

Coffs Harbour Bypass

Acoustic Advisor Monthly Report

April 2024

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Table of Contents

1.	Introduction.....	1
2.	Summary of construction activities.....	2
3.	AA activity.....	2
4.	Closing comments	5

Distribution List

██████████	Transport for NSW
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██████████	Environmental Representative
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██████████	NSW Department of Planning, Housing and Industry
██████████	Environment Manager, FGJV
██████████	Independent Certifier
██████████	Transport for NSW

Glossary of terms and abbreviation

AA	Independent Acoustic Advisor approved by DPIE
CBAG	Coffs Bypass Action Group
CCC	Community Consultation Committee
CEMP	Construction Environmental Management Plan
CNVMP	Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan
CoA	Conditions of Approval
CSSI	Critical State Significant Infrastructure
DPHI	Department of Planning Housing and Industry
Early works	Works not defined as construction under the CoA
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
ER	Independent Environmental Representative approved by DPIE
EMS	Environmental Management System
EPA	NSW Environment Protection Authority
EPL	NSW Environment Protection Licence
FGJV	Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture (the Contractor)
Incidents	As defined in the Conditions of Approval
OEH	Office of Environment and Heritage
(the) Project	Coffs Harbour Bypass
Proponent	Transport for NSW
Secretary	Secretary of DPIE
SPIR	Submissions and preferred infrastructure report
SSI	State Significant Infrastructure

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Transport for NSW is the Proponent for the Coffs Harbour Bypass (the Project).

The Project is Critical State Significant Infrastructure (CSSI) and was approved by the NSW Minister for Planning in 2020 (SSI 7666) following preparation of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) in 2017 and of a Submissions and Preferred Infrastructure Report (SPIR) by Transport for NSW in response to submissions from government, agencies, organisations and the public.

Construction commenced by the Ferrovial Gamuda Joint Venture (FGJV) on 31 March 2023 under a Construction Environment Management Plan (CEMP) and sub-plans including the Noise and Vibration Management Plan (NVMP) approved by Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) on 17 March 2023.

Transport for NSW continues to deliver early works for the project, defined in the Conditions of Approval (CoA) as low impact work, which commenced prior to approval of the CEMP. These works are in their final stages.

This Acoustic Advisor monthly report relates to all works undertaken by FGJV and Transport for NSW in April 2024.

1.2 Acoustic Advisor

In accordance with CoA A28 of Approval SSI 7666, an independent, suitably qualified and experienced Acoustic Advisor (AA) was engaged for the duration of the Project. John Hutchison was approved in the AA role by the delegate to the Secretary on 1 February 2021 in accordance with CoA A28. Scott Hughes is acting as the alternate AA where the AA is unavailable.

1.3 Environmental Representative

An independent Environmental Representative (ER) was engaged for the Project in accordance with CoA A21. Duncan Thomson is the ER, with Simon Williams the alternate, and approved by the delegate to the Secretary in July 2021.

As required in CoA A30(g), the ER works closely with the AA on noise and vibration related matters on the Project. Interactions with the AA are summarized in Section 3.10 of this report.

1.4 Scope of monthly report

As required by CoA A30(g)(iv), the AA must prepare and submit a monthly report, providing information on any actions or decisions for which the AA was responsible in the preceding month. Actions and decisions include but are not limited to:

- Communications with the Secretary
- Consideration and recommendations to Transport for NSW on improvements that may be made to avoid or minimise adverse noise and vibration impacts.
- Reviews and, where appropriate, endorsement of all noise and vibration documents required to be prepared under the Conditions of Approval.
- Any actions or decisions relating to regular monitoring of the implementation of noise and vibration documents;
- Any notifications to the Secretary of noise and vibration incidents;
- Any audits or inspections of the project and associated recommendations;
- Any action taken to help resolve conflicts between Transport for NSW and the community;
- Consideration of minor amendments to the CEMP, relevant sub-plans and monitoring programs

2. Summary of construction activities

Construction activity by the JV currently underway:

- Bulk earthwork is widespread and will continue for some time
- Drilling and blasting are underway within multiple cuts.
- Piling and bridgeworks in multiple locations including at the Englands Road Interchange, Coramba Road Interchange, North Boambee Road, Korora Interchange and several creek crossings including Pine Brush Creek. Concrete pours for pylons and headstocks occasionally require commencement or completion outside standard hours for technical purposes.
- Tunnelling has commenced at Gatelys North portal with blasting while portals are being prepared for tunnelling at Roberts Hill and Shephards portals.
- Median removal continues in the northern section of the Pacific Highway and will continue for a several weeks, mostly at night and some clearing in the southern section along the Pacific Hwy was undertaken in April.

Commencing in April and yet to be resolved, a substantial risk to the project is being managed by the team in consultation with EPA, DPHI, the ER and AA. The first issue is approval for 24/7 tunnelling, which requires associated services outside the tunnel portal such as power, ventilation and water treatment plant. These activities are not permitted outside standard hours in the Conditions of Approval if not deemed to be tunnelling or not operating within the NML. The team is working with DPHI to seek appropriate approval pathways.

Secondly, exceedances of airblast overpressure limits for blasting in Gatelys North tunnel have stalled works at the Gatelys North tunnel portal. Approval for these works is currently being sought through amendment to the CNVMP and a modification of the project approval to permit higher levels of Airblast than the CoA currently allow.

3. AA activity

3.1 Secretary communications

Written communication with DPHI in April included:

4 April – email re presentation on 24/7 tunnelling

Meetings involving DPHI are discussed below.

3.2 Recommendations for improvement

Recommendations on assessment methods and documentation were provided during review, as summarised below. Recommendations provided during site inspection (see Section 3.8).

3.3 Documentation review

3.3.1 Endorsements of project documentation

29/4 – CNVMP Revision K to address tunnelling descriptions to improve clarity around what may be considered tunnelling for the purpose of 24/7 activity.

3.3.2 Document reviews

10/11 April – review of community agreement documentation related to Increased blasting limits agreement for Gatelys Road Tunnel

22 April - Gatelys South/Shephards North - Evening Shotcrete - Agreements

26 April – CNVMP Rev K to address definitions of tunnelling

26 April - Gatleys Nth CNVIS - Revised Draft V3 – to address reasonable and feasible actions the JV can take to reduce tunnelling noise to practical minimums. NML compliance is not likely at the nearest receivers.

3.4 Approved under the EPL (for AA information only)

Works reviewed by the AA but approved by FGJV under EPL condition L6.2, L6.5 or L6.9 included:

2 April - Revised Stage 2 clearing OOHWP permit for review and approval

3.5 OOHWP permit reviews/approvals - EPL Condition L6.4

Works reviewed and approved in consultation with the ER included the following.

15 April – Extension to OOHWP 55 - BR18 & 19 Early Pours

3.6 OOHWP permit reviews/approvals – low risk

OOH works reviewed and approved under the OOHWP protocol included the following. Permits approved under the Protocol are attached as Appendix A for reference.

- NIL

3.7 OOHWP permit reviews/approvals – community agreement

10/11 April – review of community agreement documentation related to Increased blasting limits agreement for Gatleys Road Tunnel

22 April - Gatleys South/Shephards North - Evening Shotcrete - Agreements

3.8 Emergency works

No emergency works notified to the AA in April.

3.9 Document amendments

Changes to CNVMP to more specifically described tunnelling activities.

3.10 Monitoring of document implementation

3.10.1 CNVMP and associated documents

Monitoring of the CNVMP and associated documents has been undertaken through review of assessments, mitigation measures (including EWMS) and approval of OOHWP. Site inspections are undertaken to gain context for approvals and to ensure measures proposed in applications are implemented appropriately.

3.10.2 Monitoring results

On 9 April, the CHB team notified DPHI of historical non-compliance with the CoA and CNVMP. Blasting in the Gatleys North tunnel had been exceeding the Airblast overpressure limit of 115 dB for three weeks without the team reviewing or managing the impacts. Levels in excess of 130 dB were recorded.

Blasting ceased on identification of the exceedances and would not recommence until assurances of compliance and/or agreement with the affected community could be reached. Agreement with all affected residents could not be gained and blasting in the Gatleys North portal remains a high risk of impact and project delays.

As of 24 April, blast results remain non-compliant with the CoA and CNVMP.

Regular monitoring results for April have been issued to the AA for review and information:

- Noise monitoring for verification of clearing noise demonstrated agreement with predicted levels.
- Drill and blast monitoring demonstrated no exceedances in the north, however a minor airblast limit exceedance was recorded for a blast in cut 4. This fits within the 5% bracket of blasts between 115 dB and 120 dB.

3.10.3 At-receiver noise treatments

No update for April. The final few challenging properties with asbestos issues are gradually being addressed. Limited visibility on progress at the moment.

3.11 Incidents

The airblast limit exceedances have been reported to DPHI as an incident and DPHI is considering the matter. The CHB team conducted an internal review on the how the exceedances went unnoticed for 3 weeks and recommendations of this review will include adding airblast to the quality system as a hold-point prior to each blast.

3.12 Auditing and inspection

Site inspection was undertaken on 10 April. The inspection was project-wide including earthworks locations, bridge pad and piling works, portal areas, crushing and drill sites. The team is managing noise with reasonable and feasible measures in place.

3.13 Community complaints and enquiries

In total, one complaint related to noise and/or vibration was received by the JV. This involved engine braking on Mackays Road. Upon review, non-JV vehicles are believed to be responsible.

The community team has been addressing concerns/complaints in a timely manner through explanation of the work and works coming up, reasons for works outside standard hours and passing on monitoring outcomes if appropriate.

3.14 Meetings

The AA attends weekly meetings with Transport for NSW, FGJV, DPE and the ER. Within these meetings, upcoming works are discussed as well as any complaints related to noise and vibration and the status of document preparation and approval.

The AA also attends a monthly meeting with DPE and the project team for an update (10 April).

Other meetings held in April include:

2 April – 24/7 tunnel briefing with the JV

8 April to discuss 24/7 tunnelling with the JV – update to the CNVMP

18 April – Airblast overpressure discussion with EPA

22 April - Airblast overpressure discussion with DPHI

Resident meetings are regularly held to discuss the project or at-house noise treatment. No meetings were held in April.

3.15 Interactions with the ER

The ER and the AA have worked together in reviewing noise and vibration documents and providing comments to Transport for NSW in a coordinated manner. We consult together on any issues that are raised and require further discussion.

4. Closing comments

Construction is underway in line with the CNVMP including assessment procedures, implementation of mitigation and consultation.

Complaint frequency remains low, with at-house noise treatment the main causes for resident concern. Blasting has resulted in little community concern.

OOHW continues to be requested largely when working near the Pacific Highway but these requests are not overly frequent and most OOHW activity is approved under the EPL. The AA and ER have visibility of the EPL activities and this allows better coordination of respite and consistency of assessment/application of mitigation.

Substantial issues with approval for 24/7 tunnelling and airblast impacts are currently being addressed and should hopefully be resolved over the next few weeks for the CNVMP update but potentially a longer timeframe for the airblast modification process.

Interaction with the community continues regularly, with individual appointments as well as group meetings to answer questions and hear opinions. Outcomes from all meetings are provided to the community team to record in the CRM system.

Interactions with FGJV, Transport for NSW and the ER have been positive, and the AA has maintained a good relationship between all parties to achieve best practice proactive noise and vibration management and ongoing compliance with the Conditions of Approval.