

Background

Blasting is a key requirement for operations at the Highvale Mine. Blasting is required to fracture in-place coal and overburden material to the point that it can be effectively moved by either dragline or shovel. There are three types of blasting at the Highvale Mine: coal blasting, bench blasting and cast blasting.

- Coal blasting requires the least amount of explosives and is used to “loosen” the coal seam to enable loading operations.
- Bench blasting involves the rock overburden. The rock is fractured to enable digging, but the material remains in place.
- Cast blasting uses increased explosive energy to both fracture the rock and to displace it into the pit. Cast blasting has the greatest potential for impact to stakeholders.

Due to the geological structure and material types, TransAlta will continue to use blasting as an essential requirement of operations at the Highvale Mine.

TransAlta Commitment

TransAlta is committed to minimizing the impact of blasting operations on stakeholders in close proximity to the Highvale Mine.

TransAlta Blast Management Strategies

- All blasting is carried out in accordance with the Blasting Code of Practice at the Highvale Mine; cast blasts typically target two-thirds the vibration limit specified.
- Blasts are designed to minimize nuisance impact on surrounding stakeholders by considering location and intensity requirements.
- All overburden blasts are monitored for vibration and air blast, this information is available to stakeholders upon request.
- At a stakeholder’s request, the daily blast schedule is communicated by phone.
- TransAlta will respond to stakeholder questions and concerns in a timely manner (within one to two business days).
- In the event of property damage, TransAlta will work with stakeholders to determine the source of damage, third party consultants will be involved as required (at TransAlta’s expense).