



# Stawell Gold Mines

Environment Review Committee Minutes

13 May 2025



## ERC MEETING AGENDA

1. Open Meeting\_\_\_\_\_Kieran Murrihy
2. Apologies, Previous Minutes and Actions\_\_\_\_\_Kieran Murrihy
3. Environmental Report\_\_\_\_\_Cameron Hope
4. SGM Operations and Community Update\_\_\_\_\_Cameron Hope
5. ERR Presentation\_\_\_\_\_Timothy Lubcke
6. SUPL update\_\_\_\_\_Kim Mintern-Lane
7. Regulator & Council Update\_\_\_\_\_ERR, EPA, NGSC, DELWP, WCMA
8. Other Business\_\_\_\_\_Kieran Murrihy
9. Next Meeting - Date and Agenda\_\_\_\_\_Kieran Murrihy

### 1. OPEN MEETING

#### 1.1 Attendees

ERC Members	Margaret Taylor, Geoff Stratford, Kate van Dyck, Rosalind Byass, Stephen Fielding,
SGM	Cameron Hope (Manager – Environment & Community), Annie McPherson (Community Engagement Officer), Stephanie Koziol (Community Engagement Officer), Peter Gross
Regulators	Timothy Lubcke (ERR), Denise Sumper (NGSC)
Chair	Kieran Murrihy (Foresight Lane)

### 2. APOLOGIES, PREVIOUS MINUTES AND ACTIONS

#### 2.1 Apologies

Peter Mueller, Glenn Kilburn (ERR), Bryana Bisset (WCMA), Sarah Marriott (FL), Emily Lee (DEECA)

#### 2.2 Previous Minutes

The Minutes from the previous meeting, 11 February 2025, were circulated to ERC Members. No attendees had comments or concerns with the Minutes.

## 2.3 Review of Previous Action Items

Action number	Action item
110225.1	Cameron Hope to share a screen grab of the active side of the mine with Kate van Dyck if possible. <b>(Still to be completed)</b>
110225.2	SGM to provide Geoff Stratford with a laminated version of the Q1 Blast Area Map. The map will also be posted on SGM's socials and Basecamp. <b>Complete</b>
110225.3	SGM will invite the SUPL Lab Manager to attend the May meeting to provide an update regarding the activity currently happening in the Lab. <b>Complete</b>

**Action 130525.1** – Cameron Hope to share a screen grab of the active side of the mine with Kate van Dyck.

## 3. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

Stawell Gold Mines (SGM) presented a slide-deck for the Q1 2025 Environmental Monitoring Results. Drawing on the ERC Environmental Notes, the slide-deck focused on Dust, Groundwater, Noise, Blasting, Hydrogen Cyanide, Complaints, Environmental Incidents, Regulatory Notices and Operations update. (see Table 1).

**Table 1. Summary of Environmental Aspects and Compliance Status**

- Fully compliant with criteria.
- Irregular or isolated event. Requires further investigation and actions if applicable.
- Exceedance of criteria requiring action.
- Not monitored during reporting period.

Aspect	Monitoring	Status	Comments
Air Quality	Dust deposition		Compliant
	AAQMS		Compliant, only non-mine related peaks
	Hydrogen cyanide		Compliant
	Emissions		Compliant
Blasting	Site		All blasts below 100 <sup>th</sup> ile limit of 10mm/sec. 2 blasts above 95 <sup>th</sup> ile limit of 5mm/sec.
Noise	Site		Elevated readings at North, East and West. No complaints from nearest receivers.
Water	Offsite bores		No new exceedances. Compliant with HSC drawdown metric.
	Offsite farm dams		Compliant
	Offsite creeks		Compliant
	Freeboard		Compliant
Flora and Fauna	Site		Compliant
Incidents	Site		11 environmental incidents reported
Regulatory Notices	Site		No regulatory notice in force.
Community	Complaints		4 complaints were received



### 3.1 Real Time Air Quality Monitoring

Figure 1: Real Time Air Quality Monitoring Map



All mine related emissions were within their respective 24h guidance values for PM<sub>2.5</sub> and PM<sub>10</sub>. Spikes in readings (see figure 2 and 3) were not mine related and caused by regional smoke and haze, primarily caused by bushfire and burning off.

SGM advised they have recently purchased a new real time air quality monitoring station (approx. \$45K investment) to replace the old monitor situated near TSF2 North West. The old monitor will be kept as a spare.

Figure 2. 24 PM 2.5 Averages

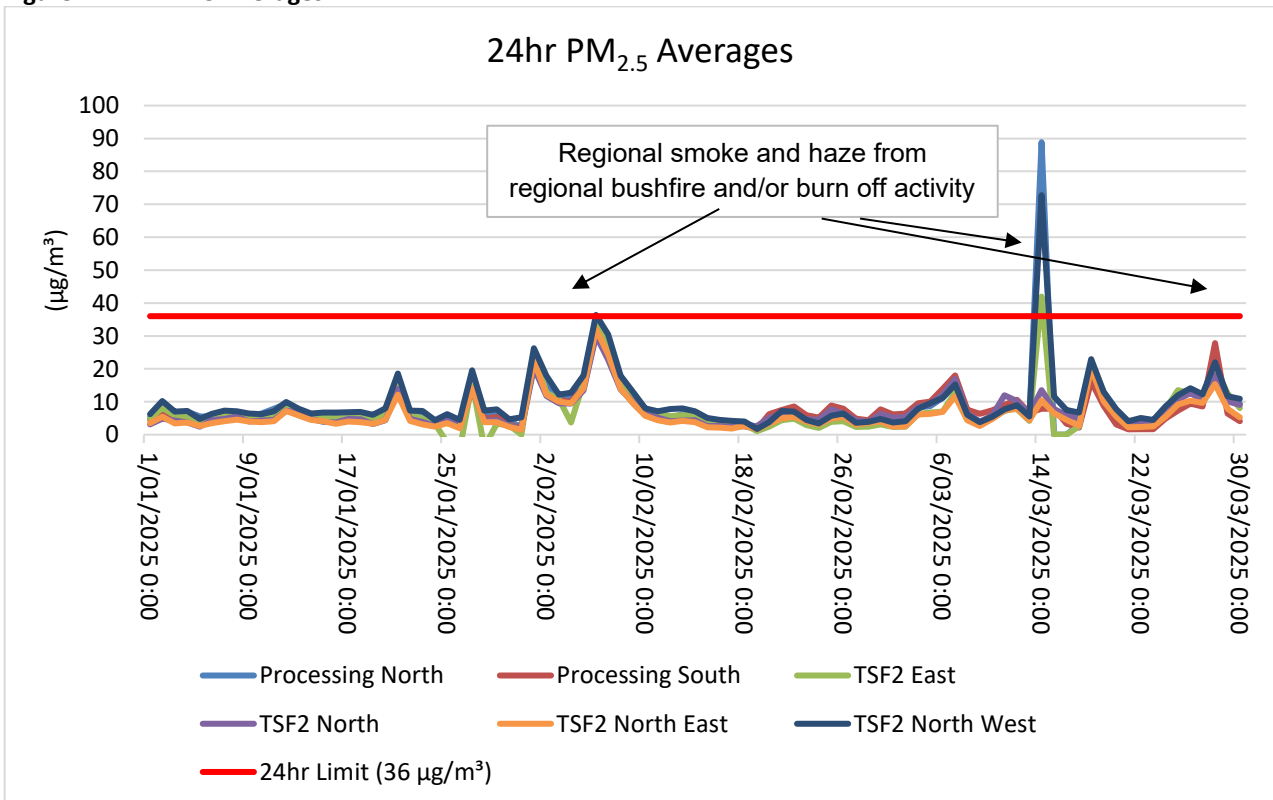
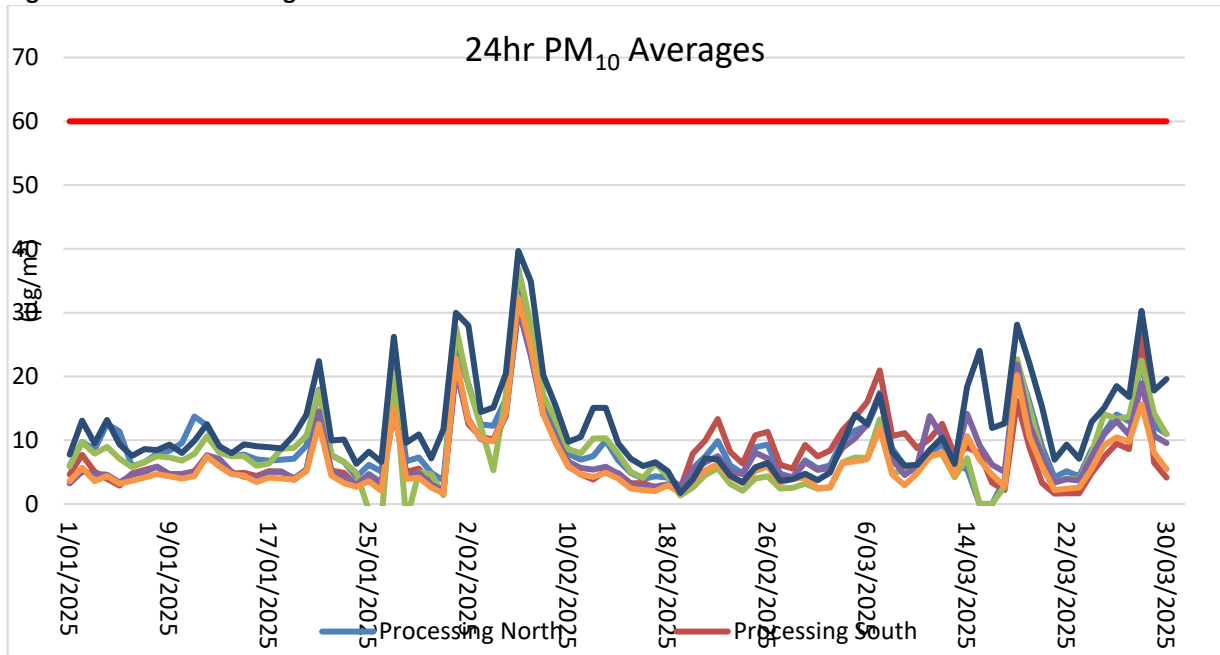


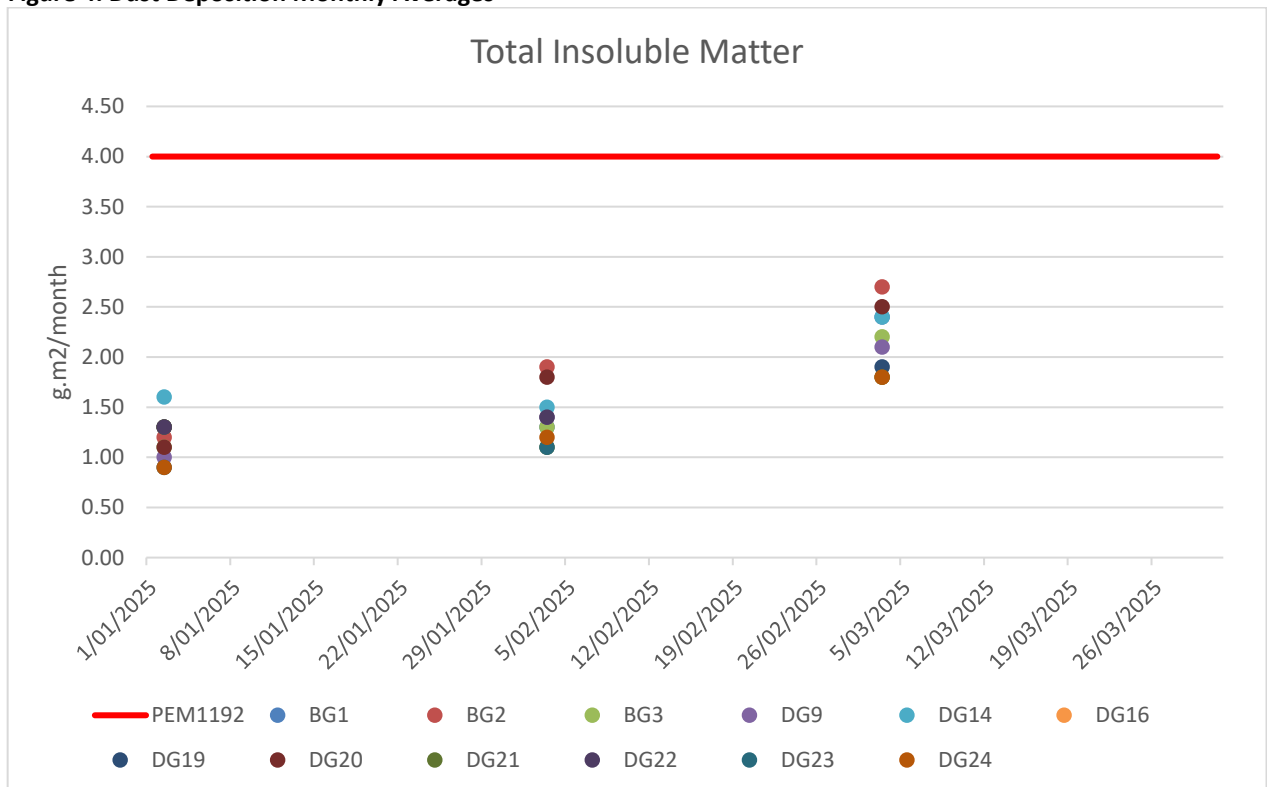
Figure 3. 24 PM 10 Averages



### 3.2 Dust Deposition

Recordings of slight dust increases appear to line up with regional smoke and haze events.

Figure 4. Dust Deposition Monthly Averages



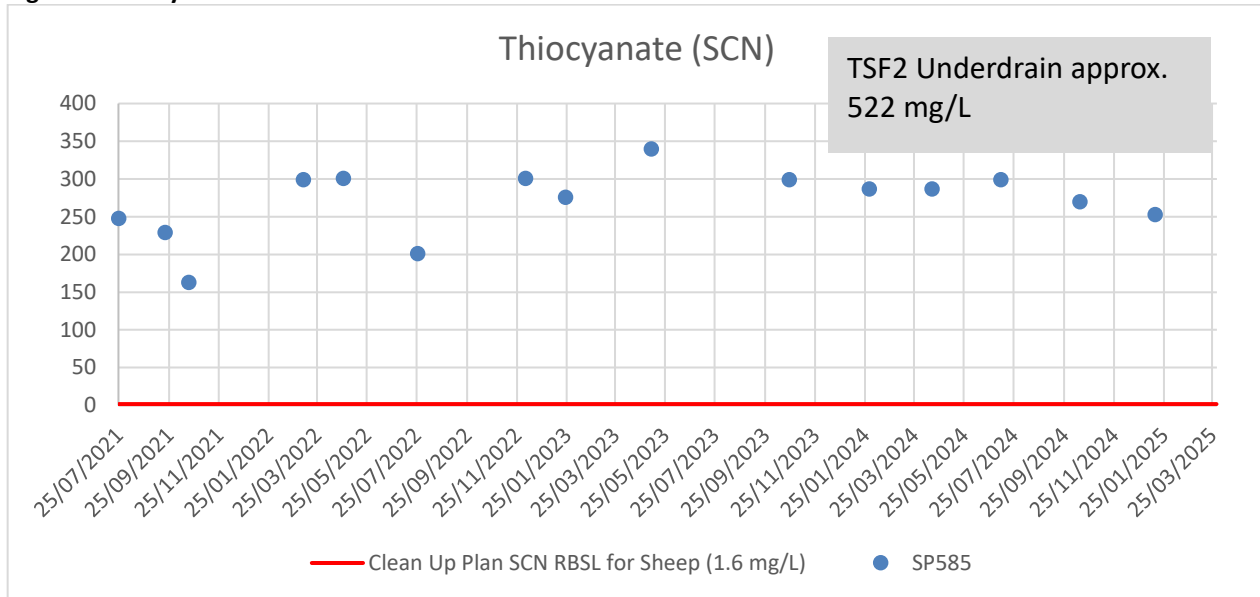
### 3.3 Emissions Monitoring

Emissions monitoring of Vent Shaft No. 4 is conducted 6-monthly, with the next monitoring round completed in April 2025. Results will be shown in the Q2 report.

### 3.4 Groundwater

The most recent sampling event at SP585 showed a concentration of 270mg/L for Thiocyanate. This is consistent with previous monitoring rounds. Ongoing groundwater monitoring will continue to establish trend lines for SCN concentrations at this bore. 2024 Mann Kendal Trend Analysis on data from March 2018 to current indicates that SP585 has an increasing trend in Thiocyanate however remains the only offsite bore with detectable limits. Trend changes each year. Previous trends have included 'Increasing', 'Probably Increasing' and 'No Trend'.

Figure 5. Thiocyanate trend line



#### Groundwater – Total Cyanide:

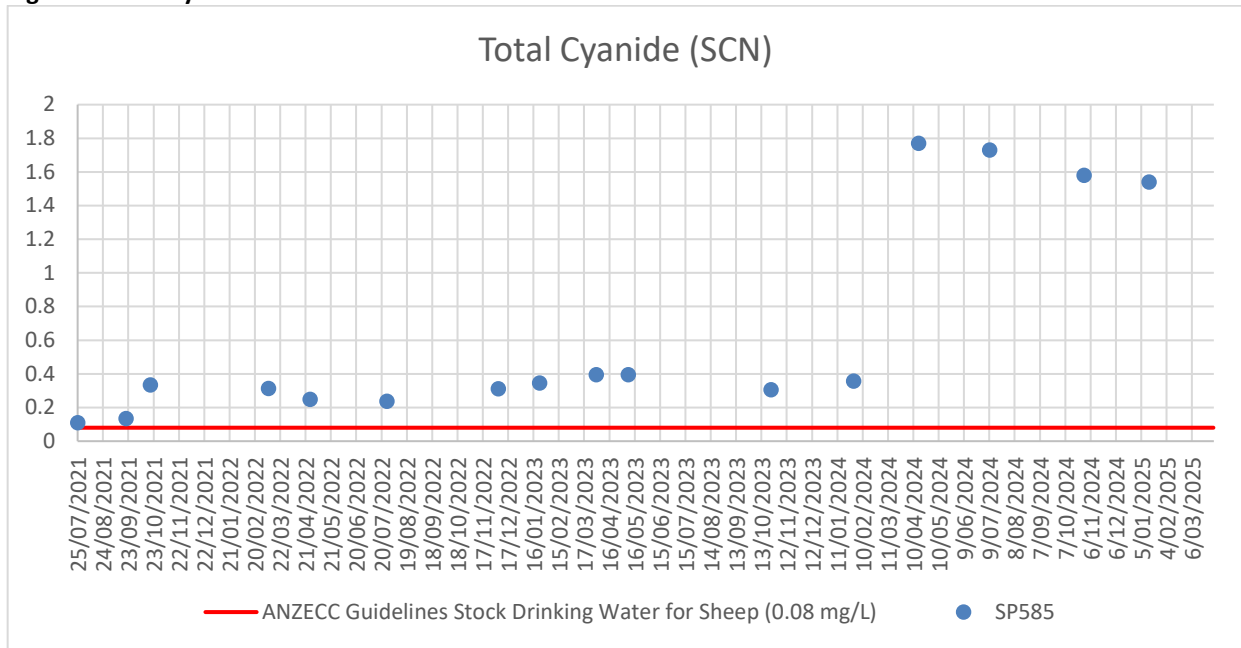
The most recent sampling event at SP585 shows a decrease from previous samples for Total-Cyanide concentrations (1.54mg/L). Total Cn investigation, headed by AECOM now has 3 quarters worth of data. Expect results within next month. There have been no new detections of Total Cyanide EPA and EEEV informed of progress. An increase in results (see figure 6) in several unconnected areas around site has triggered the investigation. Additional sampling has been undertaken and AECOM are looking into possible causes. Everything from sample contamination, to lab interference to changes in groundwater. All within the current plume area.

This issue generated significant discussion amongst ERC members. Key aspects of the discussion include:

- Community members are keen to understand the steps undertaken by SGM to find the cause of increases and inconsistencies. It was noted by community members that they want to be confident that the results can be counted upon and that any historical inconsistencies can be adequately explained.
- SGM reiterated that they have been investigating this issue in conjunction with AECOM for a number of quarters and reported on this at several previous ERC meetings. SGM are keen to get to the bottom of this issue and appreciate the importance of being able to have confidence in the results. SGM detailed some of the steps undertaken in recent times to understand the cause of the results including samples being sent to multiple labs.
- SGM asked whether community members would like for the independent consultant to be invited to the next meeting to explain (a) the process & steps undertaken to get to the bottom of the issue (b) any additional steps taken between the May and August meetings (c) findings and next steps. Community members would like for this invitation to be made – if the consultant is unable to attend, SGM will present the information in their absence or invite them to future meetings
- EPA and ERR have been kept in the loop regarding the recordings and investigation.

**Action 130525.2** – SGM to request that AECOM present information relating to the investigation processes and findings at the August 2025 meeting, as availability allows.

Figure 6. Total cyanide



### 3.5 Noise

Noise level emissions during the day period were compliant with site noise level guidance values at all monitored locations. Noise level emission during the evening period were compliant with site noise level guidance value at all monitored locations. Noise level emissions during the nighttime period were compliant with site noise guidance value at the Southern location but not at the North, East and West locations. The noted mine noise sources were the mill and trucks. A follow up was conducted as per SGMs Trigger Action Response plan. No abnormal works were reported by process management and the closest receptors reported no unusual or nuisance noises. Community consultation was conducted with those nearest receptors, and they did not note any unusual noise or noise which caused nuisance. No complaints were received.

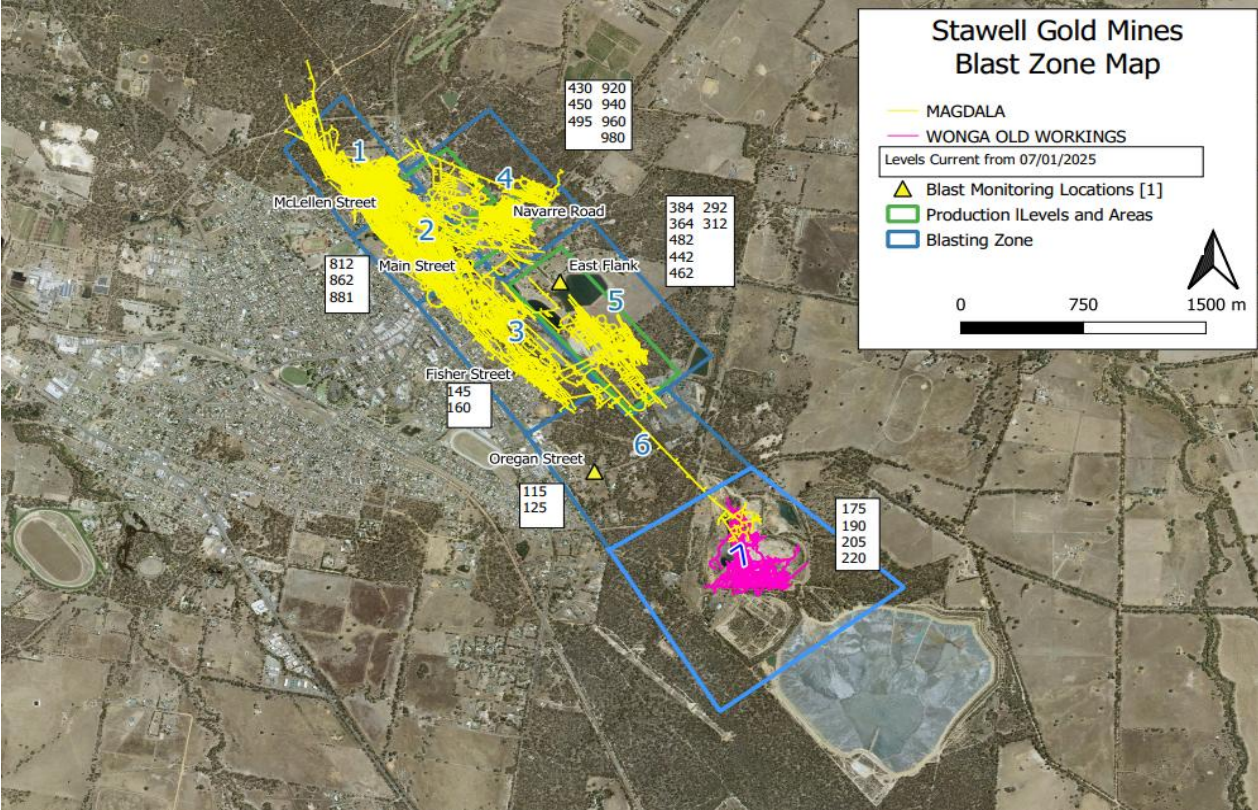
Table 2. Q1 Noise Monitoring Results

Monitoring Site	Day (07:00 to 18:00)	Evening (18:00 to 22:00)	Night (22:00 to 07:00)
Limit (LAeq)	50 dB	44 dB	39 dB
West	Mine Not Audible	Mine Not Audible	41
South	36	40	28
North	Mine Not Audible	32	45
East	35	31	41
North 2	-	-	38
East 2	-	-	36
West 2			35



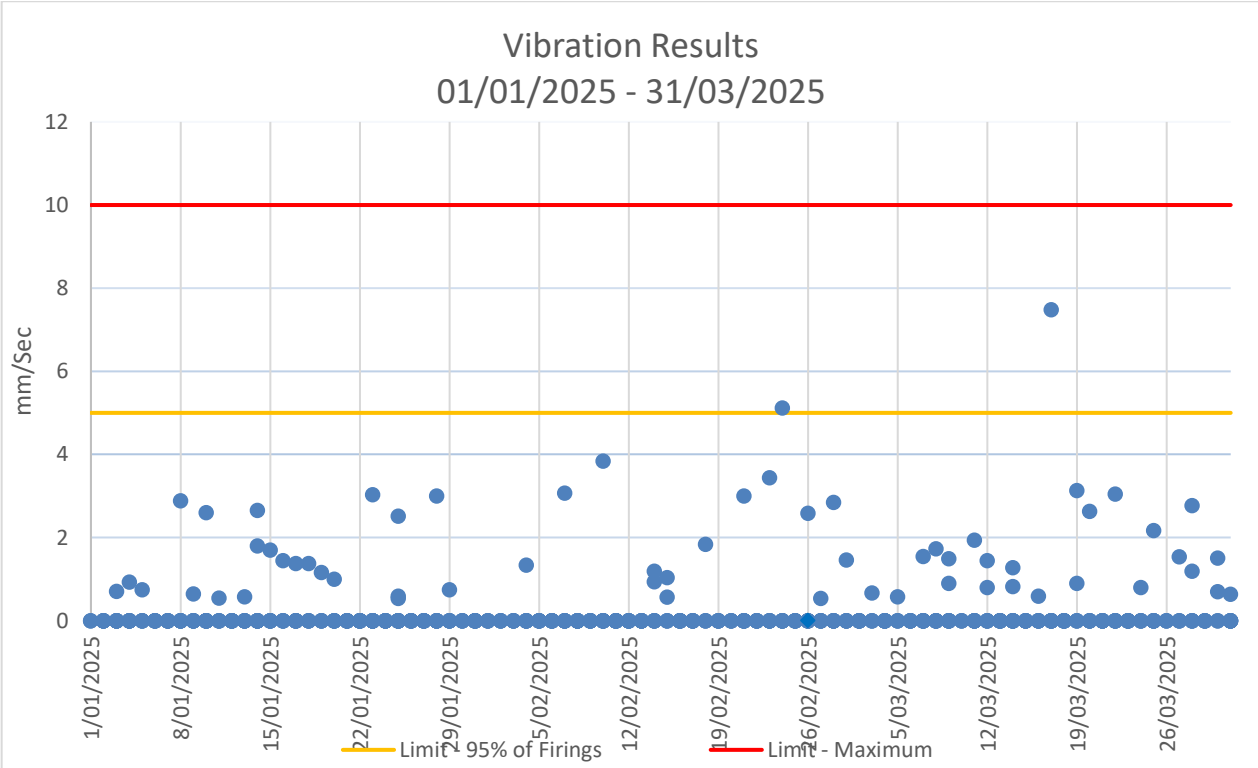
3.6 Production Area

Figure 7. Production Area for Q1 2025



3.7 Q4 Blasting – Firings Graph

Figure 8. Vibration Results Q1 2025



All readings were below the 10mm/sec absolute limit requirements with 2 readings in the 5<sup>th</sup> percentile range of between 5mm/sec and 10mm/sec.



### 3.8 Hydrogen Cyanide Monitoring

SGM's Hydrogen Cyanide readings showed no detections throughout the monitoring period.

### 3.9 Complaints

There were four community complaints during Q1 2025.

#### Blast

- Three complaints related to blasting noise and vibrations. The SGM Environment and Community team has been working closely with community members to address any queries or concerns. All complainants are known to SGM.
- The response has included providing additional information to complainants prior to every blast in sensitive areas, modifying blast duration and installing additional monitors in area of concern. Blasts remain compliant.

#### Miscellaneous

- There was one complaint received regarding signage being left out after hours. The sign was removed immediately and the complaint closed out.

### 3.10 Environmental Incidents

There were eleven environmental incidents during Q1 2025.

- **SGM005703:** Fauna - Interactions (02/01/2025)
  - Moderate
  - Guano in dust sample jar at monitoring location DG21.
  - Contamination leading to data loss.
- **SGM005704:** Spill - Liquid leak (03/01/2025)
  - Negligible
  - Liquid found leaking out of pipe in bunded area at oil storage area. Less than 1 litre.
  - The leak was contained within bund and cleaned up. Maintenance staff engaged to repair leak.
- **SGM006021:** Spill – IBC at the Batch Plant (29/01/2025)
  - Minor
  - The IBC tap was left open and resulted in a spill of shotcrete stabiliser in the Batch Plant area.
  - Approximately 3 litres of liquid was lost onto the hardstand area within the batch plant area
  - The spill was cleaned up by the mining department. No environmental damage occurred as a result of this spill.
- **SGM024363:** Incorrect disposal method - oil (29/01/2025)
  - Negligible
  - Leaves that had blown into oil storage bund had collected some oil and were removed and left next to bund.

The oily leaves were removed and disposed of correctly.

  - The environment team notified responsible department of the correct disposal method and procedures were put in place to ensure no repeat occurrence.

- **SGM004174:** Spill - Blown spigot cap on tails line at TSF2.
  - Minor
  - While conducting the tails inspection at the TSF2, it was noticed that one of the tails spigots had a leak, spraying upwards towards outer embankment of TSF2.
  - Tailings deposition was immediately moved to another area and the spigot and cap were replaced.
  - All tailings was contained within the TSF2 impoundment and any spilt material was cleaned up and disposed of into TSF2.
- **SGM006023:** Fauna - Interactions (03/02/2025)
  - Moderate
  - Guano in dust sample jar at monitoring locations DG16 and DG19.
  - Contamination leading to data loss.
- **SGM004175:** Spill - Blown spigot cap on tails line at TSF2 (19/02/2025)
  - Minor
  - Whilst conducting the TSF2 inspection, an employee noticed that a spigot cap has come off the spigot and was discharging small amounts of tailings onto the road and embankment. .
  - Tailings deposition was immediately moved to another area and the spigot and cap were replaced. All tailings was contained within the TSF2 impoundment and any spilt material was cleaned up and disposed of into TSF2.
- **SGM006024:** Fauna and Flora - Interactions (03/03/2025)
  - Moderate
  - Guano in dust sample jar at monitoring location DG23.
  - Large vegetation found in sample jar at monitoring location DG22.
  - Contamination leading to data loss.
- **SGM005602:** Spill – oil leak (6/03/2025)
  - Minor
  - Crane operator noticed oil leaking from a crane in the mill area from a suspected hydraulic line failure.
  - Work was suspended, and the crane was packed up and removed from site.

Spill was estimated at 150L, all contained in bunded area. All oil was soaked up, removed and disposed of.
- **SGM006025:** Loss of data - DustTrak (14/03/2025)
  - Moderate
  - Loss of data from Dusttrak Units due communication failures. .
  - All 6 dusttrak units were sent to Kenelec Scientific for annual calibration, upon their return they were deployed into field on 14 March. Two units were having difficulty with their telemetry connectivity(TSF2 East and Processing North.)
  - Kenelec Scientific contacted to rectify the issue on 14 March
  - Kenelec were able to resolve the issue remotely on 17 March.

- **SGM004175: Spill - Blown spigot cap on tails line at TSF2 (25/03/2025)**
  - Minor
  - Whilst conducting routine TSF2 inspection, employee noticed a blown spigot cap resulting in tailings material discharging into TSF2, as well as onto road and embankment.
  - Tailings deposition was immediately moved to another area and the spigot and cap were replaced.
  - All tailings was contained within the TSF2 impoundment and any spilt material was cleaned up and disposed of into TSF2.

SGM made note of the recurring issue with blown spigots. These incidents were easy to clean up and caused no environmental damage. Upon investigation, SGM found that the cause was sanding in the bottom of the pipes. The pipes were flushed out, removing the material. There have been no problems since.

### 3.11 Regulatory Notices

There were no new regulatory notices. SGM has continued to meet the requirements of the previously issued PAN. An annual review of the hydraulic containment system has been completed, assessed by an EPA-appointed auditor, and submitted to the EPA.

## 4 STAWELL GOLD MINES OPERATIONS UPDATE

### 4.1 Hydraulic Containment System (HCS)

The EPA made a site visit approximately 3 months ago and discussed how trends are recorded and represented in reporting. SGM informed EPA of their intention to continue to operate in accordance with the previous year's requirements, despite the notice no longer being in force. These activities include internal reporting, double layer independent oversight and an EPA submission. SGM is required to do this under the Duty to Manage. EPA indicated no concerns or follow up actions.

SGM was asked about a dust event on the 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025. SGM noted that there was no offsite discharge or increases in real time air quality monitoring. SMG took a number of steps to mitigate risks and impact including the used of water carts. As this occurred in Q2, this event will be reported at the August meeting. It was noted that there were no follow up actions required by the ERRV or EPA.

## 5 Presentations

Tim Lubcke, Senior Inspector, Earth Resources Regulation (ERR), provided a presentation of the compliance work undertaken by ERR in Victoria. A copy of slides presented on the day will be loaded on basecamp. Highlights of the presentation include:

- There are 1110 mined and quarries with a bond and 276 exploration licences with a bond.
- The scope of compliance includes risk to environment, public safety, land, property and infrastructure – and is from bond until rehab is complete.
- There are three domains of compliance
  - Licence/ authority holder obligations (requirements in the act and regulations)
  - Annual planned activity (informed by compliance priorities)
  - Other activity (prioritised via risk assessment)
- ERR has launched a Rapid Risk Assessment campaign and this will increase visitations to sites across the state. This campaign helps ascertain if the compliance focus is on the right risks in the right places. More than 90 assessments have already been undertaken in this region.
- Resources Victoria will release a new list of compliance priorities in July – the 2024/25 priorities included tailings storage, over extraction and rehabilitation.

**Action 130525.3** – Tim Lubcke to provide the chair with a presentation that can be shared on basecamp.

Kim Mintern-Lane, Facility and Laboratory Manager, Stawell Underground Physics Laboratory (SUPL). provided a presentation highlighting progress over the last 12 months. A copy of slides presented on the day will be loaded on basecamp (pending approval of content). Highlights of the presentation include:

- SUPL is an important part of the network of deep underground labs as it currently remains the only operational lab in the Southern Hemisphere.
- SUPL is 1km underground and is 700m below sea level. The depth is important in terms of reducing cosmic radiation as this allows for precise measurements and the detection of events that happen rarely (in particle physics).
- The team has recently expanded with the appointment of Steven Rushbrook as SUPL Laboratory Officer.
- Australia's Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation ([ANTSO](#)) has joined as the fifth SUPL Ltd Member.
- SUPL is working across a number of fronts to establish sustainable funding – this includes seeking recognition as National Research Infrastructure and building partnerships with International Funding Bodies ([CRNS](#)).
- SUPL continues to attract interesting projects and has been strengthening its profile and reach by presenting at international conferences and hosting events. Over 220 people from eight countries tuned in for the Beyond the Stars Livestream event.
- A local project group obtained funding to undertake a feasibility study to establish a state-of-the-art Science Outreach Centre in Stawell, styled as the Dark Matter Experience Centre

**Action 130525.4** – Chair to send a reminder to the EPA that they are scheduled to present at the August SGM ERC. NGSC will present at the November meeting.

## REGULATOR UPDATES

### 6.1 Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)

No report was given by EPA as there was no one in attendance.

### 6.2 Earth Resources Regulation (ERR)

ERR has nothing further to report.

### 6.3 Wimmera Catchment Management Authority (WCMA)

There was no report given by WCMA.

### 6.4 Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA)

There was no report was given by DEECA.

## 6 NORTHERN GRAMPIANS SHIRE COUNCIL (NGSC) UPDATE

There was no report from NGSC.

## 7 OTHER BUSINESS

Annie has revitalised the SGM MINNEWS concept to provide additional information to community members. It is anticipated the MINNEWS will be produced every 6 months and it can be found on the website - <https://stawellgoldminescommunityhub.com.au/community/>

It was noted by an ERC Community Member that whilst the attendance of community members at meetings remains strong, the attendance of regulators appears to have reduced over the last 12 months. The Chair will encourage the attendance of regulators at the August meeting and remind members that they are welcome to participate in meetings virtually.



**Action 130525.5** – Chair to send a reminder to regulators that meeting attendance is encouraged and that they have the option to attend virtually.

## 8 ACTION ITEMS AND NEXT MEETING

### 9.1 New Action Items

Action number	Action item
130525.1	Cameron Hope to share a screen grab of the active side of the mine with Kate van Dyck.
130525.2	SGM to request that AECOM present information relating to the investigation processes and findings at the August 2025 meeting, as availability allows.
130525.3	Tim Lubcke to provide the chair with a presentation that can be shared on basecamp.
130525.4	Chair to send a reminder to the EPA that they are scheduled to present at the August SGM ERC. NGSC will present at the November meeting.
130525.5	Chair to send a reminder to regulators that meeting attendance is encouraged and that they have the option to attend virtually.

### 9.2 Next Meeting

Next meeting is at 2.00pm on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> August 2025. The meeting will be held at the Stawell RSL.

Any members wanting to attend online should contact the Chair and Cameron Hope in the lead up to the meeting.