

Proposal to increase blast limits to reduce the number of blasts

The Australian and NSW governments are jointly funding the \$4.36 billion Woolgoolga to Ballina Pacific Highway upgrade. Roads and Maritime Services has engaged Pacific Complete, comprising Laing O'Rourke and WSP Parsons Brinckerhoff, to partner with the Pacific Highway Office to deliver the project.

Roads and Maritime Services has contracted OHL and York to upgrade the 14 kilometre Woolgoolga to Halfway Creek section. Work started in June 2015 and is expected to be open to traffic in 2017, weather permitting.

What are our blasting limits?

The project's environment protection licence sets the vibration and air blast overpressure limits for blasting. These are:

- Air blast overpressure not to exceed 120dB (Lin Peak) at any time and not to exceed 115dB (Lin Peak) for more than 5 per cent of the time
- Ground vibration not to exceed 10mm/s (Peak Particle Velocity) at any time and not exceed 5mm/s (Peak Particle Velocity) for more than five per cent of the time.

Why do we want to increase blasting limits?

We are seeking to increase the vibration limits to reduce the number of blasts and period of time blasting. This will also:

- Reduce the need to use other mechanical means, such as rock hammering and crushing, to break the rock
- Minimise inconvenience to residents by reducing the number of recommended relocations
- Minimise delays to motorists on the Pacific Highway and local roads.

The planning approval for the project allows for the ground vibration and air blast overpressure limits to be increased if affected residents within 200 metres of blasting agree.

What is the proposed increase to blasting limits?

We are seeking your approval to:

- Increase overpressure by 5db (Lin Peak). Overpressure not to exceed 125dB blast overpressure at any time.
- Increase ground vibration by 15mm/s. Ground vibration not to exceed 25mm/s (Peak Particle Velocity) at any time.

These proposed levels are well below the level at which any cosmetic damage to property (such as minor paint cracking) occurs.

What should I do if I think my house has been damaged?

Before work started, the project team carried out building condition inspections on dwellings that are close to the controlled blasting locations. Copies of these reports have been provided to those property owners.

If damage is caused to your property during the controlled blasting process, please contact the Community Manager immediately on 1800 778 900 (press 2) toll free. The project team will organise to have your property inspected and will monitor your dwelling during future blasts to determine if the controlled blasting has caused the damage. The project team will rectify any damage found to have been caused by the controlled blasting work.

More information

Please contact us on 1800 778 900 (press 2) to arrange a meeting with our blasting expert to discuss why we are seeking to increase the blast limits. We are also able to provide a detailed explanation of the controlled blasting operation and how our upcoming blasts will be carried out.

If you agree to the increased blast limits please sign the declaration of agreement. This can be returned by:

- Post – Community Manager, Woolgoolga to Halfway Creek section, PO Box 521, Woolgoolga NSW 2456
- Email – W2HC@ohlaustralia.com

Declaration of agreement

I understand the information provided and have discussed the proposed increase in blasting limits with the project community team.

I, _____ of _____ have no objection to the increase in approved blast limits to:

- Air blast overpressure not to exceed 125dB at any time
- Ground vibration not to exceed 25mm/s (PPV) at any time.

I understand I am able to withdraw my consent at any time or contact the Community Relations team on 1800 778 900 (press 2) if I have any concerns or queries in relation to blasting or other project related matters.

Full Name

Signature

Date