

Bungendore to Captains Flat Community information session – 22 November 2022

Questions & Answers

Kids from the local school used to play on the lines years ago. How will Transport make sure that you let people know?

In July 2022, Transport wrote to stakeholders and property owners along the rail corridor to inform them about the elevated levels of lead.

We have shared information on our website and the EPA website. Further information can be found at <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/lead-exposure-children.aspx>

Will Transport fence the corridor and who will pay for it?

We are still investigating if the corridor needs to be fenced. The Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) will provide more information to inform a decision. We will develop an Interim Environmental Management Plan (IEMP) and implement the controls. Fencing may be part of these controls, and if a fence is required, Transport will cover the cost.

How wide are the transects where the samples were taken, and do they vary?

Generally, samples were taken every 500 metres. Samples were taken along the rail line and along the edge of the rail corridor

How wide is the corridor?

About 20 metres wide either side of the centre line. Once we do the sampling and analysis plan, we will know if we need to access the adjoining land to undertake more surveys.

We have done transect investigations and these are in the [report](#). In some areas the corridor is wider than 20 metres. This is outlined in the report on our website.

Where were the highest levels of lead?

All of the readings are detailed in the report. The highest readings were along the centre line of the tracks. The levels decreased as tests moved away from the tracks.

If we need to put up or repair our fences along the corridor, how do we go about it?

We recommend that work is not carried out on a windy day. The area should be wet down to reduce dust. Wear a P2 facemask, and full-length clothing or overalls. Clothing used during the work should be removed and washed separately. Clean the washing machine afterwards. Be sure to wash your hands thoroughly and don't touch your face.

The EPA and NSW Health websites provide practical advice on how to do this safely:

- <https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/leadexposure>
- [Lead safety \(nsw.gov.au\).](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/leadexposure/Lead%20safety%20(nsw.gov.au).htm)

If Transport install fencing, farmers will still need access to water for livestock. Crossings and gates will be required.

We understand this and will talk to you to understand your needs for livestock access etc. For more information contact us at the links below.

There is a lot of building happening around Bungendore, and around the rail track, is this section also included?

The testing has been carried out within the rail corridor. The first section tested was in Captains Flat, then Bungendore town. We then tested the corridor between Captains Flat and Bungendore from Beverly Hills Rd. We have been engaging with stakeholders such as the Men's Shed and any private residences that may be affected.

What are the levels of lead?

There is a national criteria system for levels of lead. For residential it is 300 mgs/kg, for open space and recreation it is 600 mgs/kg and for commercial / industrial it is 1500 mgs/kg. The levels are indicated in the report. Some areas are above the commercial / industrial criteria.

Can it be capped?

We need more time to investigate and confirm the extent of the contamination and the remediation options. There are no criteria for agricultural land. Transport is working with the EPA (NSW Environment Protection Authority), DPI (Department of Primary Industry) and other stakeholders to establish what these levels should be. Advice from the EPA and our advisers will determine the remediation options.

Are there other places where this has happened? What has been done at other sites

Each site is different, and we need to identify the potential remediation options. Captains Flat is the first site being remediated. This work will start in 2024 and the lead will be taken back to the mine site.

Will Transport consider property owner's individual use of the land and corridor?

Yes, we will work with individual property owners to determine the options and what is required in each section.

What are the obligations on breeders for cattle that go into the food chain?

Owners have an obligation under the NSW Biosecurity Act 2015 to ensure animals containing unacceptable residues do not enter the food chain.

You are encouraged to speak to your District Veterinarian if you are concerned your livestock have been exposed to lead or other contaminants.

Who is responsible for getting the animals tested?

Your District Veterinarian can provide advice on the need to test your livestock for lead residues and can conduct the testing if required.

If you are concerned about your companion animals/pets, please speak to your private veterinarian.

When will the Human Health Risk Assessment (HHRA) be completed?

The HHRA will be completed in 2023 and will provide advice on whether testing may be required.

Is the community's personal information shared?

No personal data is shared.

What brought about this study?

The work that Transport conducted at Captains Flat identified lead contamination. The Bungendore Rail Corridor was tested, and contamination was found. Transport has tested the full length of the corridor due to the previous use of the corridor to transport material from the former Captains Flat Mine.

Will you consider all potential future uses of the land as part of remediation planning?

Yes, we will discuss Future Land use with each landowner to determine the current and potential use of their land. If the contamination is high, we will remediate the area to meet the criteria for the land use the owner requires.

If a bore is metres away from the corridor and it is used for livestock and domestic purposes, will this be tested?

Yes, all bores will be tested.

If contamination is found, who is responsible, for fencing, remediation and compensation?

Transport is responsible.

What affect can lead have on human health and how can I get tested?

Young children are most at risk from lead. Lead exposure can affect a child's mental and physical development. If you suspect that your child has been exposed to lead, remove the source and contact your doctor for advice. For further information visit

<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/lead-exposure-children's>

Is contamination higher at the Captains Flat end of the corridor?

No, there are spikes and elevated levels at different points along the corridor. The report on our website includes maps and indicates the levels of lead at different points along the corridor.

What is the advice for the public accessing the corridor, including Silver Hills Reserve?

We are working with Crown Lands and they are advising tenants and residents on using the stock route. The rail corridor is not public land and should not be accessed by the public.

Will the contamination rule out a rail trail?

Council is the lead agency for rail trails, and they seek funding from the NSW Government to create rail trails. We will consider the proposed rail trail. Transport will be consulted on future rail trails once remediation options are considered.

Bungendore Primary School is close the crossing near the Train Station and work is being done on the school. Was there any testing done before the work?

Testing was completed and the school is not affected by lead contamination. No elevated levels of lead were detected on Council land near the corridor.

Can you give us an indication of timeframes to complete remediation?

Remediation can take a long time. It generally takes at least 2 years to undertake investigations and to fully understand the site. This site may take longer as it is a large area with lots of water courses, creeks, dams and different land uses.

Has there been any testing of livestock in the area?

There has been no targeted testing of livestock for lead residues in the area.

Transport for NSW will continue to work with NSW DPI and Local Land Services to identify the potential risk to livestock as further information on the extent of contamination becomes available.

How does NSW Health access the results of lead testing in the area?

Testing takes place when people visit their GP and have a blood test as part of a general check-up. Transport does not have access to this information. In the last ten years there have been no elevated levels of lead detected in the general community in the local area.

The mine has shown signs of other heavy metals. Is there concern about high levels of other metals?

The report confirms that most other heavy metals do not exceed the criteria. If elevated levels are found in the next stage of testing this will be addressed.

What about the accumulation of lead in recent years. The place is dusty, especially in drought. Dust affects tank water. Do you have concerns regarding tank water?

Tank water will be tested in the next round of testing along with air monitoring to assess the risk. The monitoring will be left in place for 12 months. We have tested tanks in Bungendore and Tarago and they have not been elevated.

NSW Health advise that you need to flush rainwater tanks each day and install a filter on the kitchen tap. Please see the [NSW Health website](https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/lead-exposure-children.aspx) for more information.

Will the sediment be tested in the creeks and dams?

Yes, the sediment will be tested.

Is funding allocated for soil testing or water testing for sites in-addition to what has already been tested?

Yes, the next stage is a detailed investigation. Testing will include private properties along the corridor. The testing needs to meet the requirements of the Contaminated Land Management Act 1997

Do you have any recommendations about cleaning around the house to reduce potential lead exposure?

The NSW Health website provides information about reducing potential lead exposure:
<https://www.health.nsw.gov.au/environment/factsheets/Pages/lead-exposure-children.aspx>

NSW Health recommends the following:

- Regularly wash or wet-mop floors, stairs, and window sills to reduce dust.

Further information

Transport will keep you informed as planning continues.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please contact our project team on:

Phone: 1800 491 566

Email: landassessment@transport.nsw.gov.au

March 2023

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