

2 October 2020

LOY YANG B DUST EXCEEDANCE EVENT

Loy Yang B
Power Station

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Loy Yang B Power Station is disappointed to have recorded its second dust exceedance event for 2020, having previously gone more than five years without a reportable environmental event.

Unit start and stop events – planned or otherwise – do not occur frequently at Loy Yang B, however when Unit 1 was shut down for essential repair on 31 August 2020, the unit experienced high dust conditions from the main flue gas discharge location (stack).

On this occasion, a master fuel trip did not automatically reset, causing the dust capture equipment (electrostatic precipitators) to be out of service for an extended period. Once the dust exceedance alarm was initiated, the operating crew on shift identified the precipitators were not operational and immediately reset the master fuel trip to re-energise the precipitators, quickly reducing the dust emissions to within station license limits.

A detailed investigation by our staff found the high dust levels can be attributed to inadequate relaying of critical operational information relating to the status of the electrostatic precipitators and the level of dust emissions which occur in situations when the unit is offloaded.

The following improvements have been implemented:

- Additional dust level alarms and operational status alarms for dust capture equipment have been added to assist with minimising dust levels;
- Plant operating manuals have been reviewed and updated to include additional checks during the unit shutdown process; and
- Briefings delivered to all panel operators/technicians, refreshing them on current unit shutdown instructions and procedures on environmental operating response and compliance.

Unfortunately, this event follows another dust exceedance which occurred on Unit 1 in February 2020, the details of which can be found on our website.

In each event, for a single 30-minute period, Loy Yang B recorded a particle (dust) mass rate value greater than that permitted by our Environment Protection Authority (EPA) operating licence #3987 (station maximum limit 11,100 g/min). The elevated levels of dust for one 30-minute period will have been diluted in the atmosphere with normal flue gas discharges, and while there would have been higher levels of visible dust occurring during the period, there were no measurable impacts to the environment or community.

In both cases, the EPA was contacted and provided an assessment. No action was taken by the EPA in relation to either non-compliance due to the minor nature.

We are confident these two events are unrelated and do not indicate a systemic issue. Despite this, we are committed to improving our environmental controls and are confident that the actions proposed will prevent a similar reoccurrence.

These events will both be publicly reported in the relevant year's Sustainability Report and Environment Improvement Plan, available on the Loy Yang B website, and in the Annual Performance Statement (APS), which is publicly available following a review by the EPA.

We are disappointed this event has happened and share the community's expectation that our power station will operate in continuous compliance with all requirements. We remain committed to minimising our impact on the environment.

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