Archival Research

Investigations to be completed when researching or planning to mine in and around Old Workings - A Guide
Abstract

Following the Gretley disaster, which occurred in November 1996, the need for and value of the development of formal guidelines was evident from the recommendations of the inquiry held by Justice Staunton.

In line with recommendation 3 of Justice Staunton’s findings a “Guide for Searching Coal Mine Records in the New South Wales Department of Mineral Resources”, was developed by officers of the Department and was incorporated into the Gretley Information and Retraining Seminars held in November 1998.

Prior to Gretley, no actual guidelines, training or formal education through any mining curriculum existed within the coal mining industry for research into mine workings.

This Guide was developed to assist surveyors, managers and other persons who need to undertake a search of the Department’s coal mining records.

The outline and content of this Guide has been reviewed on several occasions to take into account experience gained over the last decade. Changes to the methods of storage and cataloguing within Mineral Resources Branch is currently under review.
Introduction

The Department of Industry and Investment’s Mineral Resources Branch (MRB) through
- files
- index systems
- registers
- maps and plans
provides a history of mining in New South Wales. In many instances this material is “primary source” information.

Information relating to the extent, accuracy and history of coal mine workings may be researched through a range of material held at MRB. This research may be extended into other sources and areas.

Additionally, the potential for the existence of mines other than coal, such as shale or metals, should be investigated.
Preliminary Research

- Continual updating of information and systems within the MRB has resulted in surveyors being able to conduct preliminary research via the website.

- This provides a good starting point prior to visiting the MRB.

- Preliminary research begins with the website utilising tools such as
  - Minview,
  - DIGS,
  - Tasmap and
  - the Library Catalogue.
Website Research

I agree to the **conditions of use** for this site.

Choose one of the following options to continue. You can further customize each option to display any of the available data layers. Your preferred display scheme can then be bookmarked for future use.

- **Titles Data:**
  View current titles, title applications and historical titles for minerals, petroleum and coal exploration.

- **Minerals Data:**
  View minerals titles, geology, origin of drill core held in our libraries, mineral drill hole locations and the location of significant metallic and industrial mineral sites.

- **Coal:**
  View coal titles, geology, origin of coal drill core held in our libraries and coal borehole locations.

- **Petroleum:**
  View petroleum titles, geology, origin of petroleum drill core held in our libraries, petroleum borehole locations and the location of gas fields around the state.

- **Links and Downloads:**
  Access useful links, including those for downloading external data.

- **Apply for a Title:**
  Select areas for submission of minerals Exploration Title Applications and complete using your credit card.
Online Applications - DIGS

DIGS® is an interactive database for exploration and geoscience information.
Found 1 report that matches your criteria, of which 1 is an open report, and 0 are confidential reports, from 129011 reports in database. Showing reports 1 to 1

Your search has matched 1 Open File (viewable) report(s), and 0 Confidential reports.

This result set contains:
1 viewable report(s), of type:
Mineral Exploration Reports Open File
Mine Records Open File
Research Reports Open File
Annual Report Compilations Open File
Coal Exploration Reports Open File
Petroleum Exploration Reports Open File
Record Tracing Open File
Survey Plan Open File
Working Plan Open File
Consolidated Lease Open File
Cartographic Maps Open File
Heritage Maps Open File
Departmental Publications Open File
Environmental Reports Open File

Page: 1

1 M27001 (R14090600)

Report Title Mining Lease 1518 (Act 1992)
Report Year NA
Author/Company Name Camberwell Coal PTY Limited
Collation 1 sheet

Page: 1
Report Summary and Document List for M27001

**Report/Document Number:** M27001  (Documents attached to this report are listed below).

**Report Identification Number:** R14090600

**Confidentiality:** Open File  **Accession Date:** 29-OCT-06

**Authors/Company Name:** Cambewar Coal PTY Limited

**Report Title:** Mining Lease 1518 Act 1992

**Collation:** 1 sheet

**Report Year:** N/A

**Subject Terms/Keywords:** Mapping, Mine

**Tenement Name/Number:** ML1518 Act 1992

**Map Sheet:** #26=9133-3-5

**Location:** County Durham Parish Auckland


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Online Applications - TASMap

TAS Map permits the search, display and download of NSW titles, maps and detailed information.

Turn on various layers showing current title and applications for coal, minerals and petroleum.
Online Applications - Libraries
Library Services within NSW DPI are delivered through a network of libraries located across the state. Our libraries exist primarily to support the Department’s staff in the conduct of their official business.

**Services available to members of the public**

Members of the public are welcome to use NSW DPI libraries for reference use only. However, licensing arrangements do not allow public access to databases for which the libraries pay a subscription fee.

You can search the Department of Primary Industries [library catalogue]. Direct borrowing is not permitted. Please contact your public, university or corporate library to arrange an interlibrary loan for any item you wish to borrow. Fees and conditions may apply at these libraries.

Photocopying is available but a charge may apply.

For library support, students should contact their own school, university, institute or college library in the first instance.

Library visits are available by appointment only at the following times:

- Monday – Friday from 9:00 am to 4:00 pm.

Please contact reception at the following centres to arrange an appointment.

- **Cronulla Fisheries Research Centre** - fisheries library
- **Cumberland State Forests, West Pennant Hills** - forest library
- **Elizabeth Macarthur Agricultural Institute** - agriculture library
- **Orange Agricultural Institute** - agriculture library
- **Mineral Resources Central Office, Maitland** - minerals library
- **Tamworth Agricultural Institute** - agriculture library
- **Total Agricultural Centre** - agriculture library
- **Trangie Agricultural Research Centre** - agriculture library
- **Waaga Waaga Agricultural Institute** - agriculture library
- **Wollongbar Agricultural Institute** - agriculture library

See also:
Research Procedures

- Obtain Check Sheet for Mine Plan Research.

**Coal**
- Register for Collieries and Projects
- Colliery Card Index
- Colliery Workings, Holding and Title Maps
- Mine Record Tracing
- Additional Information

**Metalliferous**
- Title Maps
- Registers
- Mine Working Plans
- Additional Information
Coal – Register for Collieries and Projects

- XL spreadsheet at MRB (not available online) *Contains information from Colliery Names Index and various registers.*

- Record Tracings (RTs) and Parish Maps are available as digital images.

- All registers containing Colliery Holding boundaries are being scanned and will be available as pdf documents.
## Register for Collieries and Projects

### Collery Index

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<th>Office</th>
<th>County</th>
<th>Fields</th>
<th>Party</th>
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<th>Meters</th>
<th>Associated Cliffs</th>
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<th>Plan Reviewed</th>
<th>Minerals Worked &amp; in the case of the name of owners</th>
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Colliery Card Index

- The Colliery Card Index had been developed and maintained over a number of years, however is now basically redundant.

- The index cards have been scanned and are available for research projects. The information on these cards has also been transferred to the Register for Colliery and Projects.

- The Colliery Card Index is useful as an historic research aid as it lists
  - notifications of suspension of mining
  - recommencement of operations
  - discontinuance and
  - abandonment for many, but not all, mines.
### Colliery Card Index

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Company name changed from J. A. Brown & Abermain Sadler Collieries Ltd to Coal & Allied Operations Plc as from 13/3/80.
Colliery Workings, Holding and Title Maps

- District Workings Plans (DWP) – are compiled hard copy, small scale workings maps showing the approximate location of coal mine workings on a seam by seam basis, within a particular coal mining region relative to cadastral boundaries. Each plan contains an index listing the Colliery name, Mine Record Tracing number and the name of the seam worked.

- The extent of workings in each seam is shown by a distinctive colour.

- Parish Workings Plans (PW) – cover mine working areas generally not included on the District Workings plans. Detail is similar to DWP.

- DWP and PW are not regularly updated but provide information to assist in identifying the RTs requiring further research and are now available as digital images.
Colliery Workings, District Working Maps
Colliery Workings, Parish Working Maps
Colliery Workings, Parish Title Maps
Colliery Holding and Discontinued Registers

- A colliery holding register is required to be maintained in accordance with Section 163 of the *Mining Act 1992*.

- These registers show details of
  - leasehold and freehold titles
  - barrier and pillar extraction approvals
  - Colliery Holding and miscellaneous file numbers relating to the history of the mine
  - the Mine Record Tracing number and
  - name of the operator of the mine.
Colliery Holding Registers
Mine Record Tracings

- MRB holds Record Tracings for current, discontinued and abandoned collieries. Record Tracing sheets that may have been superseded by sheets charted at another scale or for other reasons may also be available.
- The term “Record Tracing” was introduced in 1947, previously the plans were generally M series. A large proportion of older “RTs” also contain an M number.
- Prior to 1976 the RTs were usually drawn to a “local” grid and were measured in chains. Over time, this changed to imperial (feet) and eventually to a common grid and metric.
- Typical research relating to a record tracing is shown on the following “Check list”.
- RTs for all discontinued and abandoned coal mines have been scanned and are available as pdf, jpg or tiff documents.
Mine Record Tracings
Check List for Mine Record Tracings

- Seams
- Number of Sheets
- Scale
- Plan of Abandonment/Discontinuance
- Date of Abandonment/Discontinuance
- Notations
- Datelines
- Surveyors Signature
- Survey Information
- Drift/Shaft
- Connection to Boundary
- Name of Last Surveyor
- Notes

See Appendix A for Departmental Check Sheets
Additional Information

- Field Books
- Survey Plans
- Miscellaneous Plans
- Baseline Plans
Field Books

- The mine surveyors field notes are an important part of the research. Prior to 1976, RTs may not contain traverse and level information nor connection to some cadastral (portion) boundary.

- MRB stores a number of surveyors field notes and also retains an index of colliery surveys and colliery baselines.

- Other potential sources of field notes are former owners, former employees, registered land surveyors, historical societies or museums.
Field Books

Richmond Main Colliery

FIELD NOTES OF SURVEYS

from the 27th February 1923 to the 16th July 1923

Transmitted to the Chief Mining Surveyor at Sydney with my letter dated 10.8.23 No. 23/19 Ins No. 28/17 of 19.2.23

(Signature) Ed. Thomas M.S.
Survey plans

- MRB maintains an extensive range of plans related to surveys of mining leases dating back to the 1800’s. Every survey undertaken for a mining lease under the mining legislation of NSW is catalogued in this system.

- Index registers are maintained for the plans with a catalogue system using the letters M, P, G, S, D and T. Mining Lease surveys for coal mining operations would normally be found in the M and P registers with some older surveys in the S system. The D register is primarily diagrams including Consolidated Coal Leases.
Survey plans
Former Surveyors

- Information on former surveyors will be listed on the RTs.

- Further information can be obtained from the Mine Surveyors Register held at Mineral Resources-Mine Safety Performance-Competencies & Exams.

- If possible, former surveyors at the mines should be contacted and discussions held, regarding:
  - accuracy of plans and survey methods
  - surface surveys/marks
  - location of any survey field books or notes
  - colliery baseline marks or other surface marks that may be linked to underground workings
  - memory or any information on accuracy of workings and survey practices, particularly areas closest to the mine.
Surface and Survey Information

- Connection from surface to underground – this information may possibly be on a RT or the Department of Mines may have conducted a series of surveys to provide a connection from portion boundaries via shafts, drifts or tunnels to underground survey marks (Miscellaneous Plans).

- Some of these marks may still be in existence or a connection can be compiled to an existing cadastral location (Portion corner) on the appropriate grid system.
Other Sources

- MRB
  - TASMAP for current leases, titles
  - DIGS for historical plans, leases, RTs
  - Check for mineral titles, metal, shale mines
  - Library – Annual reports, Humble

- State Archives – old files (see Gretley Retraining document).


- Historians / researchers / historical societies.

- Regional and / or Mining Museums – Newcastle Museum, Lithgow State Mine Museum, Richmond Main – History of Greta Seam (Jack Delaney), Edgeworth David Museum (Kurri Kurri High School)

- Former surveyors, mine managers, proprietors, mine inspectors.
Compilation and Conversion

- Gather all available information from MRB and other avenues.
- Locate underground survey field notes or calculation books for the mine.
- Review to establish a survey from the entry to the face (closed wherever possible).
- Locate survey information from a portion boundary or other known mark to the mine entry.
- Compare portion information from this source, generally Parish Plans with current available cadastral (LPMA).
- Compile information for conversion to MGA.
- Convert information.
- Plot on mine plan.
Summary

- Research according to the Guide.
- Investigate all avenues not just MRB.
- The older Record Tracings cannot be relied on as a “stand alone” documents.
- Anecdotal evidence – talk to last mine surveyor if possible.
- Produce detailed records and documentation, particularly records of interviews and discussions.
- Incorporate this information into relevant Research and Inrush Management documents with particular reference to the accuracy and standard of information obtained especially in relation to the advice of the last surveyor.
Summary

- An example of accuracy is:
  - Level 1
    Most accurate – date lines around extremities, survey information, surveyor’s signature, connection to portion boundary. Opportunity to speak with last surveyor.
  - Level 2
    As for level 1, but last surveyor not available.
  - Level 3
    Date lines, surveyor’s signature, connection to portion boundary.
Appendix A

- Mine Plan Research Attendance Record
  - Check Sheet for Mine Plan Research – Coal
  - Check Sheet for Mine Plan Research - Metalliferous
CHECK SHEET FOR MINE PLAN RESEARCH ATTENDANCE RECORD

COAL

Candidate Name:

Mine/Company:

Date:

Mine Name/s:

RT Number/s:

Register for Collieries and Projects: ☐

History:

Associated files:

Colliery Card Index: ☐

Comments:
Colliery Workings, Holding and Title Maps:

District/Parish Working Maps:
Check Outline of workings generally agrees with RT: 

Shown Reference Number:

Parish Title Maps:

Colliery Holding Plan Register:

Mine Record Tracing:

Seam/s: 

No of Sheets:

Scale:

Plan of Abandonment/Discontinuance:

Date of Abandonment/Discontinuance:

Notations:

Datelines

Surveyors Signature
Survey Information

Drift/Shaft

Connection to Boundary:

Name of Last Surveyor:

Notes:

Additional Information:

Field Notes/Books:

Survey Plans:

Miscellaneous Plans

Baseline Plan

Signature of Attendee:

Signature of Departmental Officer:
CHECK SHEET FOR MINE PLAN RESEARCH ATTENDANCE RECORD
METALLIFEROUS

Candidate Name:

Mine/Company:

Date:

Mine Name/s:

MWP Number/s:

County:

Parish/s:

Title Maps:

Parish Title Maps:   □
Registers:  

Associated files:  

**Mine Working Plan:**  

Levels:  

No of Sheets:  

Scale:  

Plan of Abandonment/Discontinuance:  

Date of Abandonment/Discontinuance:  

Notations:  

**Additional Information:**  

Field Notes/Books:  

Survey Plans:  

Miscellaneous Plans  

Baseline Plan  

Signature of Attendee:  

Signature of Departmental Officer: