



CSIRO Local Voices Community Conversation: Muswellbrook

On 27th February 2020, CSIRO and BHP hosted a Community Conversation in Muswellbrook. Community members came together with Dr Kieren Moffat from CSIRO, Mt Arthur Coal General Manager Adam Lancey and BHP community team members to:

- Share key findings from the CSIRO Local Voices Anchor survey
- Discuss these findings with other community members and BHP, and
- Talk about how the community, BHP and CSIRO can work together to understand and progress challenges identified.

BHP LOCAL VOICES



Upper Hunter Anchor Survey Participants

197
COMPLETED
SURVEYS

9.64%
ABORIGINAL/TORRES
STRAIGHT ISLANDER



Community Rewards

\$2,750 EARNED BY LOCAL VOICES PARTICIPANTS FOR 13 COMMUNITY GROUPS

Trust in BHP

We found trust in BHP was related to three key areas: how the company responds to community concerns, commitment to Muswellbrook through local jobs, and the quality of interactions between BHP people and the communities surrounding its operations in the Upper Hunter region. Spreading the benefits of BHP's operations broadly and fairly through community was also important in driving trust.

Discussion: How can we improve trust?

The group explored BHP's responsiveness as a key area where improvement would lead to higher levels of community trust in the company. A strong discussion theme was open communication. For those living close to the mine, proactive engagement about specific issues, schedules, and reasons for changes in the mine were of primary importance, while for those further away from site the emphasis was on broader opportunities to interact with BHP. Community Conversation type workshops and more face to face opportunities to interact constructively with BHP were encouraged by community members. The group also explored how younger people of the region may be engaged more fully (e.g. through creating a youth reference group, working with local schools and using social media).

Discussion: Spreading the benefits of mining wider

These discussions focused on how to broaden the value proposition for BHP within the community, and ensuring local people feel they are receiving a fair share of benefits that flow from its operations (which is also a key driver of trust in the company from our Local Voices data). Participants were keen to work on ways to encourage employees living outside Muswellbrook to engage more with the town economically through local businesses where possible. The group also felt that BHP could better inform the community about its existing extensive local spend and the broader benefits that flow from mining that may not be easily apparent, specifically the Local Buying Program, local procurement and BHP's contributions to local community groups. It was also acknowledged that the groups who do benefit from BHP could share their 'good news' stories more as well. Youth employment was discussed, with the group keen to see renewed emphasis on employment pathways and local traineeships for local young people.

Community resilience

The Local Voices data shows us that communities are better able to manage change when there is a strong track record of collaboratively solving problems together, trust between groups, and strong diversity in the community (i.e. different types of groups like older people as well as young families). Leadership (both formal and informal) also plays an important role.

Discussion: Working on leadership in Muswellbrook

Muswellbrook has shown strong resilience in the past through downturn and drought, but the current feeling is that less people are now involved in volunteer positions, and shift work could be the main contributory factor. The group would like to see this rectified so that more community groups and committees could benefit from the leadership of BHP employees. The group expressed an interest in BHP committing to the future of Muswellbrook, beyond the life of the mine, by contributing to local infrastructure projects and actively engaging with the community. The discussion also explored the need for diversification in the local economy for ensuring the resilience of Muswellbrook no matter what challenges the future may bring.

- Responsiveness
- Local jobs
- Contact quality

TRUST

Next steps

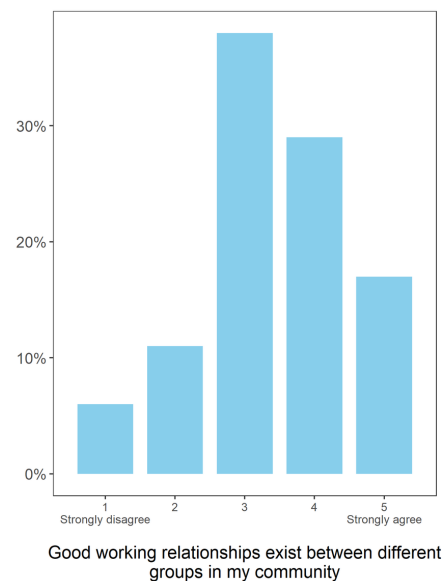
The CSIRO Local Voices program of work is about bringing the voice of community in Muswellbrook directly in to BHP.

There are two main areas where CSIRO will be focusing in 2020:

1. Increasing the number of community members participating in Local Voices surveys each month - remember, BHP can only respond to concerns if they know about them, and
2. Working with local groups and the BHP team to make the data that Local Voices collects as useful (and used) as possible.

Get involved

To register for Local Voices, search for "BHP Local Voices" online or contact localvoices@csiro.au



CSIRO Local Voices
Feeling heard is a powerful thing

BHP