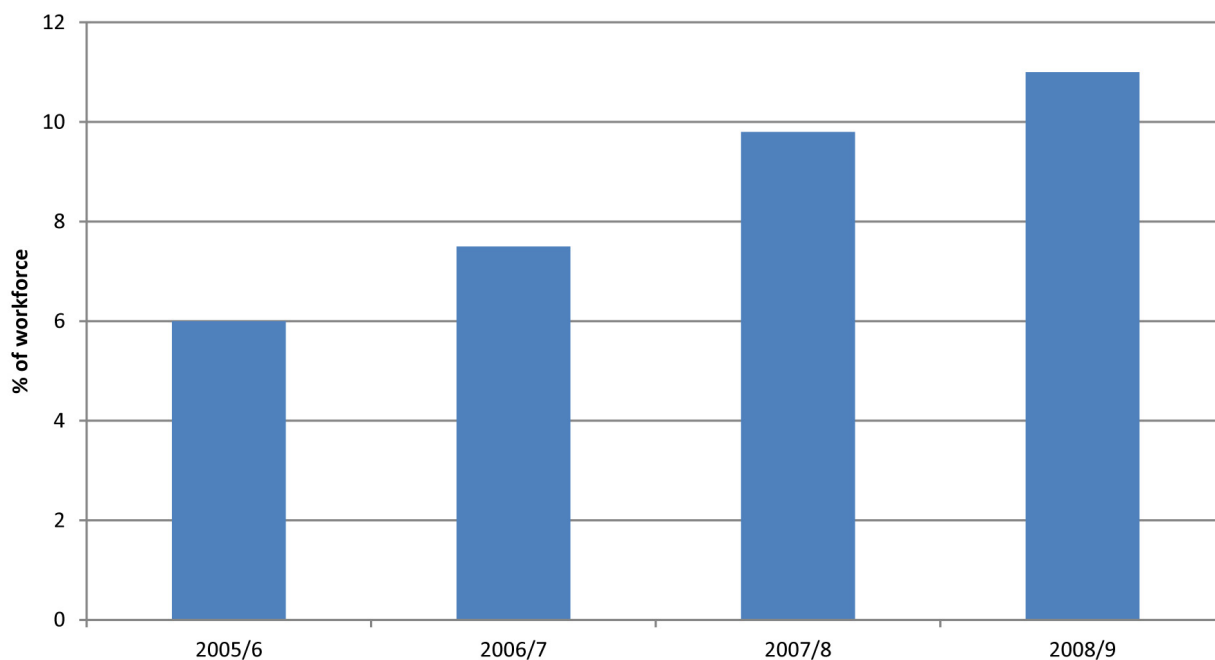
While more males will be employed than females at the mine, it is likely that female employment shall continue to rise over time, in part due to near full employment in the region, and in part due to the continual breakdown of cultural barriers limiting female training and employment in particular trades and industries. The Queensland Resources Council is actively promoting female employment, pay equality and improved workplace conditions for female employees.

Local business opportunities will predominantly benefit suppliers in Emerald and to a lesser extent those from Mackay, Clermont and Bowen. However, some contractors are expected to establish a base in Alpha or Jericho.

The project will cause some negative economic impacts. These include:

- a decrease in cattle production (and / or cattle productivity) in those areas in which project facilities are located;
- the loss of employees from existing business activities as they take jobs in the Project;
- increases in the cost of living (including increases in the cost of housing and an increase in the cost of goods and services resulting from higher wages);
- the potential loss in economic benefits from a downturn in the industry; and
- increasing income inequality.

**Figure 2. Women working in non-traditional roles in Queensland’s resource sector**



Source: Queensland Resources Council, December 2009.

The reduction in cattle production is not expected to be significant at an industry level, either when considering the project or the cumulative impact of multiple resource projects. However, the loss of economic activity (across a range of industries) is expected to be significant when considering the loss of current employees to cumulative resource projects. Given the low level of unemployment in the region, skilled workers will have a good chance of gaining a job on a resource project and receive a considerable boost in pay. This will continue to put upward pressure on wage and salary levels, which will to various degrees, be passed onto customers. Thus, the prices of many goods and services will be higher in the region than in other parts of Queensland due to the need to pay workers a higher wage to compete with the mining and coal seam gas industries.

As discussed below, upward pressure will also occur on house prices and rental costs, which will contribute to the relatively high cost of living in the region. This will have a greater impact on those people with low incomes, such as retirees, single parents and the unemployed (also discussed below).

The potential loss in economic benefits from a downturn in the industry is considered as unlikely in the short to medium term as output from the project has already been sold to China Power. However, a major downturn in the coal industry would impact severely in the mine area. A downturn could increase unemployment, reduce incomes, lead to a reduction in house prices and

result in a reduction in the level of support provided by mining companies for community infrastructure and services. It should be noted, however, that the outlook is for exponential growth of coal exports to both India and China, based on the rapid increase in new coal fired power stations in both countries. The risk of a major downturn in the industry is considered to be relatively low, despite the potential introduction of an Emissions Trading Scheme in Australia and internationally. Queensland mining towns, and in particular, those near coal mines, will therefore have a strong medium to long term economic future. Higher coal prices, which have been experienced since 2006, are expected to be maintained.

While the project will cause some negative economic impacts, the positive economic impacts are expected to greatly outweigh the negative economic impacts.

### 16.5.2 POPULATION AND DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGE

The majority of the construction workforce is expected to be engaged on a FIFO basis and have minimal impact on the permanent, residential population within the project area. Should Alpha be developed as proposed, the permanent residential population of Alpha will increase substantially as a result of indirect and induced employment opportunities (i.e. mine contractors and other jobs resulting from the higher population and higher income levels). If Alpha is not developed as



proposed, contractors are more likely to reside in Alpha on a temporary basis and contribute little to Alpha's permanent, residential population. Alpha's permanent residential population in 10 years time could therefore range from as little as 500 to at least 2,000.

The project will result in a relatively small increase in the population of most centres, with the exception of Alpha and Bowen, and therefore have a relatively small direct impact on population. However, the cumulative impact of multiple resource projects will have a far greater impact on population in the region. Given the near-full employment levels in Queensland at present, and the well publicised skills shortage within the construction and mining industries, considerable in-migration will be required to satisfy the workforce requirements of the project and other resource projects currently being developed. While many workers are expected to move to Queensland from inter-state, the sheer number of new projects being developed in Australia, and their scale, means that some workers will need to be sourced from overseas. Although subject to increasing debate in Australia at present, either an increase in the number of workers entering Australia with mining and construction skills will be required, or Queensland will need to accommodate a much larger share of Australia's skilled migrants.

While it is likely that construction of some of the proposed resource projects will be delayed, in part due to workforce shortages, it is likely that a number of projects will be constructed on or near schedule, and as a result, more foreign workers will either be granted temporary work visas or will migrate to Queensland. Overseas workers are expected to originate from a range of locations, but are likely to include China (given the involvement of MCC) and countries with high levels of competency in English, such as New Zealand, the Philippines and Papua New Guinea.

The project itself will not have a huge impact on demographic characteristics; however, the cumulative impacts of multiple resource projects in the Bowen, Surat and Galilee Basins will result in significant demographic change:

- there will be a higher proportion of non-residents in Alpha, in particular young and middle aged working males; and
- inter-state and overseas immigrants will in general be younger and many will have or will establish young families. Thus, immigration may slow the aging of the

population and slow the reduction in family size that would otherwise occur.

### 16.5.3 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Although covered in detail in the EIS, some of the main environmental impacts – directly impacting people in the mine area – are summarised here as they contribute to the social impact of mining.

As stated in the EIS, the main direct environmental impacts will occur in the vicinity of the mine and will affect a relatively small number of landowners who reside on or in close proximity to the mine site. The environmental impacts are expected to include dust, noise, vibration and visual amenity. It is possible that two properties on the MLA will have resident owners once operations commence. Additional families live on properties neighbouring the mine site, and downwind from the mining area, but given the relatively large size of the properties, relatively few families will be directly impacted from noise, vibration or visual amenity. Additional properties will be impacted by dust, particularly during periods of relatively strong wind, although Waratah Coal is considering a range of options to reduce dust from mine operations, including watering of stockpiles and roads and progressive rehabilitation of mined areas.

The main concern expressed by local property owners is the impact of the mine on groundwater. A comprehensive groundwater management plan will be implemented to minimise impacts on groundwater. This will include diversion banks to ensure mine water is recycled and used in the mine rather than released in the Belyando Catchment. At the same time, neighbouring property owners shall be provided with piped water from the mine to be used for both stock and domestic purposes where a net deficit occurs due to mining activities. A more reliable source of water will help overcome one of the main constraints to grazing activities in the area.

### 16.5.4 IMPACTS ON RURAL PROPERTIES

The proposed mine site is located on eight beef cattle properties, each with an average area of around 70 km<sup>2</sup>. Three of the properties are managed as a single entity, and one is jointly managed as a wildlife refuge with sustainable cattle grazing. The property owners live on three of the six entities.

Project infrastructure and open cut mining would be located on three of the eight properties. It is anticipated that Waratah Coal will acquire two properties in full and part of the third.

Underground mining would occur on the remaining five properties and contribute 64% of total mine production. The physical impacts on these properties will be far less. Access roads and power lines will be built to each long-wall panel, where bores will be drilled and submersible pumps used to extract mine water. Channels will be constructed to transfer the water to a central water preparation plant. Power lines and water channels will generally be adjacent to the access roads. Mine staff will check the pumps, test the water and monitor environmental conditions (e.g. dust and subsidence). For these purposes, mine staff will use light 4WD vehicles. Subsidence is not expected to cause any discernable change on the surface: a drop of up to a maximum of 1 m is possible across a 470 m long-wall panel. This is not expected to impact on vegetation, fences, power lines or roads; although water tanks, pipes and creek beds will need to be monitored after any subsidence occurs. All ongoing cattle enterprises on the mining lease, and immediate neighbours, will benefit through improved power supply and telecommunications to the region, and piped water should there be any reduction in the quality or quantity of water as a result of mine operations.

Compensation will also be provided to properties on the mining lease, although the exact compensation quantum will not be publically available.

On an individual basis, the mine is expected to impact as follows:

- three properties (one with a resident owner and two with non-resident owners) shall continue cattle operations while supporting underground mining activity;
- one property (with resident owner) will be acquired in full;
- approximately one third of the jointly managed cattle / conservation property would be acquired. As the owners are not resident, it is expected that this property could continue to be managed as a cattle operation. Waratah Coal is expected to meet any costs that may be required for the property to continue cattle operations (e.g. fencing, watering points, stockyards and farm access roads); and

- one of the three jointly managed properties would be acquired in full. The homes of the resident owners will be relocated and cattle operations continued on the remaining two properties. The owners will be offered compensated accordingly. In addition, Waratah Coal is expected to meet any costs that may be required for the property to continue cattle operations (e.g. fencing, watering points, stockyards and farm access roads).

Neighbouring properties will, to various degrees, be impacted from dust, noise, vibration, visual amenity and the presence of mine staff involved in environmental monitoring activities. The prevailing wind is from the north-east, indicating that those properties to the south-west of the mine site will be most impacted from dust. As previously discussed, those in relatively close proximity to the mine, and downwind, could exhibit a decline in pasture productivity. However, efforts will be made to reduce the level of dust (e.g. lowering the height of stockpiles, spraying water and progressive rehabilitation of mined areas). These same properties may be provided with improved telecommunications, power and piped water, and offered some financial compensation.

#### **16.5.5 IMPACTS ON PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND SOCIAL SERVICES**

The project will itself have only a modest impact on public infrastructure and social services when compared to the cumulative impact of multiple resource projects:

- an increase in heavy vehicle traffic, particularly during the construction period (including the Capricorn Highway from Rockhampton to Alpha);
- an increase in traffic on the Alpha-Emerald and Alpha-Clermont roads;
- an increase in accidents on the Alpha-Emerald and Alpha-Clermont roads, placing increased demand on police, health and emergency services;
- improvements to power, water and communications for properties on or neighbouring the mining lease; and
- the development of public infrastructure in Alpha, should the proposal to develop Alpha be implemented, which would see the provision of sewerage, an extension of the air strip and upgrading the airport terminal, and improvements to power, water, communications and other town infrastructure.

The majority of the mine workforce will be housed in purpose built accommodation that is on the mining lease and not in the vicinity of Alpha or Jericho. The mine site will have its own medical facility. Any workers with serious injuries are expected to be taken to the hospitals at Emerald, Rockhampton or Mackay. Given the limited health facilities available in Alpha, the medical staff at the mine site will provide an additional local resource and over time could be expected to provide assistance in times of emergencies (e.g. accidents in the local area). In addition, the charter flights for the FIFO workers may be used to transport local residents to Mackay, Rockhampton or Brisbane if they need emergency health care.

The direct mine workforce is not expected to increase the demand on social services in Alpha or Jericho or surrounding towns; however, the indirect workforce (i.e. contractors) and their families will increase the demand on a wide range of public infrastructure and services (including health and education facilities, water and power infrastructure, garbage collection, etc). The BRC's proposal for Alpha aims to address these requirements in an attempt to accommodate a higher population; integrate part of the mine workforce and contractors in the town; and facilitate improvements in infrastructure and services so that local residents benefit from the development of nearby coal mines.

If Alpha is not developed in a planned and coordinated manner, a higher number of contractors are likely to provide mine services on a DIDO basis from Emerald, Barcaldine, Clermont, Blackall, Tambo, or further afield. This will increase local traffic and fatigue is likely to become a problem, leading to an increase in demand on health and emergency services.

The cumulative impact of multiple resource projects and resulting population growth, coupled with an aging population, is expected to have the following impacts:

- an increase in the number of children attending school in Alpha;
- an increase in the demand for health care, and in particular, aged care facilities and services;
- an increase in the demand for child care services;
- an increase in the demand for a wide range of welfare services (including, for example, accommodation support, victims of domestic violence, victims of child abuse and mental health support);
- an increase in demand on the rural fire brigade; and

- an increase in demand on emergency services (resulting from increased traffic and in particular, the increase in large trucks on the main roads and the increase on DIDO workers).

Emergency services are currently very limited in the Alpha area. The development of four coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha will lead to rapid population growth in Alpha and to a lesser extent Jericho, and will result in substantially more traffic on all roads leading to Alpha. While construction materials are expected to be trucked in from Gladstone, Townsville and / or Mackay, contractors and mine employees are expected to drive to Alpha from Barcaldine (143 km), Emerald (169 km), Clermont (179 km), Blackall (168 km) and Tambo (169 km). These distances will result in fatigue and accidents, particularly after working a shift, and particularly on the unsealed roads (Blackall-Jericho, Tambo-Alpha and Clermont-Alpha).

The development of four coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha will lead to rapid population growth in Alpha and some growth in nearby towns including Jericho and Emerald. Many welfare services are already stretched to the limit and will have difficulty meeting the demand from a higher population let alone the increased demand potentially resulting from long distance commuting (particularly for contractors) and stress and marriage breakup as a result of FIFO or DIDO work practices. In addition, the lack of family and friends, particularly for new residents attracted to the area for mine employment, and the high cost of accommodation, means that family disputes or marriage breakups more often leads to individuals seeking support from welfare agencies than in other areas.

#### 16.5.6 IMPACTS ON HOUSING

Speculation has already increased the cost of land and houses in Alpha and Jericho. This is likely to continue as contractors seek housing for staff and land to establish workshop and storage facilities. Should Alpha be developed, as proposed by the BRC, a substantially larger number of contractors (and some employees) will be based in Alpha, or establish satellite offices in Alpha. Under this scenario, house prices and rental costs can be expected to increase substantially, not only due to the mine, but other coal projects planned in the area.

The cumulative impacts of multiple resource projects will not only increase house prices and rental costs in Alpha and Jericho but have a negative impact on the

availability of tradesmen such as builders, plumbers, electricians and painters. Many tradesmen are expected to be attracted to the mines, particularly during the construction periods, and this will increase the cost of tradesmen and the waiting time before they arrive. This is also likely to impact towns such as Barcaldine, Blackall, Tambo and Longreach, where some existing tradesman can be expected to seek mine employment.

Central Queensland attracts large numbers of tourists each year, predominantly in the winter months. Many are self-drive tourists and while some stay in motels or hotels, many stay in caravan parks.

Housing shortages and high rental costs in mining towns in the Bowen Basin has resulted in a substantial increase in the demand for short term accommodation (hotels, motels and cabins, caravans and powered sites in caravan parks). Hotels, motels and caravan parks in towns such as Clermont and Moranbah have high occupancy rates, particularly in the winter months. The hotels, motels and caravan parks at Alpha and Jericho are likely to be fully occupied during the development of mines near Alpha and there will certainly be sufficient demand to increase the number of rooms, cabins and powered sites. Until this occurs, the shortage of available powered sites may actually reduce the number of tourists that overnight in Alpha or Jericho (or caravans are parked on the town outskirts overnight and create additional demand for public toilets and garbage collection services).

#### 16.5.7 IMPACTS ON COMMUNITY VALUES

Evidence from the Hunter Valley and Bowen Basins indicates that community values, and in particular the 'sense of community' can be promoted by coal mining. In areas where the workforce is permanently located in local towns the income level is boosted and mining companies often provide funding for local infrastructure or community activities. Both factors can help address the loss of community values that may otherwise occur as a result of a declining (and aging) population and difficulty in meeting basic economic needs.

The project will impact community values:

- if Alpha is developed in a planned and coordinated manner, the town population will grow, infrastructure and services will be substantially improved, and income levels increased. This is expected to enhance community values; and

- if Alpha is not developed in a planned and coordinated manner, population growth will be predominantly through temporary residents, and infrastructure and services will remain inadequate, at least in the short to medium term. Under such a scenario, the local community is likely to be disenchanted with mining operations, and may develop a feeling of 'lost opportunity', which may erode community values.

Given the proximity of Jericho to the proposed coal mines, the town is likely to expand as contractors seek to accommodate their staff. The planned development of Alpha, should it occur, would limit the expansion of Jericho, but provide Jericho's residents with expanded social services. If Alpha is not developed in a planned and coordinated manner, Jericho will grow, but is likely to share in the feeling of lost opportunity, as most contractors operate on a FIFO or DIDO basis and social services are not improved.

#### 16.5.8 IMPACTS ON WORKFORCE FAMILIES

Families attracted to Alpha or nearby towns in search of work with any of the proposed new mines or their contractors, will be vulnerable if they do not gain meaningful employment in a relatively short period of time. Accommodation costs are high and accommodation may be difficult to obtain. The population increase, and rising house and rental costs, may result in a higher number of people seeking accommodation support from welfare agencies. Temporary unemployment may also add stress to family relationships and could lead to domestic violence or marriage breakups, again adding to the demand on welfare agencies in the area.

#### 16.5.9 IMPACTS ON DISADVANTAGED GROUPS

The project is expected to have minimal direct impact on disadvantaged groups, with the exception of rising housing prices in Bowen and Alpha. The cumulative impacts of multiple resource projects is expected to lead to higher house prices and increased rental costs, and the price of locally produced goods and services is also expected to increase (due primarily to higher labour costs). The increase in the cost of living may disadvantage low income earners, in particular single parents and aged pensioners.

Disadvantaged groups may also be adversely impacted as a result of population growth, without an expansion of public infrastructure and services, particularly

facilities that cater for the aged and disabled. The State Government is; however, expected to provide additional funding for infrastructure and services in the Bowen and Galilee Basins in the longer term, in response to high population growth and rapid economic development.

The Indigenous population is not expected to be disadvantaged by the mine or the development of multiple resource projects in the region. To the contrary, many employment opportunities will be created, and substantial training provided to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous community. Organisations such as the HiHo Group, established by Girudala, can play a key role in maximising the extent to which Indigenous people participate in and benefit from resource projects in Central Queensland.

The development of multiple mines in the Alpha area could significantly increase the demand for welfare services. Welfare agencies are; however, already stretched to the limit in terms of their facilities, staff and resources. The cumulative impact of multiple resource projects will significantly add to the burden on these agencies and without additional resources could result in a decline in their ability to provide services to the growing population.

#### 16.5.10 DEVELOPMENT OF ALPHA

In general, the local community sees mining as an opportunity to improve services and provide employment opportunities. However, they wish to retain their rural lifestyle rather than see Alpha become a mining town. Balanced and managed growth, perhaps resulting in a town like Clermont, is no doubt more preferable than larger mining towns such as Moranbah or Blackwater. For balanced and managed growth to occur, the mines will need to accommodate the majority of the 4,000 direct mine employees in purpose-built workforce camps. Most mine employees will therefore need to be engaged on a FIFO basis. Alpha's desired population growth will be achieved from mine contractors and a limited (and controlled) number of mine employees and their families.

If Alpha is developed in a planned and coordinated manner, it will be an attractive location for families to live. Improvements to health and education services and the provision of day care facilities will help attract families to Alpha. This in turn will enable the spouse of mine workers to enter the local workforce and minimise staff shortages in the public and private

sector. Developing Alpha will therefore stimulate local employment, including jobs outside the mining industry, and provide an opportunity for young people to remain in Alpha rather than seek employment in the cities.

If Alpha is not developed in a planned and coordinated manner, few contractors are likely to move to Alpha on a permanent basis and very few families are likely to be attracted to the area. Under such a scenario, improvements to public infrastructure and services will be modest, commercial development will be limited, and issues such as alcohol and drug abuse are likely to be more common (stemming from single men with high income levels living together with few entertainment outlets). In addition, the Alpha and Jericho communities may become disenchanted with mining due to perceived lost opportunities and an erosion of their rural lifestyle, impacting adversely on their sense of community and community cohesion.

It is strongly recommended that a detailed town plan be prepared for Alpha by the BRC, and the development of Alpha is supported by all parties and a fully coordinated approach is initiated as a matter of priority. Waratah Coal is prepared to play a leading or supporting role in the preparation of a town plan for Alpha, if requested by the BRC. Waratah Coal will give due consideration to the plan when developing mine infrastructure (e.g. power, water, telecommunications and airport), and furthermore, will provide financial contributions to help implement priority projects included in the plan.

#### 16.5.11 EMPLOYMENT

The mine workforce will predominantly be engaged on a FIFO basis. Preference will be given to employees from the project area, Central Queensland, the rest of Queensland and elsewhere in Australia, in that order, before foreign workers. To attract and retain staff, Waratah Coal will provide training and engage apprentices as part of their normal operations and will provide individual accommodation for FIFO staff. Waratah Coal will develop a human resource management plan aiming to enhance the skill levels of the workforce and local communities (maximising the number of apprentices from the local region and providing greater employment opportunities for Indigenous workers and women). Liaising with organisations such as the HiHo Group, established by Girudala, should help maximise the extent to which Indigenous people participate in and benefit from the Project. Waratah Coal will also consider a housing



scheme for workers who wish to reside in Alpha, and will develop a Code of Conduct for employees and the employees of all contractors to help minimise behaviour which might offend local residents and contribute to animosity.

### 16.5.12 CONTRACTING

Waratah Coal has entered agreements with Chinese partners for the financing, construction and marketing of the project. The Metallurgical Corporation of China (MCC) has been engaged to undertake the engineering, procurement, construction and management of the project, although Waratah Coal will have a management team and will maintain a supervisory role during construction, operations and decommissioning. While MCC has been engaged as the EPCM contractor, opportunities will be provided during both the construction and operational phases of the project to local contractors and local suppliers whenever possible. Waratah Coal will prepare a Local Industry Participation Plan, in collaboration with DEEDI and the Industry Capability Network (ICN), to promote opportunities for Australian organisations to tender for contracts. This will give preferences to contractors and suppliers from the project area and local region (eg. Alpha, Emerald, Clermont, Barcaldine, Jericho, Collinsville, Proserpine, Mackay and Bowen and other nearby centres).

Waratah Coal will provide assistance to local businesses, through the help of the ICN, to ensure they are aware of potential contracting opportunities and understand the required contract standards and conditions.

### 16.5.13 CATTLE OPERATIONS

Those properties that shall continue operations on the proposed Mining Lease will be compensated financially for any inconvenience and lost productivity. These and some neighbouring properties will be provided with power, water and improved telecommunications as a result of improvement to these services from the mine development. Waratah Coal will work with each property owner to minimise disruptions and reduce impacts on cattle productivity as a result of the mine and railway. This may entail the realignment of fences, provision of additional watering points, the construction of new farm roads and relocation or provision of new cattle yards. Waratah Coal will also provide the services of a farm management specialist to assist property owners to modify farm practices as a result of the mine or railway.

### 16.5.14 ROAD TRAFFIC

Measures to minimise disruptions and accidents caused by the increase in the number of heavy vehicles, particularly during the construction period, will include:

- reducing local traffic in the Alpha area by having a predominantly FIFO (self-contained) workforce;
- providing a bus service between nearby regional centres (such as Emerald) and the mine site for employees, should a sufficient number of employees reside in a nearby regional centre;
- preparing TMPs in consultation with the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the relevant regional councils and Queensland Police Service; and
- including safe driving and fatigue management strategies for employees and contractors who will drive to or from work.

### 16.5.15 EMERGENCY SERVICES

Emergency services are currently very limited in the Alpha area. The development of four coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha will lead to rapid population growth in Alpha and to a lesser extent Jericho, and will result in substantially more traffic on all roads leading to Alpha. A strategy to enhance the capability of emergency services should be considered as part of the proposed development plan for Alpha. The plan, and any specific strategies relating to emergency services, should be prepared in close consultation with the BRC, responsible government agencies and emergency service providers in Alpha and surrounding towns (Jericho, Barcaldine, Emerald, Clermont, Blackall and Tambo), as employees and contractors are expected to drive in from all of these locations, and therefore impact on emergency services in these locations.

Waratah Coal will provide financial contributions to help implement priority projects included in the development plan for Alpha. This may include emergency services.

### 16.5.16 WELFARE SERVICES

Welfare services are currently quite limited in the Alpha area. The development of four coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha, and the expected increase in population and rising housing costs, are expected to place additional demand on welfare services in future years. Waratah Coal will prepare an Accommodation and Housing Plan, that will consider the impact of the project on housing affordability and the demand for social housing in



Alpha. However, the demand for welfare services should be assessed more broadly as part of the proposed development plan for Alpha. The plan, and any specific strategies relating to welfare services, should be prepared in close consultation with the BRC, responsible government agencies and service providers in Alpha and nearby centres.

Waratah Coal will provide financial contributions to help implement priority projects included in the development plan for Alpha. This may include welfare services.

#### 16.5.17 COMMUNITY SUPPORT

Financial contributions from mining companies are increasingly seen as an important element of the social license to operate, but need to be coordinated with the BRC, local residents and the other resource companies. Internationally, lessons indicate that an effective way to achieve sustainable local development is for mining companies to contribute to local development plans. In the project area, the first steps are to agree on a coordinated approach and then prepare local development plans (as existing plans do not reflect the current mine proposals or provide sufficient detail to prioritise or plan contributions from resource companies). Plans should be prepared by the BRC, with input by the State Government, local communities and the resource companies. Plans should help prioritise infrastructure and services and provide a baseline from which social and economic impacts from multiple resource projects can be monitored and assessed on a cumulative basis.

It is premature to predict the type or level of community support that Waratah Coal might provide in the future when four large mines are likely to be developed in the Alpha area, and there is uncertainty over the BRC's development proposal for Alpha. However, Waratah Coal remains committed to supporting local communities, and regards local community development plans as an effective way to allocate assistance. Waratah Coal is willing to provide support to the BRC for the preparation of a development plan for Alpha, if requested. Waratah Coal is also willing to provide financial support to help implement priority projects included in the plan. As discussed above, this may entail improvements to emergency and/or welfare services in Alpha.

Waratah Coal will also ensure that mine infrastructure built in the vicinity of Alpha (particularly power, water, and airport and communication infrastructure) is considerate of the growing needs of the local

community, and this infrastructure, and any subsequent local development contributions, will be planned in coordinated with the local council, local residents and other resource companies.

#### 16.5.18 DECOMMISSIONING OF THE MINE

Mine closure should not trigger new social or economic planning initiatives. Instead, plans should be prepared from the onset and aim to capitalise on the opportunities provided by mining for social and economic development, taking into consideration at all times, the need to prepare the community for life after mining. As discussed above, an effective way to achieve sustainable local development is for mining companies to contribute to local development plans. It is therefore recommended that mine closure planning be initiated from the onset as part of the proposed development plan for Alpha.

#### 16.5.19 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Waratah Coal will maintain effective dialogue with a range of stakeholders throughout all phases of the project:

- participating in Community Reference Groups;
- involving key stakeholders in the design and assessment of stakeholder engagement strategies;
- preparing a Community Engagement Plan; and
- establishing a grievance and dispute resolution mechanism for employees, contractors and external stakeholders.

The Community Engagement Plan is expected to include a range of engagement processes:

- continuing the information hotline (1800 number);
- providing information on Waratah Coal's website and updating this information periodically; and
- preparing periodic project updates and disseminating these among key stakeholders (focusing on selected state government agencies, local councils, property owners, Indigenous groups, other local residents and local interest groups).

### 16.5.20 OPTIONS FOR ADDITIONAL GOVERNMENT SUPPORT

In addition to the above commitments and recommendations, which directly involve Waratah Coal, government may wish to consider the following:

#### 16.5.20.1 Housing

To counter housing shortages and rising accommodation prices and help ensure the availability of housing for a range of socio-economic groups in the future, it is recommended that government:

- ensures adequate residential land is available for development, particularly in Alpha;
- ensures a range of housing options are included in new residential developments; and
- considers making finance available for new residential developments.

The State Government may consider the establishment of an additional Urban Development Area (UDA) in Alpha. A UDA could potentially be funded under the State Government's Resource Town Housing Affordability Program, and should be coordinated with the proposed town development.

#### 16.5.20.2 Emergency Health Services

Emergency health services for the Bowen Basin are provided from Rockhampton, Mackay and Townsville. The emergency response time will be significantly longer for incidents in the Galilee Basin. In addition to the expansion of emergency services in Alpha (as discussed above), consideration should be given to the upgrading of emergency health services in Emerald. To effectively serve the Galilee Basin, this would require a helicopter, equipped for medical emergencies, based permanently at Emerald. Some funding could be available under the State Government's Sustainable Resource Communities Policy, which includes funding to improve local infrastructure.

#### 16.5.20.3 Training Facilities

Trade training is currently provided in Emerald, but accommodation for trainees is limited and alternative accommodation expensive. As Emerald is the main centre for trade training in the region, the development of on-site accommodation at Emerald's TAFE campus would help increase the number of local apprentices and other trainees gaining trade skills, and therefore help address skills shortages and help young people stay in

the region. Funding could be available under the State Government's Sustainable Resource Communities Policy, which includes funding of \$100 million for improving local infrastructure (including trade training centres), and would facilitate the training of local apprentices, as discussed above.

## 16.6 CONCLUSION

### 16.6.1 ASSESSMENT OUTCOME

The four mines proposed for the Alpha area are expected to produce around 120 Mtpa of coal per annum. This compares to 190 Mtpa of coal produced throughout Queensland in 2008/9, and is indicative of the scale of benefits that will be provided to Queensland and Australia once these mines reach full production. The Galilee Basin; however, is a rich pastoral area, steeped in history, and is increasingly dependent on tourism. The development of mining in an area with minimal previous mining history will cause irreversible change to the physical landscape and the social fabric of towns and communities in the vicinity of the mine and much of the railway.

The project provides an opportunity for substantial economic development in Central Queensland and will accelerate population growth, increase employment and training opportunities, and raise income levels. However, the project will increase the volume of local traffic, disrupt cattle operations, place increased demand on public infrastructure and services, including welfare services, add to the cost of living (particularly housing costs) and may impact adversely on community values.

Research in the Bowen Basin indicates that coal mining results in a range of both positive and negative social impacts. However, the number of coal mines near a town, and the reliance on FIFO or DIDO workers, appear to be key factors determining the extent of social impacts. This does not auger well for Alpha, a small town of 350 people with an expressed desire to maintain its rural lifestyle and not become a mining town, as the four large coal mines proposed for the Alpha area are each expected to field a predominantly FIFO workforce.

While the development of four coal mines in the vicinity of Alpha provides a unique opportunity for Alpha and surrounding communities to benefit from sustainable and socially acceptable development, these benefits will only be realised if mine development is accompanied by carefully prepared and effectively coordinated development plans and strategies. The following commitments are therefore given.

## 16.7 COMMITMENTS

Waratah Coal commits to:

1. Preparing a Local Industry Participation Plan in collaboration with DEEDI and ICN;
2. Giving preference to contractors (including local suppliers) from the project area, Central Queensland, the rest of Queensland and elsewhere in Australia (and New Zealand), before overseas;
3. Reporting on Local Industry Participation annually;
4. Preparing a Recruitment and Training Plan, aiming to enhance the skill levels of the workforce and local communities, providing opportunities for Indigenous employment, female employment, and maximising the number of apprentices from the region;
5. Giving preference to employees from the project area, Central Queensland, the rest of Queensland and elsewhere in Australia (and New Zealand), before overseas;
6. Basing a minimum of 28 staff in Alpha;
7. Providing those properties on the mining lease, and their neighbours, with water should there be any reduction in the quality or quantity of water as a result of mine operations, and possibly electricity and telecommunications;
8. Working with each property owner to minimise disruptions and reduce impacts on cattle productivity as a result of the mine (including the provision of specialist advice from a farm management consultant to assist farm planning exercises);
9. Providing support to the BRC for the preparation of a development plan for Alpha (if requested);
10. Ensuring that infrastructure built in the vicinity of Alpha, and in particular power, water, airport and communication infrastructure, is considerate of the growing needs of the local community;
11. Ensuring that community infrastructure and any subsequent local development contributions, provided by Waratah Coal, are planned in coordination with affected regional councils, local residents and other resource companies;
12. Considering a housing scheme for staff for who wish to reside in Alpha;
13. Arranging financial management advice for employees;
14. Providing a bus service between the mine site and any nearby regional centre that contains a sufficient number of mine employees;
15. Developing a Code of Conduct for employees and contractors and outlining this during induction programs for all employees and contractors;
16. Continuing the existing information hotline (1800 number);
17. Establishing a grievance and dispute resolution mechanism for staff, contractors, local residents and other parties;
18. Providing up to date information on the project on the Waratah Coal website;
19. Preparing annual updates of the SIMP, which will include progress in implementing action plans, stakeholder engagement and grievance summaries for the previous year, any new or emerging social issues, and changes to action plans; and
20. Disseminating the SIMP updates among key stakeholders and placing them on Waratah Coal's website.