



Chimney Update

Images of the deteriorating state of the eight Hazelwood Power Station chimneys were displayed at last week's community information session in Morwell.

Station Lead with the Hazelwood Rehabilitation Project, Wayne Buckley, told around 50 people who attended that the images allowed the community to see a close-up view of the chimneys' poor condition.

He said demolition of the Power Station was planned to start in 2020, with the chimneys expected to be demolished sooner rather than later because of their deterioration.

The chimneys, which have now stood for double their original design life, have been barricaded off since 2016 because of serious safety concerns, with an exclusion zone remaining in place.

"Since the Power Station ceased operation, there has been no heat passing through the chimneys and they have deteriorated more quickly than would normally occur," he said.

"They remain stable in the short term but continued deterioration does pose risks but more importantly,

creates weak points that impact the integrity of the shell.

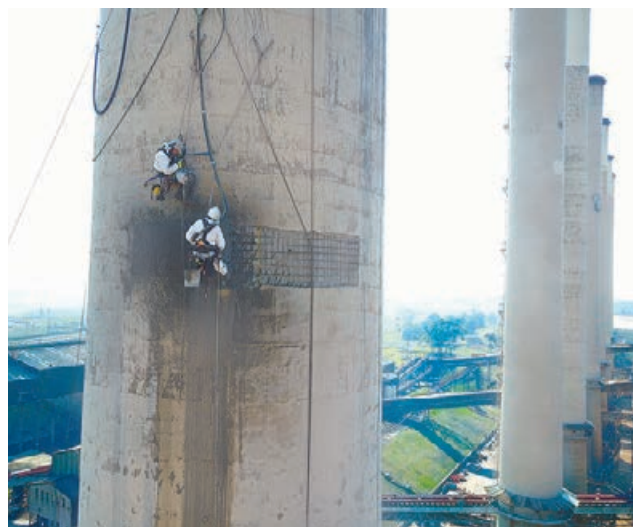
"The upper steel walkways and their fixings to the chimney are for the most part all in a failing state. All access ladders require constant inspection and repair to allow access to the top in order to perform the annual inspections, involving high rope access work.

"The technical reports show that the upper structural bands are also in a rapidly declining state and are critical for the integrity of the last upper section. The internal brick-work plays a large part in the stability by acting as a ballast and is in a failed state requiring on going repair."

Mr Buckley said international demolition consultants, ABB, were providing a range of independent consultancy and engineering advice to ENGIE in relation to the future demolition activities.

"We expect to advertise the tender next month and select the successful tenderer in 2019," he said.

 engie.com.au/media/videos



The ongoing maintenance of the deteriorating Hazelwood chimneys is carried out by specialist contractors, skilled in working at heights.

HAZELWOOD COOLING POND

PFAS levels in the Hazelwood Pondage were well below the 95 per cent level of protection ecosystem standard, a community meeting in Morwell was told last week.

Environment Manager Regulatory with the Hazelwood Rehabilitation Project, Ross Brooker, said this level was not unusual in many parts of the state.

"Some people have expressed concern about possible PFAS in the foam used by CFA during the Hazelwood Mine Fire," he said. "The foam used then was Class A Foam - in other words it was free of any PFAS."

Mr Brooker said ENGIE Hazelwood monitored water quality discharges from the Pondage on a weekly basis, sometimes daily, as required by its EPA Licence.

ENGIE Hazelwood has released water from the Hazelwood Pondage into the Morwell River and Eel Hole Creek over its 52 years of operation.

Hazelwood's EPA licence was changed recently to allow

the release of additional water to remove pressure on the deteriorating Pondage walls.

The previous licence allowed 75 megalitres of Pondage water per day to be released into the rivers. Recently, the EPA granted permission for up to 300 megalitres a day to be released.

"This is not something unusual," Mr Brooker said. "We have always released water to manage inflows to the Pondage. The additional flow will result in an increase in salt concentration but not to a level that will have any ecological implications."

Meanwhile Technical Services Manager, James Faithful, said the future of the Pondage would depend on the final report of independent consultants into the integrity of the Pondage walls.

He said since the Pondage had closed due to safety concerns, ENGIE Hazelwood had worked with the Latrobe Valley Yacht Club, the organisers of the Sailability Program, to assist in relocating to another lake.

"The dam walls were constructed of varying materials and

not to the rigorous standards required today," he said.

"The independent consultants found the moisture content within the materials used to construct the dam embankment wall structures is very high. High moisture content could result in what is known as piping where seepage causes internal erosion within the dam wall. When this occurs to a significant level, it could result in a dam break flow, which could impact a number of downstream assets and properties."

Mr Faithful said ENGIE Hazelwood had always been open about its preference to eventually drain the Pondage to assist in filling the Mine void then rehabilitate the area. As Hazelwood is no longer an operating Power Station, it has no need for this asset.

"We have always said once we start to fill the Mine void, our preference would be to use the water from the Pondage as part of that process. The Mine needs around 650 gigalitres of water to fill it and the Pondage is around 30 gigalitres. It (the Pondage) looks expansive but it is relatively shallow and small."

