

FAQS

HAZELWOOD MINE

ENGIE

MINE DECOMMISSIONING

Has decommissioning in the Mine finished?

Decommissioning in the Mine has not finished and will continue through into 2019 as plant and equipment become redundant. Decommissioning of some Large Mining Equipment (LME) and conveyors has already been completed, with oil and grease removed and the plant cleaned.

Can't any of this large equipment be used at AGL Loy Yang or Yallourn?

This large equipment cannot be used at Loy Yang as it doesn't match the size and compatibility of its systems. Yallourn only has one Bucket Wheel System which excavates the overburden and uses a Dozer Push operation to excavate coal.

How are you digging the overburden for rehabilitation if you have decommissioned the dredgers?

We have maintained our Overburden System, which incorporates Dredger 25, the TS2 Stacker and approximately seven kilometres of conveyors, to continue to mine overburden. This overburden is used for select Toe Weight placement at the bottom of the Mine. This operation will cease in 2018. The material needed for rehabilitation on the batters will be placed using truck and shovel.

You have all that coal in the Mine; if it can't be used locally, why can't it be exported?

The coal cannot be stockpiled for long periods of time for transporting as it has the potential to spontaneously combust. There has been no industry identified that would consume large quantities of coal to warrant maintaining the Mine in its current state.

What if a new power station started locally - could they use coal from the Hazelwood Mine?

Under our closure plan in our Mine Work Plan Variation, approved by regulators, the Hazelwood Mine must be rehabilitated. We are getting on with that work. We are progressively rehabilitating the batters and our preferred option is to eventually cover the remaining coal with water to ensure the Mine is safe, stable and sustainable.

Could someone take over your current Mining Licence?

Our primary focus is on rehabilitation. To date, no-one has expressed any interest in using the Hazelwood coal. However we remain open to any viable offers for consideration by ENGIE in Australia. Our current Mining Licence requires that we must deliver a safe, stable and sustainable landform once mining has finished.

Until it is filled with water, couldn't the coal catch fire?

Fire preparation and readiness remains our priority all year round and this activity moves to another level over the summer months. We undertake activities such as grass slashing, weed killing and establishing fire breaks well before the fire season is declared. The Mine has an extensive network of water pipelines and sprays in addition to large water tankers and fire fighting vehicles. All our Mine personnel are trained as first responders. On days of extreme fire danger, we set up our emergency command centre.

There is a rumour that a big fire is burning underground in the Mine - is this true?

Brown coal, because of its composition, can occasionally experience hot spots. Our employees regularly patrol the Mine with portable thermal imaging cameras. This efficient diagnostic technology allows them to instantly detect any hot areas in and around the Mine. In addition to general surveying for excessive heat, the cameras are used to check previous areas of interest to ensure they remain benign. The hand-held cameras are supported by Forward Looking Infrared (FLIR) cameras mounted on permanent fixtures to monitor the Northern and Southern Batters area. If a smouldering area is found, it is dug out and clay capped to ensure it remains safe.