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QUEENSLAND COAL MINING BOARD OF INQUIRY

Coal Mining Safety and Health Act 1999

Establishment of a Board of Inquiry Notice (No 01) 2020

Before:

Mr Terry Martin SC, Chairperson and Board Member

> Mr Andrew Clough, Board Member

At Court 17, Brisbane Magistrates Court 363 George Street, Brisbane QLD

On Wednesday, 17 March 2021 at 10am (Day 18)

THE CHAIRPERSON: 1 Yes, Mr Hunter. 2 3 May it please, I call Martin Watkinson. MR HUNTER: 4 5 <MARTIN WATKINSON, sworn: [10am] 6 7 <EXAMINATION BY MR HUNTER: 8 MR HUNTER: Q. Mr Watkinson, your full name is Martin 9 Watkinson? 10 11 Α. Correct. 12 13 Q. You are currently the executive mining engineer at 14 Simtars? That's correct. 15 Α. 16 What is Simtars? 17 Q. Safety in mines testing and research station. Α. 18 19 Q. Just make sure you keep your voice up. 20 It's the safety in mines testing and research 21 Α. Sorry. 22 station. 23 You hold the degree of Bachelor of Science with 24 Q. honours in mining? 25 That's correct. Α. 26 27 28 Q. And you also have a number of other technical qualifications both here and in the United Kingdom? 29 That is correct. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. How long have you been with Simtars? My current stint, it's seven and a half to 33 Α. eight years. 34 35 Overall, how long have you been at Simtars? 36 Q. 37 Α. Fourteen years, I think it is. 38 Apart from your work at Simtars, you have been 39 Q. 40 involved in the industry? That's correct. Α. 41 42 You were underground general manager for a coal mine, 43 Q. for example? 44 Yes, for a proposed coal mine, that's correct. 45 Α. 46 That was for Adani? 47 Q.

1 Α. Adani, correct. 2 3 But you've worked in the industry both here and in the Q. 4 UK? 5 That is correct. Α. 6 Your CV has been provided to the Board? 7 Q. 8 That is correct. Α. 9 And that is RSH.019.001.0574. I'm not asking for it 10 Q. to be called up. Could you please tell us about your 11 current role at Simtars and what you do? 12 13 Α. My current role at Simtars is providing technical advice to coal mines and the mines inspectorate in issues 14 regarding spontaneous combustion, emergency response and 15 some ventilation-related matters. 16 17 Have you been assisting the Queensland Mines 18 Q. Inspectorate, or RSHQ as it's now known, in connection with 19 the investigation of the serious accident that occurred at 20 21 Grosvenor mine on 6 May last year? 22 Α. I have been. 23 24 Q. What role have you played in the investigation? My primary focus was in the analysis of the gas data, 25 Α. to analyse the gas data for methane exceedances, and then 26 to look at primarily the tube bundle and real-time data to 27 28 look at any evidence of spontaneous combustion activity as well. 29 30 I'll get you to explain in due course what tube bundle 31 Q. 32 and real-time data is. In what form, though, did the material come to you? 33 The information was supplied to me via the 34 Α. inspectorate back from the mine. The tube bundle data and 35 the real-time data was provided in what was known as an spw 36 37 file, which is a file which is produced by a Simtars program Safegas. Some of the gas chromatograph data was 38 also in an spw file - again, it's a Simtars program. 39 Some 40 of the data for the goaf wells, some of the initial data, was a 14-day file that was provided as a csv, which was an 41 export from the Citect system, which Grosvenor utilised as 42 43 a SCADA system. 44 45 Can we start with an explanation of what Safegas is? Q. 46 Α. Safegas is a program which was developed after the 47 Moura No. 2 explosion. Its purpose is to focus on all the

1 records that are needed around setting of alarms, raising 2 of alarms, long-term trending. The program interfaces to 3 another program called Segas Professional. 4 5 Segas Professional? Q. Which is again a Simtars program. 6 Α. Now, this is 7 utilised for the trending of the data. Safegas will record the immediate alarm, and then long-term trending and 8 further analysis can be done in Segas Professional. 9 10 You mentioned tube bundles. 11 Q. What's a tube bundle? A tube bundle - the system has been available since Α. 12 13 the late 1960s. It is a bundle of polyethylene tubes which is run underground, so it typically can be a half-inch 14 external diameter or five-eighths external diameter. 15 Thev run to discrete locations underground. There's no power 16 All that is underground is a flame arrestor 17 underground. There are systems of pumps and solenoid and a filter. 18 valves on the surface. So there's a purge pump which keeps 19 the gas sample in the tube moving all the time to the 20 Then at probably two-minute intervals, the sample 21 surface. 22 sequence switches over to an analysis pump, which pushes the gas sample to the analyser. The gas analyser is 23 a four-gas analyser which analyses for carbon monoxide, 24 carbon dioxide, oxygen, and methane. 25 26 Do I understand you correctly that there are tubes 27 Q. 28 going to various locations throughout the mine? There are, yes. 29 Α. 30 And the analyser on the surface alternates between the 31 Q. various locations? 32 That's correct. 33 Α. 34 35 So it takes a sample from one tube, then a sample from Q. another tube? 36 37 Α. Correct. 38 Presumably these tube points are, or can be, quite 39 Q. 40 some distance from the analysis point? They are several kilometres, yes. 41 Α. 42 43 So how long does it take, or can it take, for a sample Q. 44 of atmosphere at the termination of a tube to get to the 45 analyser? 46 Α. Long runs can take one to two hours. 47

1 Q. Is that time lag significant, or can it be 2 significant? 3 The primary objective of a tube bundle system is to Α. 4 detect the onset of spontaneous combustion, so not ideal, 5 but it doesn't have a massive impact on the outcome. 6 7 Q. You said real-time? 8 Yes, the real-time system is - and again a lot of this Α. is prescribed in the regulations. They have what they call 9 environmental monitors, which again are the same four 10 gases, which is carbon monoxide, carbon dioxide, oxygen and 11 methane, and these tend to be electrochemical cells and 12 13 they are located at discrete locations around the mine. 14 The difference with them is that the data is sent via the mine's Wi-Fi system or electronic system to the surface. 15 16 So it's instantaneous, or near enough to? 17 Q. Yes, there are - it depends on the sequence of the 18 Α. PLCs talking to each other, but, yes, it's a smaller 19 distance than two hours. It's a matter of seconds. 20 21 22 Q. The PLC being the programmable logic controller? Apologies. Programmable logic controller, yes. 23 Α. 24 Those real-time sensors, do they all test for the four 25 Q. gases, or do some just test for one? 26 Not all the locations. The legislation prescribes the 27 Α. 28 locations where the four gases have to be. The mine will identify where methanometers are placed - those are what is 29 known as the explosion risk zones, and there's 30 non-explosion risk zones, so the mine has a risk-based 31 policy to determine where they are. There are also 32 discrete carbon monoxide monitors around conveyor belts. 33 34 35 The tube bundles and the real-time sensors feed data Q. into Safegas? 36 37 Α. Correct. 38 How is that data conveyed to the mine operator? 39 Q. 40 In the control room, there is a visual display which Α. indicates the mine map. There are individual locators of 41 where the sensor is on that map, and there is a discrete 42 43 display either side which gives you the location, name and 44 all the four gas readings, along with other ratios. 45 46 If an alarm is raised, there is an audible alarm. 47 Then the control room operator will investigate, accept the

1 alarm - so the alarm screen goes red, and then when an 2 alarm state has been accepted, the screen goes yellow. When the alarm state is no longer present, it goes clear. 3 4 5 Q. It goes? 6 Α. Clear. So yellow - it's like a traffic light system. 7 8 So is it only the tube bundle and real-time systems Q. that feed data to Safegas? 9 That's correct. Α. 10 11 Q. Within Safegas, it's possible to set alarm triggers? 12 13 Α. Correct. 14 That's configurable for each tube bundle point or 15 Q. 16 real-time sensor? Correct. 17 Α. 18 19 Q. What about the system on the goaf wells - you said that there was data that was fed into the mine's Citect 20 21 system? 22 Α. Yes, they have a Citect system and they have four gas sensors again on the goaf wells, the same four gas sensors, 23 and that data was sent into the Citect system. 24 25 Q. Was the control room operator able to see that data as 26 well? 27 28 Α. That data is available to the control room operator 29 plus anyone else who has Citect access. 30 31 Q. Is it possible to set alarms in Citect? 32 Α. Yes, it is. 33 34 Q. With respect to the gas data, I mean. 35 Yes. Α. 36 37 Q. You mentioned gas chromatographs? 38 Α. Yes. 39 40 Q. What's a gas chromatograph? A gas chromatograph is an instrument that does gas 41 Α. Its name, the gas - Sean Muller may give you a 42 analysis. 43 better and more detailed explanation than this, but you take a sample of the gas and you introduce it to the 44 The reason it's called a gas chromatograph is 45 svstem. 46 because gas is used as the medium for pushing the sample through, and it will go through a series of columns and the 47

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1 process works by separation of the gases and it goes over a detector, and the time it takes to get to that detector 2 3 is the time - how we know which gas it is. 4 5 Is it possible using a gas chromatograph, or GC, to Q. identify all of the components of a gas sample? 6 7 Α. Yes. 8 Not just the four gases you've spoken about? 9 Q. Yes, you can configure a GC to do all gases. 10 Α. We tend to configure it to the primary gases of interest. 11 12 13 Q. How are samples taken so that they can be analysed by 14 the GC? Samples can be taken either direct from the tube 15 Α. bundle system or underground. They're taken into an 16 aluminium bladder. The mine has a process for how often 17 you fill the bladder and evacuate it. Then the bladder is 18 taken to the gas chromatograph, and the control room 19 operator is normally the GC operator. On that bladder, the 20 person who took the sample will normally identify what the 21 22 gas readings were on his hand-held gas instrument. So they have that as a reference. If it was a seal sample, it will 23 also indicate whether the seal was breathing in or 24 breathing out. 25 26 When you say "breathing in or breathing out", are you 27 Q. 28 referring to barometric pressure? Not just barometric pressure. That can also be mine 29 Α. pressure as well. 30 31 32 Q. You say that the bag samples can be taken from the tube bundles. Is that taken at the surface? 33 34 Α. That's taken on the surface, yes. 35 But otherwise someone physically takes one of these 36 Q. 37 bags to a particular point underground? 38 Α. Yes. 39 40 Q. And takes a sample of the atmosphere? 41 Α. Yes. 42 Q. What about with the goaf wells, is it possible to take 43 a bag sample of the goaf wells? 44 It is possible to take a bag sample of the goaf wells. 45 Α. 46 I'm not totally familiar with the operation of that system, 47 but it is possible, and they have taken bag samples from

1 the goaf wells. 2 We might ask Mr Muller more about that in due course. 3 Q. Mr Operator, if I could call for a PowerPoint, please. 4 Just while that's being displayed, you have your reports 5 and other notes there with you? 6 7 Α. Yes, I have, yes. 8 I assume there's no objection to you referring to any 9 Q. of those if you need to during the course of your evidence, 10 so please feel free to do so. Can I start, though, by 11 asking you to just have a look at this first slide. 12 13 Α. Yes. 14 Which sets out the locations of the various tube 15 Q. bundles. 16 Yes, these are the tubes that were relevant to the 17 Α. 104 longwall. 18 19 Q. There's tube 22. That was the one that's required to 20 21 be 400 metres outbye of the face? Yes. 22 Α 23 24 Q. Tube 26, which was located in 3-4 cut-through in the tailgate? 25 Α. That's correct. 26 27 28 Q. That's about 4 kilometres from the face, thereabouts? 29 Yes. Α. 30 Q. As at the date of the incident it was, at least? 31 32 Α. Yes. 33 Q. And then there were three tube bundles that were 34 35 located at the location of three goaf seals? Α. Correct. 36 37 38 Q. Tube 36 was located on the maingate side at 38 cut-through? 39 Sorry, 38, correct. 40 Α. Yes. 41 Then tube 38 is in B1 cut-through, which is at the 42 Q. rear of the goaf? 43 Yes. 44 Α. 45 Then tube 39 was on the tailgate side at 46 Q. 47 40-41 cut-through?

1 Α. That's correct. 2 3 We might just have a look, then, at this next slide, Q. 4 slide 3. Do you recognise that as being part of a plan of the mine showing the outbye end of longwall 104? 5 I do. 6 Α. 7 We can see the mains at the bottom of the screen, but 8 Q. over on the left-hand side where I'm using the cursor at 9 the moment we can see three markings that indicate some 10 11 sensors? That's correct. Α. 12 13 14 And those sensors are the four-gas sensor, which is Q. this one here (indicating) with a label starting GM002? 15 Α. That's correct. 16 17 The tube bundle number 26, which is over here? 18 Q. Yes. 19 Α. 20 21 Q. And there's also a velocity sensor. 22 Α. Correct. 23 What's the purpose of a velocity sensor? 24 Q. The purpose is, because you know the cross-sectional 25 Α. area, you can calculate the quantity, and that is useful in 26 calculations of CO make, which we'll discuss later. 27 28 Just so we're clear about this, this is a tube bundle 29 Q. and this sensor here - they're at what's called 30 3-4 cut-through? 31 Yes. 32 Α. 33 Q. That's because there's number 3 cut-through and 34 there's number 4 cut-through? 35 Α. That's correct. 36 37 The next slide, does this show the location of the two 38 Q. 400 metre sensors as at April 2020? 39 40 Α. Yes. 41 Q. 42 This is, again, taken from a mine ventilation plan? Yes, that's correct. 43 Α. 44 45 I should say just for the record that each of these Q. 46 slides identifies the source document in the bottom The 400 metre sensors are here where I'm 47 left-hand corner.

1 moving the cursor (indicating)? Correct. 2 Α. 3 4 One thing I wanted to ask you about was the Q. 5 ventilation arrangement here. We can see on the slide some red arrows over here on what I understand to be C heading? 6 7 Α. Correct. 8 Do those arrows depict ventilation away from the goaf, 9 Q. that is, heading outbye? 10 Those arrows would indicate the direction of air 11 Α. movement. 12 13 14 There are some seals on the various cut-throughs that Q. we can see here at 36, 37, 38, 39 and indeed at 40? 15 Α. Correct. 16 17 So does that mean, then, that there is ventilation air 18 Q. heading away from the goaf that would not go past this 19 400 metre sensor? 20 21 Α. That would indicate that possibility, yes. 22 Is that a desirable state of affairs? 23 Q. Α. 24 Not really, no. 25 Q. Why? 26 You're going to miss the relevant gas data. 27 Α. 28 So there will be gas coming out of the goaf that won't 29 Q. get measured there? 30 It won't get picked up by that sensor, but it does get 31 Α. 32 picked up by the outbye sensor. 33 34 Q. But that's 4 kilometres --35 Α. Four kilometres away, yes. 36 37 Is there an issue in terms of dilution, given the Q. quantities of air that are going to be travelling through 38 that roadway? 39 40 There's no more dilution effects, but it depends on Α. what the gas concentrations were in C heading as opposed to 41 B heading. So, as we don't know those actual values, it's 42 difficult to say. 43 44 45 This next slide, does it show the various sampling Q. 46 points that we're going to talk about? 47 It shows all the goaf wells, as well as the tube Α.

1 bundle seal locations. 2 3 Q. So we've got all of these, the goaf wells, identified 4 here? 5 Α. Correct. 6 7 Q. Those that are marked with "V" do you understand to be vertical goaf wells? 8 I'm not sure of why they've called them "V", but 9 I understand they are vertical goaf wells. 10 11 And then there's one here that's GRO4 with an "L". Q. Is 12 13 that a lateral well? 14 Α. I'm not sure. 15 Q. All right. 16 I defer to --17 Α. 18 Then there are some wells that are over closer to the 19 Q. maingate side that are marked with an "M", so GR04M001, and 20 it's located here where I have the cursor? 21 22 Α. Correct. 23 24 Q. And then 1.5, which is here (indicating)? Correct. 25 Α. 26 The blue line that we can see that I'm moving the 27 Q. 28 cursor backwards and forwards across at present, does that depict the approximate location of the face as at the date 29 of the incident? 30 Α. It does. 31 32 It also shows the location of the tube bundles? Q. 33 34 Α. Correct. 35 Tube bundle 39? 36 Q. 37 Α. Correct. 38 Q. There's tube bundle 38, which is in B1 cut-through? 39 40 Α. Correct. 41 Q. 42 Then over here, in 38 cut-through, there's tube 36? Correct. 43 Α. 44 So there were other goaf seals that we can see in the 45 Q. 46 other cut-throughs, but your analysis was confined to those tube bundles in terms of the goaf seals? 47

1 Α. Correct, I concentrated on the tube bundle data, yes. 2 3 Here is a closer view, slide 6. That again shows 39, Q. 4 38 and 36, as well as two others? 5 Tube 37 and tube 40 are fresh air tubes. Α. 6 7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Q. Sorry, Mr Watkinson, can you just keep your voice up, please? 8 Yes, tube 37 and tube 40 are both tubes in fresh air 9 Α. or air that's come down the downcast shaft. 10 11 What's the purpose of having a tube MR HUNTER: Q. 12 13 bundle at a goaf seal? To identify if there is any spontaneous combustion 14 Α. 15 activity. 16 So the idea is that the termination point of the tube 17 Q. bundle is actually inside the goaf? 18 That is correct. 19 Α. 20 21 We can see, as depicted here, that at least, for Q. 22 example, tube 38 has a double seal? Correct. 23 Α. 24 That's a common arrangement? 25 Q. It's a common arrangement where you're trying to 26 Α. control oxygen ingress into the goaf. 27 28 Q. So we can see one is a 35 kPa flexi? 29 Correct. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. And the other is a bulkhead, I think it says "10 metres rated"? 33 Α. Yes. 34 35 Can you explain what those two labels refer to? Q. 36 37 Well, the 35 kPa is an explosion resistance, and the Α. bulkhead would be probably rated as a water resistance. 38 There's a possibility of water accumulation against that 39 40 seal. 41 You say that the purpose of those seals is to prevent 42 Q. oxygen ingress into the goaf? 43 44 Α. Correct. 45 46 Q. You're familiar with the ventilation arrangements 47 here. Is it the case that the fan that supplies air into

1 this roadway here is located in this - I'll call it the 2 back left-hand corner of the goaf? 3 It's on the surface, yes. Α. 4 5 Q. Sorry, but it supplies air to that point? 6 Α. Yes. 7 Q. And it's a downcast fan? 8 Correct. 9 Α. 10 11 Q. An intake? Α. Intake, yes. 12 13 14 Lastly, then, we have a picture that shows all of Q. those locations, including a red line for the longwall 15 face, as well as that number 96 chock, which in your 16 reports you refer to because of the significance it held in 17 terms of what happened after the events of 6 May? 18 After the event, yes, that's correct. 19 Α. 20 21 If we could just go back, we see goaf well M001.5. Q. 22 That's located here (indicating), and it's depicted by that small circle? 23 24 Α. Correct. 25 Tell me if I'm wrong, but is it the case that that 26 Q. goaf well is in the same general location as chock 27 28 number 96? That's correct, it's in the same general location. 29 Α. 30 Now I'm going to ask you about gas ratios, 31 Q. All right. 32 but before I do that, you mentioned spontaneous combustion and the idea being to avoid - at those goaf seals at the 33 rear of the goaf to detect the ingress of oxygen and 34 prevent spontaneous combustion. What is spontaneous 35 combustion? 36 37 Spontaneous combustion is a process which coal and Α. other minerals - hay, for instance - can oxidise. 38 The oxidation process is exothermic and it can slowly warm to 39 40 the point where there can be a fire. 41 One thing that should be recognised is the word 42 43 "spontaneous" is from the old English derivation, which means "without external influence", so it's not as it's 44 used colloquially now. So it's a process whereby it 45 46 changes from normal and will eventually get to the point -47 it could get to the point of an open fire.

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1 2 What's required for coal to spontaneously combust? Q. Sufficient oxygen for the reaction to occur and 3 Α. 4 insufficient airflow for the heat to be dissipated. 5 So how much oxygen is required in terms of - we know 6 Q. 7 that oxygen in the normal atmosphere is 21 per cent or 8 thereabouts. It's difficult to ascertain exactly the amount of 9 Α. oxygen that's needed. One thing that has been identified 10 many times is that the coal retains the heat, so that if 11 you've got hot coal, above ambient, it will react quicker 12 13 when the oxygen is supplied. 14 15 If you go to the New South Wales mine rescue black book, they typically say that all oxidation ceases at 16 2 per cent oxygen. It's difficult to get below 2 per cent 17 oxygen. 18 19 So if you have more than 2 per cent oxygen - we'll see 20 Q. 21 some graphs later today showing that there was at least 22 2 per cent oxygen in this goaf, at least in the places that were measured. 23 24 Again, you look at the oxygen you've got with the CO Α. that's being produced to see if any reactivity is 25 occurring. 26 27 28 Q. Is it fair to say this, that it's normal for there to 29 be some level of oxidation going on in, really, any goaf? There is always some level of oxidation going on. 30 Α. It depends on whether it gets to the point where it has 31 32 sufficient thermal energy to move away, but it's quite normal to see a level and then a decline. As the oxygen 33 34 drops, the CO drops, and that's normal. 35 As the coal heats up, does it give off gases? 36 Q. The primary gas of interest is always carbon monoxide 37 Α. because it's not - it doesn't occur naturally. 38 39 40 Q. Please keep your voice up? The common gas to use is carbon monoxide. 41 Α. Sorry. There are other indicator gases, hydrogen and ethylene, 42 43 which you need a gas chromatograph to identify. When I started in 1997, hydrogen was regarded as one of the -44 a key indicator, but the gas chromatographs have got better 45 46 at detecting them. 47

1 Q. Hydrogen would be present, at least to some extent, in 2 a normal atmosphere? 3 There's 1 to 2 parts per million, yes. Α. 4 5 What about ethylene? Q. 6 Α. Not normal. 7 8 So is there any part of the mining process, apart, for Q. example, from the oxidation of coal, that would produce 9 ethylene? 10 It can be seen with - in drilling the boreholes, where 11 Α. the heat from the drilling action has created ethylene. Ιt 12 13 can be seen in the face of tunnel boring machines. That was the oil breaking down - that was the heat breaking the 14 oil down. 15 16 17 Q. That's oil breaking down? Oil breaking down. When I say "oil", it's the 18 Α. lubrication they were using on the cutter. 19 20 21 So apart from those scenarios, ethylene is not Q. 22 something that you see underground unless there's a heating of coal to some degree? 23 To some degree, yes. It takes an input of heat for 24 Α. the ethylene to be released. 25 26 I take it that different coal responds differently to 27 Q. 28 heat? 29 There are a number of tests that have been done on gas Α. evolution. They're all - there are differences in the 30 analysis, but it can be - I've seen ranges between 80 and 31 32 120 degrees Centigrade. 33 34 Q. That's for ethylene? 35 For ethylene, yes. Α. 36 37 But in terms of gas evolution, as you've described it, Q. is that a test whereby you heat coal and work out what 38 gases come off it and at what temperature? 39 That's correct. It's been done for maybe 20 years 40 Α. now - over 20 years. 41 42 43 Is it common for mines to do that sort of testing so Q. that the mine has an understanding of the specific coal 44 that's being mined at that mine? 45 46 Α. It's very common for each mine to do their own 47 individual tests.

1 2 So that the mine would have an understanding of the Q. 3 temperatures at which particular gases are liberated? 4 Α. Yes, that's correct. 5 Whilst there are generally recognised, I'll call them 6 Q. 7 trigger points, but points of concern, if I can call them that, when you're looking at both raw gas data and ratios, 8 am I right to say that it's always going to be coal or mine 9 specific? 10 It should be mine specific, all TARPs should be mine 11 Α. The presence of ethylene is an indicator of specific. 12 13 something starting to warm. 14 We've been speaking about the four gases that are 15 Q. measured by Safegas, and obviously the tube bundle system 16 will measure the raw values for each of those. 17 Α. That's correct. 18 19 Q. And so will the real-time sensor. 20 21 Α. That's correct. 22 But are the raw values the full story? 23 Q. Ratios have been 24 No. You can use ratios. Α. investigated over a number of years. A common one is 25 Graham's ratio, which originates from 1925 in the UK. 26 27 28 Q. What does Graham's ratio attempt to do? 29 It attempts to identify the intensity of the heating. Α. So we're looking at the carbon monoxide produced by the 30 oxygen which was - the oxygen deficiency, which is the 31 oxygen consumed in that process, and then multiplied by 100 32 to become a meaningful number. 33 34 35 Q. I beg your pardon? It's multiplied by 100 to become a more meaningful 36 Α. 37 number rather than a small number. 38 You can see on the screen there's two formulae. The 39 Q. 40 top one, is that a very general description? It's a very general description of the ratio. 41 Α. 42 43 Q. What's depicted at the bottom? Is that what's known 44 as the long form of Graham's ratio or something 45 approximating it? 46 Α. That is the traditional form. The long form is when 47 you're trying to take account for dilution of methane.

1 That's in the pure form as derived by Mr Graham. 2 3 We'll come to methane dilution in due course, but in Q. 4 the ratio that's depicted at the bottom, it talks about the 5 initial and the final levels for oxygen? 6 Α. Correct. 7 How does one calculate the initial and final figures 8 Q. for oxygen when you're attempting, for example, at 9 3-4 cut-through at longwall 104 to calculate Graham's 10 ratio? 11 Well, for 3-4 cut-through, the mine was using a fresh Α. 12 13 air reference tube, which means it takes out any vagaries in oxygen analysis or carbon monoxide analysis, any issues 14 relating to the sensor. 15 16 Where was that fresh air reference tube? 17 Q. It was the one on the corner in the maingate, not the 18 Α. one at the bottom of the tube, not at the bottom of the 19 It was the one at the right-hand side corner. shaft. 20 21 22 So at Grosvenor, that first tube would give the mine Q. the reference point for the initial figure for oxygen? 23 And for carbon monoxide as well. 24 Α. 25 And for carbon monoxide, but if it's fresh air, you 26 Q. would expect there to be no carbon monoxide? 27 28 It's possible. There should be none. But, again, if Α. you go back to the spontaneous combustion process, all the 29 coal in the roadways is sort of reacting, or it's been 30 cooled, so it doesn't get any hotter. So there is a normal 31 32 background count, which sometimes can be 1 ppm. 33 Then the final figure for oxygen - that's measured 34 Q. several kilometres away at, say, 3-4 cut-through? 35 At 3-4 - it's measured at every location. 36 Α. 37 38 Q. So you compare the amount of oxygen in the air at those two points, and that tells you how much has been 39 40 consumed? Α. Correct. 41 42 Is it common, though, for the purposes of Graham's 43 Q. ratio to make assumptions about the content of the air? 44 45 Α. Sorry? 46 Perhaps if I go over the page, is it common to assume 47 Q.

1 that the fresh air has a defined initial state? 2 Yes, this is another variation of Graham's ratio where Α. you're using the oxygen to nitrogen ratio in fresh air, and 3 4 so you use the nitrogen analysis to determine what the 5 oxygen initial was. But the only technique which actually measures nitrogen is a gas chromatograph. A tube bundle 6 7 doesn't. 8 The literature identifies what are - I referred 9 Q. a moment ago to the importance of doing your own testing, 10 but there are some nominal values for Graham's ratio that 11 are said to be significant? 12 13 Α. Those are the textbook values. 14 You said that this is a measure of a heating 15 Q. intensity? 16 Yes. 17 Α. 18 Q. So what do you mean by that? 19 You're trying to determine how hot the coal is or 20 Α. where it's at. There's always a danger that this ratio can 21 underestimate, so sometimes absolute values don't always 22 give you the true indication of where it's at. So you're 23 trying to - if you look at the figures there, and those are 24 originally derived by Mr Graham, a serious fire is when you 25 get a Graham's ratio of 2. 26 27 28 Q. Sorry, you'll have to say that again? A serious fire, they expect that it's actually 29 Α. Sorry. on fire at that point. It doesn't try and indicate 30 temperature, whereas CO/CO2 talks about temperature. 31 32 Can I ask you this: is Graham's ratio a useful tool 33 Q. 34 when it's measuring at a point that is a long way from the 35 face? It's not an ideal location to be using Graham's ratio, 36 Α. 37 because of dilution. With the ventilation quantities we have, there is a large - the oxygen final is still very 38 large, so the denominator becomes very small. 39 40 Is there an issue in terms of the accuracy of the 41 Q. types of sensors that are used, particularly in terms of 42 the measurement of oxygen? 43 44 Oxygen has always been a difficult gas, and there is Α. an Australian standard which determines how gas analysers 45 46 should be maintained, and the accuracies are stipulated in That's AS/NZS 2290 part 3. 47 that.

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1 2 Q. Sorry, you will have to speak up? It's an Australia/New Zealand Standard, 2290 3 Α. Sorry. 4 part 3, and it was reissued in 2018. That determines the 5 acceptable limits for the accuracy for when you do calibrations. 6 7 8 So what is the tolerance for the measurement of Q. oxygen? 9 Oxygen, as I remember, is 0.3. I can't remember all 10 Α. the others. 11 12 13 Q. So for oxygen, that's plus or minus 0.3? 14 Α. Plus or minus, yes. 15 16 You've told us that the oxygen deficiency at a point Q. that is remote from the goaf, given dilution, is likely to 17 be very small, in any event? 18 Α. Yes. 19 20 21 So is it right, then, that that error in the Q. 22 measurement of oxygen, even though it's only 0.3 of a per cent, could actually be significant in terms of its 23 impact upon Graham's ratio? 24 It can be. That's why it's better with a tube bundle 25 Α. system to use a reference tube to try and take away the 26 vagaries of the oxygen analysis. 27 28 29 And that was occurring here? Q. That was occurring here. 30 Α. 31 You mentioned the CO/CO2 ratio. What does this ratio 32 Q. tell us? 33 34 Α. Well, this ratio is looking at the carbon monoxide produced by the activity, divided by the carbon dioxide, 35 because at low temperatures or lower temperatures you get 36 37 more carbon monoxide than carbon dioxide. When things get to a open fire, the predominant gas is carbon dioxide 38 because of the oxygen availability. One thing that people 39 40 need to remember is we often talk about parts per million for CO, but in these equations you're using the percentage 41 terms. 42 43 44 So what does the CO/CO2 ratio tell you about what's Q. 45 going on? 46 It gives you an indication of what the temperature of Α. 47 the coal is.

1 2 Again, there are some nominal or textbook values that Q. are set out in the slide there? 3 4 Yes, those are textbook values, and they have been Α. cross-validated with testing as well. 5 6 7 Q. There's no specific value for a figure of 0.2, but 8 obviously it lies somewhere between 0.15 and 0.35. Α. Yes. 9 10 So on the textbook values, a CO/CO2 ratio of 0.2 would 11 Q. obviously be above 100 degrees? 12 13 Α. It's above 100 degrees Centigrade, yes. 14 Q. We know, though, that CO2 is a seamgas. 15 The bulk of the seamgas is methane, but there is some 16 Α. CO2 in the seamgas, that's correct. 17 18 So is it desirable when calculating the CO/CO2 ratio 19 Q. to adjust for dilution? 20 It would be good to adjust for a dilution, but the 21 Α. 22 calculation would not be simple. 23 24 Would it be possible to do it using tube bundle or Q. real-time sensors in the way that was being done here? 25 It should be possible, yes. You'd have to look at the 26 Α. mathematics and go and look at the analysis. 27 28 Would it simply be a matter of configuring Safegas 29 Q. to do the calculation? 30 Safegas, it could be configured, yes. 31 Α. 32 Q. It would be good if you didn't talk over the top of 33 34 me. 35 Α. Sorry. 36 37 I'll probably do it to you occasionally. Q. But it's possible to configure Safegas to do that calculation? 38 That is possible. 39 Α. 40 You also mentioned CO make. 41 Q. This derived from Germany in the 1960s, and here 42 Yes. Α. 43 you use the carbon monoxide in parts per million, times the 44 airflow, in cubic metres per second, and the constant there brings the value to litres per minute. 45 46 47 Q. Is this where that velocity sensor that we saw, for

1 example, at 3-4 cut-through comes into play? 2 Correct. Α. 3 4 Q. Are there limitations to the usefulness of CO make? 5 Yes, it can either be a small amount of coal giving Α. off a lot of carbon monoxide, or a large amount of coal 6 7 giving off a small amount of carbon monoxide. It doesn't There have been occasions in New South differentiate. 8 Wales where massive CO makes have been detected with no 9 activity in the goaf. 10 11 You mentioned TARPs before. By TARP, you mean trigger Q. 12 13 action response plan? That's correct. 14 Α. 15 You've had a look at the TARPs, as you call them, for 16 Q. the active goaf at Grosvenor? 17 Correct. Α. 18 19 These are the TARP trigger points for the longwall 20 Q. 21 return? 22 Α. Correct. 23 24 Q. Do you understand that to be a reference to data identified at 3-4 cut-through? 25 That's correct. Α. 26 27 28 Q. We can see immediately that the normal state for the CO/CO2 ratio is said to be less than 0.2. 29 Yes, it is that. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. And you told us a moment ago that the textbook values would suggest that at a CO/CO2 ratio of 0.2, the coal would 33 34 have heated to a temperature in excess of 100 degrees? 35 Α. Correct. 36 37 What do you say about the appropriateness of the 0.2 Q. as the trigger value for the CO/CO2 ratio? 38 I would say it's not an appropriate normal trigger. 39 Α. 40 Is a figure of 0.02 something you would expect to see? 41 Q. From the textbook values, yes. 42 Α. 43 44 How likely is it that an analysis of this particular Q. coal would have revealed or would have suggested that 45 46 a CO/CO2 value of 0.2 was appropriate? 47 I've not evaluated that data in that detail, so Α.

1 I don't know. 2 3 We can see that the level 2 triggers include Q. 4 a detection for ethylene at equal to or greater than 1 part 5 per million? That's correct. 6 Α. 7 8 Again, that's something that would be measured at Q. 3-4 cut-through, 4 kilometres from the face? 9 Α. Correct. 10 11 Are you able to offer a view - I'm not suggesting Q. 12 13 a precise calculation, but a view about what sort of ethylene would need to be coming out of the goaf to be 14 registered at 1 part per million at 3-4 cut-through? 15 16 I can't estimate what it would be. It would be Α. a substantial number for it to be detected at 1 ppm in that 17 location. 18 19 If you are going to pick up ethylene coming out of 20 Q. a goaf, where is the best place to find it? 21 22 Α. The goaf stream. 23 24 Q. We know that samples were taken from the goaf stream? That is correct. 25 Α. 26 Do you understand that that involved someone, 27 Q. 28 presumably a deputy, actually going into the tailgate and taking a sample of the goaf stream as it comes out of the 29 qoaf? 30 Α. That's correct. 31 32 Is there an art to identifying the goaf stream? 33 Q. Α. There have been training packages put together in the 34 past for how you look for the richest gas. 35 You want the most concentrated gas to give you the best evaluation. 36 37 38 Q. Presumably you'd expect that someone who was a deputy would be skilled at doing that? 39 40 Yes, you use your hand-held instrument to find where Α. the gas is the most concentrated, as long as it's safe to 41 be there, and then take the sample. 42 43 44 I notice the level 3 triggers talk about, for example, Q. CO make being greater than 93 litres a minute and Graham's 45 46 ratio being equal or greater than 1 or ethylene equal or 47 greater than 3 parts per million and CO make equal to or

1 greater than 53 litres a minute. 2 Yes. Α. 3 4 What do you say about the desirability of the use of Q. what I'll call "and" statements, that is, requiring 5 a combination of two parameters in a level 3 trigger? 6 7 Α. "And" statements are not ideal in that situation, and 8 there's actually an "and" statement in the level 2 trigger as well. It's not ideal. If you're looking at the 9 ethylene one, and CO make, that's two different detection 10 techniques you're using. Again, you can trigger one part 11 of it but not the other. 12 13 14 Q. I take it that a level 3 trigger involves evacuation? Α. 15 Yes. 16 So you could be, for example, at the evacuation 17 Q. trigger for one parameter and just short of the other, for 18 example? 19 That is possible, yes. 20 Α. 21 What do you say about the effectiveness of this 22 Q. particular TARP to detect - bear in mind that it's based 23 upon the longwall return at 3-4 cut-through - to identify 24 a small but intense heating in the goaf? 25 I've not really evaluated that in detail, but looking 26 Α. at it, with the dilution effects, it may be difficult for 27 28 it to identify at 3-4 cut-through. 29 Q. Sorrv? 30 Α. I said it might be difficult to identify it at 31 32 3-4 cut-through. 33 This is the TARP for the goaf seals. We've spoken 34 Q. about taking account the effect of dilution with CO2. 35 What do you say about the desirability of the triggers being 36 37 based upon calculations that were performed either air free or methane free? 38 A lot of people have used methane free - air free 39 Α. 40 calculations in the past and set triggers on them. It's not something I'd necessarily establish a TARP on, but 41 I would expect the ventilation officer or other technical 42 people to evaluate those in conjunction with something 43 44 If one parameter gives you a warning, which would be else. carbon monoxide, then you start to look at other things, to 45 46 look at the other parameters. The key thing with TARPs is 47 to keep them simple for a control room operator to operate,

1 to respond to. 2 3 Q. What is a methane free calculation? 4 You look at - you need a total gas analysis, ideally Α. 5 from a gas chromatograph, because it will actually determine what the nitrogen is, and then you take the 6 7 methane out of the calculation and then you take everything back up - you proportionally increase everything back up to 8 where it is, so you've eliminated the dilution effects from 9 methane. 10 11 Q. Is that something that's important when looking at the 12 13 raw figures, or is it only important when you're looking at 14 a trend? It could be either/or. It depends. 15 Α. The key thing with spontaneous combustion is not necessarily to wait for 16 the TARP to trigger but to respond to a trend or something 17 that's not normal. 18 19 That's something I was going to ask you about. 20 Q. In terms of the ratios that we've looked at - and there are 21 22 others, undoubtedly, but in terms of those ratios and CO make, is the trend something that's of significance as 23 well as whether or not, for example, some TARP trigger 24 points have been reached? 25 The trend over time is important. Α. 26 27 28 Again, we see the use of "and" statements not just in Q. level 3 but elsewhere. Does your opinion differ for this 29 particular TARP in terms of the desirability --30 I'm not keen on "and" statements. 31 Α. 32 Q. Sorry? 33 Α. I'm not very keen on "and" statements. 34 35 Have you seen a TARP for the goaf stream? 36 Q. 37 Α. No. I have not. 38 Q. In your view, is a TARP for the goaf stream desirable? 39 40 Α. It is. 41 Q. Why? 42 It's the most concentrated source of the gases, so you 43 Α. get less effects - you've got a better chance of detecting 44 the ethylene. Obviously if you've got more methane in it, 45 46 you'll get dilution effects, but you'll detect the ethylene 47 quicker.

1 2 Q. There's also a TARP for the goaf wells. 3 Correct. Α. 4 5 Q. We can see that the normal state is said to be oxygen 6 at less than 8 per cent? 7 Α. Correct. 8 What do you say about the appropriateness or otherwise 9 Q. of 8 per cent oxygen as the normal state? 10 I'd like to defer to Mr Ray Williams, but 8 per cent 11 Α. appears high to me. 12 13 14 Q. What should it be, in your view? You'd be looking less than 5 per cent, but that's 15 Α. speculation on my part. I'd need to go to technical 16 references. 17 18 Again, we see the use of "and" statements in the 19 Q. triggers. 20 21 Α. Mmm-hmm. 22 You're nodding. Is that a "yes"? 23 Q. Yes, sorry, yes. There's "and" statements on oxygen 24 Α. and methane, yes. 25 26 Again, is your opinion about the desirability of the 27 Q. 28 use of "and" statements any different from that which you've expressed in relation to the longwall return and 29 qoaf seal TARPs? 30 I agree, it's still the same. I'm not keen on 31 Α. No. "and" statements. My experience in British coal, there was 32 "or" statements. The oxygen level or the methane 33 level were two different triggers. 34 35 Q. That TARP doesn't refer to ethylene? 36 37 Α. It does not. 38 Should a TARP for a goaf well have a trigger value for 39 Q. 40 ethylene? I believe it should. Α. 41 42 And why? 43 Q. 44 Because there's a large proportion of carbon monoxide Α. seen reported to the goaf wells, and there could have been 45 46 a possibility of ethylene being seen there. 47

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1 Q. In terms of the calculations that are done with 2 respect to the goaf wells, should there be calculations done to take account of the effects of dilution? 3 4 You mean on the raw gases? Α. 5 Yes. 6 Q. 7 Α. Yes, there should be, yes. 8 9 Q. Why is that? Because you've got a large - ideally in a goaf well, 10 Α. you've got a large proportion of methane, which will dilute 11 the other gases, particularly carbon monoxide. 12 13 14 Is Graham's ratio a useful tool with respect to a goaf Q. well? 15 Unlikely, because of very low oxygen that you would 16 Α. 17 see there. 18 19 Q. What about with respect to determining the total amount of CO that is made? These wells, we know, are 300 20 or 400 metres in depth. I'm not sure of their diameter, 21 22 but they're not insubstantial. What sort of volume are we talking about in terms of CO that's in the wells 23 24 themselves? I can't remember off the top of my head, but I have 25 Α. done calculations on that. The CO make from all the wells 26 combined, using the data from the goaf well monitoring 27 28 systems, was 10 to 15 litres a minute. 29 Is that a lot, or not? 30 Q. That is a lot, when you - I have graphs where I've 31 Α. 32 added it to the CO make for the tailgate. 33 Q. Was that being taken into account? 34 That would not have been a normal operation at that 35 Α. time, no. 36 37 You've gone through the exercise of analysing in great 38 Q. detail the data from the tailgate return airway, including 39 the 400 metre sensor, the 3-4 cut-through, four gas sensor 40 and the tube bundles located at 400 metres and at 41 3-4 cut-through? 42 43 Α. That's correct. 44 And using Safegas, you're able to generate graphs that 45 Q. 46 show gas levels? 47 Yes, the Segas Professional software enables me to do Α.

1 that very quickly. 2 3 And you're also able to calculate ratios such as Q. 4 CO/CO2? Α. Yes, that's correct. 5 6 7 Q. The first graph we're going to go to is what is figure 23 from your first report, and it's CO/CO2 as 8 calculated using the Safegas system for both the 9 3-4 cut-through and the 400 metre sensor? 10 Α. That's correct. 11 12 It's a bit difficult to see, but if we look in the 13 Q. bottom left-hand corner, we can see tailgate 104 14 400 metres, and then this one is tailgate 104 15 3-4 cut-through? 16 Correct, the blue is the inbye tube. 17 Α. 18 The two graphs reflect the calculation from mid-April 19 Q. through until 6 May? 20 That's correct. 21 Α. 22 The peak that it got to was just a touch under 0.04. 23 Q. That's correct. 24 Α. 25 We know that the TARP trigger for these two tubes was 26 Q. 0.2 for the CO/CO2 ratio; correct? 27 28 Α. That is correct. 29 So if we were to draw a line, though, if the TARP 30 Q. value was 0.02 as opposed to 0.2, the TARP level would be 31 approximately where I'm moving the red cursor horizontally 32 across the screen? 33 34 Α. That's correct. 35 Which meant that the level 2 TARP trigger would have 36 Q. 37 been reached on multiple occasions? The TARP was --38 Α. 39 40 Q. If it was 0.02, it would have been reached on multiple occasions? 41 It would have been reached on the inbye tube; but the 42 Α. 43 outbye tube, it doesn't appear so. 44 Can you explain why it might have triggered at the 45 Q. 46 inbye tube and not at the outbye? 47 Because the inbye tube was using a fresh air tube as Α.

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1 a reference, and the outbye tube would have been using a calculation assuming fresh air. 2 3 4 So it would have been using the simple version of the Q. 5 calculation that we had on the screen before, which used the constant of 0.265? 6 7 Α. Yes, that would assume fresh air values as opposed to actual values from the analyser. 8 9 So the inbye tube is, what, a more accurate 10 Q. calculation of the CO/CO2? 11 No, the outbye tube is the more accurate one. Α. 12 13 14 So the outbye tube was more accurate, and it would not Q. have reached the trigger value of 0.02? 15 Α. Yes, there's less variability in the data if you look. 16 17 There is a peak here in about 17 April or thereabouts. 18 Q. Yes. 19 Α. 20 21 Are you able to explain what that indicates, if Q. 22 anvthing? I have no idea what could have caused that. 23 Α. 24 This next slide, slide 19, shows Graham's ratio for 25 Q. the same two tubes? 26 Α. Correct. 27 28 Again, the blue is the 400 metre and the red is the 29 Q. 3-4 cut-through? 30 Α. Correct. 31 32 What is the significance, if any, about what's 33 Q. displayed on this graph? 34 Well, it shows it never triggers the level 1 TARP of 35 Α. 0.3 per cent. 36 37 You were talking before about trends. 38 Q. Is there anything of significance about the trend for Graham's ratio 39 40 in the lead-up to the events of 6 May? Around 17 April there's a small - there's an increase 41 Α. in Graham's ratio but doesn't trigger the TARP. It then 42 drops away to a lower level. There's a very, very slight 43 increase, but only slight. 44 45 46 Q. We see again this increase in Graham's ratio in around 47 the middle of April?

| 1 | Α. | Yes. |
|--|----------------------------|---|
| 2 3 4 5 6 7 | Q. A. try a there | What might explain that? It's difficult from just looking at the raw data to and second-guess. There was some PUR injected around e. |
| 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 | | Sorry? There was some PUR injected around there, but I don't if that was the cause or that was just normal goaf ing or what. |
| | Q. ther A. | Just on the point of the PUR, you understand that e is some testing currently being undertaken? I understand so. |
| 17 18 19 | | At Simtars? That's correct. |
| 20 21 22 | Q. the l used' | Involving coal from this particular longwall and also PUR product, the polyurethane resin injectable being ? |
| 23 24 25 | Α. | I'm aware of the testing but not of the absolute il of what testing's being done. |
| 26 27 28 29 | | I'm not suggesting that you're personally involved in but you understand that's being done? Yes, I do. |
| 30 31 32 | Q. A. | And the results are yet to be finalised? That's correct. |
| 33 34 35 36 | | Did you do a similar exercise of looking at the data the goaf seals? That's correct. |
| 37 38 39 | with' | |
| 40 41 42 | A. Q. | It does. Just to be clear about it, though, for example, tube |
| 43 44 45 | | le 38 is shown on the plan as being located between e two seals? That is what the plan shows, yes. |
| 46 47 | Q. | Is that likely to be how it was in reality? |

1 Α. Unlikely. 2 3 Q. Would there be any point in having a tube bundle 4 terminating between the seals? No. 5 Α. 6 7 Q. It's likely to have been in the goaf itself? It would have been put into the goaf itself. 8 Α. 9 Similarly with 36, it's depicted as being on the fresh 10 Q. air side of the seal. You would expect it to be on the 11 goaf side of it? 12 13 Α. I would expect it to be on the goaf side, yes. 14 We can't really see because of clutter about tube 15 Q. bundle 39, but you would expect it to be measuring goaf 16 atmosphere as well? 17 I would. Α. 18 19 Did you look at the levels of carbon monoxide at each 20 Q. of those seals for the period March through until the date 21 22 of the incident? Α. I did. 23 24 Are they depicted on this graph? 25 Q. They are. 26 Α. 27 28 Q. The red, which is at a very low level throughout, is B1 cut-through - that's the seal at the back of the goaf? 29 That's correct. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. But the green, which has some peaks in early April, that is the tailgate 40-41 cut-through? 33 Α. That's correct. 34 35 And the blue is on the maingate side? Q. 36 37 Α. Yes, it's the 38 cut-through seal. 38 Have you, on this document, depicted the level 2 TARP 39 Q. 40 for CO parts per million? Yes, I have. 41 Α. 42 Q. And that's that horizontal line at the top at 200? 43 44 Α. Correct. 45 46 Q. So we can see that on or about 22 May and the days that followed, the CO levels at the maingate goaf seal at 47

1 38 cut-through exceeded that trigger point for CO. 2 3 THE CHAIRPERSON: 22 April? 4 5 MR HUNTER: Q. 22 April. 6 Α. 22 April, yes. 7 8 It exceeded the trigger point for CO. Q. What could explain the production of CO at that point right at the 9 back of the goaf? 10 This isn't right at the back of the goaf. 11 Α. This is in the maingate, immediately behind the --12 13 14 Q. Sorry, you're quite right, yes. So that would be normal oxygen penetration and waiting 15 Α. for the methane to come forward and drop the oxygen 16 concentration. 17 18 Q. What's normal oxygen penetration? What do you mean? 19 There have been CFD studies and studies done in the 20 Α. past which indicate that oxygen can penetrate several 21 22 hundred metres behind the face in the maingate. 23 24 Q. What about the seals themselves, are they permeable to 25 oxygen? They're designed to be leak proof. 26 Α. 27 28 Q. In reality, though? The seal will probably be leak proof because it's 29 Α. sprayed concrete, normally. There are chances of leakage 30 through the coal around the seals. 31 32 What about the amount of CO, albeit in some lesser 33 Q. amount, that was being produced at the 40-41 cut-through on 34 the left of the goaf back in early April? 35 When the seal is built, there is normal air - as you 36 Α. 37 build the seal, there is normal air either side. So, as you build the seal, there should be no more oxygen 38 penetration from the active side. Then you're waiting for 39 40 the oxygen to deplete. The longwall was also - that's at the point when - that seal would have been put on very 41 quickly as the longwall was moving away, so there would be 42 43 oxygen penetration everywhere into the goaf. 44 45 So at the point in time when that happened, it would Q. 46 be reasonable to expect that the longwall was somewhere in 47 close proximity to that seal?

1 Α. Yes, it would be reasonable to assume that. 2 3 Did you, though, also look at the levels of oxygen Q. 4 that were being detected in the tubes at those seals? 5 I did. Α. 6 7 Q. And did you then compare that oxygen with the amount of CO that was being generated? 8 Α. I did. 9 10 11 Q. And there are some graphs that show that. For example, this one, slide 23 - is this a graph that you 12 13 generated that shows oxygen and CO at 40-41 cut-through 14 seal? It is. 15 Α. 16 17 Q. And the red is oxygen? Correct. Α. 18 19 The blue carbon monoxide? Q. 20 21 Α. Correct. 22 We see that for substantial periods back at the start 23 Q. and then towards the end, the amount of oxygen is somewhere 24 in the vicinity of 21 per cent or thereabouts, which would 25 be the equivalent of fresh air? 26 Fresh air. If you look at that graph, the first - you 27 Α. 28 see a sudden drop in oxygen. That's about 19 March, when 29 the longwall commenced operation. 30 31 Q. That's here (indicating)? 32 Α. Yes. 33 34 Q. So there's a sudden drop in oxygen when the longwall commences. But, then, over here, commencing around about 35 3 May or just around the start of May, we see that the 36 37 oxygen level goes back to fresh air level? That's correct. 38 Α. 39 40 Q. Can you explain what's going on there? I don't - my interpretation of that is that the sample 41 Α. was not representative of the goaf atmosphere. 42 43 44 Because if it was representative of the goaf Q. atmosphere, it's consistent with fresh air? 45 46 Α. Yes, it's not fresh air - I don't expect the goaf 47 atmosphere would be fresh air.

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1 2 So what happens here, though? If we go forward Q. No. 3 to about 10 May, and there's a drop but a corresponding 4 rise in CO. What might explain that? 5 That was at the point when the mine had re-entered and Α. they would have gone to check the tube bundle systems. 6 If 7 you correlate it across, the oxygen is very similar and the 8 CO is slightly higher than it was before the explosion on 9 6 May. 10 11 Q. Is there a similar sort of activity shown here prior to the explosion? You've got drops in oxygen and small 12 13 rises in CO? 14 Very, very small rises in CO. In my report, Α. I identified issues with flow to the analysers, there were 15 flow alarms, and that oxygen could be due to the flow 16 alarms or to sampling from fresh air. 17 18 We might jump forward a couple of slides, perhaps, 19 Q. because I've got them out of order. You've actually 20 labelled a similar slide to that. 21 I'm now looking at slide 22 27. You've identified, firstly, 8 April? Yes, because that's when the CO drops. 23 Α. 24 Can you assist us in terms of what might explain that? 25 Q. From the data, no, I can't. It could be due to 26 Α. inertisation or another action taken at the time, but the 27 CO drops. 28 29 Inertisation involving what? 30 Q. Nitrogen gas. They used nitrogen gas. 31 Α. 32 Why would there be inertisation with nitrogen gas? 33 Q. 34 That's part of the process for stopping the oxygen Α. ingress, but I didn't see a corresponding drop in the 35 oxygen content. So there's an unknown action. 36 I don't 37 know what - I cannot explain why that occurred. 38 Could the CO have dropped in response to some 39 Q. 40 nitrogen, nitrogen injection? I would have expected a drop in the oxygen as well, so 41 Α. it could have, but unlikely. 42 43 44 Q. On 18 April, you've identified a drop in oxygen. So that is more likely at the point when nitrogen may 45 Α. 46 have been introduced or a change in goaf drainage 47 strategies.

1 2 Q. The CO increases. 3 Yes, well, the oxygen has been available for a number Α. 4 of days, and so the coal has reacted so it, so that's the CO that's coming off. And then later on, you'll see the CO 5 6 drop away in response to the oxygen dropping. 7 You've got a leak test identified on or about 8 Q. 27 April? 9 I identified that because the tube actually failed the 10 Α. leak test on the day of the test. 11 12 13 Q. What's the significance of that? AS 2290 part 3 requires the tubes to be tested on 14 Α. a monthly basis for leaks. You take a sample of known gas 15 underground and put it into the tube to determine if 16 there's a leak outbye of your sample point, because that 17 can dilute your sample. You're trying to establish that 18 the sample you're analysing on the surface reflects the 19 sample that's behind the seals. 20 21 22 Q. And it failed the leak test? Α. 23 Yes. 24 What does that tell us, then, about any of the data 25 Q. that precedes that point? Does it affect the reliability 26 of it? 27 28 Α. There is a small - it only just failed the leak test. It wasn't a massive failure. So it could mean that the 29 oxygen would be overestimated and the CO underestimated. 30 31 32 Q. We'll come to the other goaf seals in a moment. Did you look at the Safegas system for the alarms that had been 33 34 set? 35 Not every alarm, but I did investigate - oh, for some Α. of the alarms that had been set, yes, I did. 36 37 38 Q. In relation to these goaf seals? In particular for the oxygen alarm, that was one I was 39 Α. 40 interested in, yes. 41 Q. 42 What was the oxygen alarm set at? Sorry, I remember 21.5 per cent. 43 Α. 44 45 Q. Which is fresh air? 46 Α. Fresh air, yes. 47

1 Q. Is that how you would normally configure an oxygen 2 alarm for a goaf tube bundle? Not the normal way. You would normally mirror the -3 Α. 4 on a weekly or bi-weekly process, mirror the fall of the oxygen, because you're interested in oxygen ingress into 5 6 the goaf. 7 8 Q. So what would be a normal level at which you would set 9 an oxygen alarm? It depends on what the normal level is for that seal. 10 Α. You're looking - ultimately, if you're looking around 11 22 April, you would probably have an alarm around 12 13 10 per cent, because that was below 10 per cent. 14 Is there much point in having the alarm set at the 15 Q. equivalent of fresh air? 16 It's of no use in determining - if you've got the 17 Α. alarm set on fresh air, you will not get an alarm. And if 18 you're reading fresh air, you're unlikely to get a methane 19 alarm, carbon monoxide alarm or carbon dioxide alarm, 20 because you're reading fresh air. 21 22 Could we go back to slide 24. Is this the CO and 23 Q. oxygen for the B1 cut-through seal? 24 Α. It is. 25 26 It shows from early March through until roughly the 27 Q. end of April, a level of oxygen that's up or around the 28 29 20 per cent mark? It does. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. But then it steeply falls away at the start of May? It does. 33 Α. 34 35 Q. Is there a correlation between those levels of oxygen and the amount of carbon monoxide that we see reflected in 36 37 the blue graph here? The levels of carbon monoxide are very, very low. 38 Α. They're only 10 ppm. 39 40 So what explains or what might explain the oxygen 41 Q. level dropping effectively vertically, as it does at the 42 43 end of April? 44 Probably the use of inertisation. Α. 45 46 Q. Again, that's nitrogen? 47 Nitrogen. Sorry, yes. I apologise. Α.

1 2 And is there anything significant about the level of Q. carbon monoxide after that point? 3 4 Well, it's only showing around less than 5 ppm and Α. 5 there's no rising trend, which is a good thing. 6 7 Q. This is the 38 cut-through seal. Again, we've got that period where the level of oxygen is equivalent to 8 fresh air, and that's between about 29 May [sic] and 9 12 May, but at the same time the level of CO is effectively 10 What does that tell you about what was happening 11 zero. with respect to that tube bundle during that period? 12 13 Α. That was 29 April to around 10 or 11 May. 14 Q. Yes. 15 Α. It's reading - it appears to be reading fresh air. 16 17 Prior to that period on 29 April or thereabouts, does 18 Q. the data appear to be valid for the goaf atmosphere? 19 It does appear to be valid. 20 Α. 21 22 Q. But from 29 April onwards, there was no valid data coming out of the tube bundle for that goaf seal? 23 Not for that location, no. 24 Α. 25 Now, did you calculate Graham's ratio for the various 26 Q. locations? 27 28 I did not calculate Graham's ratio. The calculation Α. was done in Safegas. 29 30 I beg your pardon, but you've output the data into 31 Q. a graph here for us? 32 Yes. Α. 33 34 We have the level 1 TARP of 0.3 for Graham's ratio 35 Q. depicted in this horizontal line? 36 37 Α. Correct. 38 Given what we know about the fluctuations or potential 39 Q. 40 fluctuations in reliability of the data for those seals, how useful is this Graham's ratio data? 41 That data goes up where the Graham's ratio is over 0.3 42 Α. 43 to the - it falls below 0.3 on about 24 April, so it's 44 reasonably reliable, I think. If you look at the B1 cut-through Graham's ratio, those readings were very, very 45 46 low CO and oxygen close to fresh air, so you see a scatter, 47 a scattergram.

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1 2 But the figure for Graham's ratio tracks markedly Q. downwards from about 25 April or so? 3 Α. It does. 4 5 6 Q. Through until the time of the incident? 7 Α. It does. 8 9 Q. Did you look at the real-time Citect data for the goaf wells? 10 I did. Α. 11 12 13 Q. This didn't involve the use of a gas chromatograph -14 gas chromatograph data? No, I looked at the raw data from the goaf wells. 15 Α. 16 In terms of analysis of the GC data, that's been done 17 Q. by your colleague Mr Muller? 18 Α. That's correct, plus other gas chemists, yes. 19 20 21 Just as a refresher to identify the various goaf Q. 22 wells, you understood that the goaf wells were drilled at roughly 25 metre intervals on the surface? 23 That's correct. 24 Α. 25 You've got number 10 here. The horizontal line 26 Q. indicates the approximate location of the face as at the 27 date of the incident? 28 Α. It does. 29 30 Goaf well number 10 - I'll just use the last two 31 Q. digits - was essentially, if not at the face, not far from 32 it? 33 Α. Correct. 34 35 But 9.5 was 25 metres back; 9 was 50 metres back; 8.5, 36 Q. 37 75 metres back, and so forth? Correct. 38 Α. 39 40 Did you look at trends in that data over the period Q. from 2 May through until 6 May? 41 I did. Α. 42 43 44 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr Hunter, since we're going on to the trends, we might have the morning break now, if that's 45 46 convenient. 47

1 MR HUNTER: Of course. 2 3 THE CHAIRPERSON: We will adjourn until a guarter to 12. 4 5 SHORT ADJOURNMENT 6 THE CHAIRPERSON: 7 Yes, thank you, Mr Hunter. 8 MR HUNTER: 9 Thank you. 10 11 Q. Mr Watkinson, I've been asked to ask you if you would please endeavour to keep your voice up. 12 13 Α. I'll try and move forward and do that. 14 The slide, which is slide 31 - and for 15 Q. Thank you. those who are interested, it's 31 of 53 - depicts the four 16 gas data from the goaf drainage well known as number 7? 17 That's hole number 7, and GMS15 identifies the goaf 18 Α. drainage skid that's on the well. 19 20 21 The goaf drainage skid is a portable device that can Q. 22 be moved from well to well? Α. Correct. 23 24 So here we can see the data from 2 May through until 25 Q. a couple of minutes after the incident occurred. We can 26 see that the oxygen level seems to be sitting anywhere 27 28 between, apart from that spike above 10, somewhere around the 8 to 6 per cent mark? 29 Correct. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. Is there anything significant about the trend that we see here in terms of the amount of carbon monoxide? 33 You can see an upward trend in carbon monoxide. Α. 34 It starts to change around 4 to 5 May, you could even say 35 a step change. There's a couple of times it goes above 36 37 100 ppm but doesn't trigger the TARP. 38 Q. What's a step change? 39 40 Α. If you look --41 You're talking about this area here (indicating)? 42 Q. Yes, this area - not an immediate step. If you look 43 Α. 44 between the 5th and the 6th, overall the data seems to be a step, a step upwards. Prior to that, it's running around 45 46 40 to 50 ppm, and there it's running around 70 to 80 ppm on 47 average.

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1 2 Q. What does that trend say, if anything, about the 3 oxidation of coal that's occurring? 4 It would say there'd been a change in the oxidation Α. pattern and maybe there's more oxidation happening, but 5 that's only a raw CO value, of course. 6 7 8 Q. Can you explain what you mean by that? Well, there are - you could have - if you're looking 9 Α. at a step change, there is also a drop in methane about the 10 time of the step change, maybe towards the end of the 4th 11 of the 5th, so that part of step change could be explained 12 13 by dilution of methane as well. 14 So if you used a methane free calculation, it might 15 Q. actually not be a step change at all? 16 Correct. 17 Α. 18 Q. 19 That's not an exercise you did, though? Α. 20 No. 21 22 Q. That's something Mr Muller has done? Mr Muller looked at a couple of the wells in 23 Α. particular where he was asked, but I was looking at the raw 24 data and the data that was available to the mine in normal 25 analysis. 26 27 28 Q. The next slide is well 8? 29 Α. Correct. 30 This relates to the amount of flow from the well as 31 Q. 32 well as the amount of carbon monoxide? That's correct. 33 Α. 34 35 Do we see anything about the data that's of Q. significance here? 36 37 Yes, the goaf well was closed in about - on the 4th of Α. There's still a slight flow which can be 38 the 5th. determined, and you can see an increase in CO trend prior 39 40 to the event, but again I don't think it triggers 130 ppm, which is the level 1 TARP, until the afternoon of the 6th 41 of the 5th. 42 43 44 And that's after the incident, you mean? Q. 45 Α. Yes. 46 47 Q. This is hole 8.5.

1 Α. Correct. 2 3 Q. This would be, what, about 75 metres back from the 4 face or thereabouts? 5 Α. About there, yes. 6 7 Q. We can see that the oxygen levels again are somewhere between about 5 per cent, maybe 4 per cent, and 8 10 per cent, apart from that spike? 9 Α. Correct. 10 11 We can see a spike in CO at about the same time as Q. 12 13 that oxygen spike? Correct. 14 Α. 15 Is that an actual correlation or could they be 16 Q. completely independent events? 17 They could be independent events. I don't know what 18 Α. was the cause. 19 20 21 What do you say, though, about the trend, if any, of Q. 22 carbon monoxide? The trend is going upwards. If you look - I'm 23 Α. thinking just back to the data, when you look, the increase 24 in CO correlates to a decrease in methane, so that could be 25 again an advantage of looking at methane free CO in goaf 26 But it's an upward trend, a slightly upward trend. 27 wells. 28 The absolute numbers are not very high. 29 Does this exercise highlight the importance, for 30 Q. example, of using a methane free calculation when you're 31 32 assessing this data? I believe this is something we should be doing in the 33 Α. future, yes. 34 35 At the time of the incident, was the Citect system set 36 Q. 37 up to do a methane free calculation for CO? I don't have that information. I've not seen it. 38 Α. 39 40 Methane free calculations were not part of any of the Q. suite of data that you were given? 41 Not - none of that - I was given raw gas data. 42 That's Α. all I was given. 43 44 45 Hole 9. This is about 50 metres back from the face. Q. 46 What are we seeing, if anything, in terms of the trend for 47 carbon monoxide?

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1 There's a slight increase in carbon monoxide trend Α. 2 over the period. 3 4 But, again, is there a trend downwards in the amount Q. 5 of methane, or was that after the explosion? That's - no, from the middle of the 5th to the -6 Α. 7 there's a sudden change in methane and carbon monoxide, 8 I don't know what the cause of that was, around the middle of the 5th of the 5th, midday. 9 10 This is then hole 9.5, which is the closest operating 11 Q. well to the face at the time of the incident; correct? 12 13 Α. That's correct. 14 The data is a bit all over the place, but is there 15 Q. anything significant that we can see here? Can I ask you 16 firstly about the amount of oxygen? 17 The oxygen is a concern. It's gone above 10 per cent 18 Α. about the time of the incident. Methane is dropping. If 19 anything, carbon monoxide appears to be trending down. 20 21 22 Why is the amount of oxygen a concern? Q. Well, it's up above 10 per cent, and looking at the 23 Α. graph it's probably 13, 14 per cent just immediately 24 before - around the time of the incident, the explosion. 25 26 That's around about 25 metres back from the face? Q. 27 28 Α. Yes. 29 You've seen some of the methane free calculations that 30 Q. were done by Mr Muller; correct? 31 32 Α. Correct. 33 In fact, you reviewed his report as part of the peer 34 Q. review process; is that right? 35 That's correct. 36 Α. 37 I'm just going to show you some of them. 38 Q. Just before we do that, are you satisfied with the methodology that 39 40 Mr Muller employed in doing these calculations? Α. Yes. I am. 41 42 43 Is there anything unusual or remarkable about doing Q. a methane free calculation for carbon monoxide? 44 It's not common practice, but again in a methane rich 45 Α. 46 environment it can give you some additional information to 47 evaluate.

1 2 This is the methane free calculation for hole number 8 Q. that we were looking at earlier, so the effect of methane 3 4 dilution had been taken out - yes? 5 That's correct. Α. 6 7 Q. What does it show us in terms of the trend in the lead-up to the incident? 8 It shows a sudden increase in methane free CO, which 9 Α. is very similar to the absolute values in CO as well. 10 11 So what does that tell you about what's going on in 12 Q. 13 the vicinity of hole 8 in the goaf? Well, it says that the gas is reporting to that 14 Α. There is indication of an increased activity. 15 location. 16 What sort of activity? 17 Q. Spontaneous combustion activity, sorry. Α. 18 19 If we go to the next slide, which is methane free 20 Q. calculation at goaf hole 8.5. What do you say about what 21 22 we see here? Well, what you can see here is like a small step 23 Α. 24 The reading is averaging around 100, and then it change. appears to be reading averaging around 150, and then you 25 see the rapid increase around the time of the explosion. 26 27 28 Q. Again, what does that tell us about what was happening 29 in the goaf in the vicinity of where this well was situated? 30 Again, with the gas that's reporting to it, it will be 31 Α. 32 indicating increased activity or an increased level of activity, spontaneous combustion activity. 33 34 35 Q. This is hole 9? That shows a similar graph again. 36 Α. It's not as clear, 37 the step change, but the step change is there from around 100 to around an average of 150, but there is variability 38 in the data. 39 40 Can you just explain something for me. 41 Q. With the methane free calculation, let's say you've got an 42 atmosphere that contains 80 per cent methane and you remove 43 that 80 per cent from the calculation. If you're detecting 44 3 parts per million, say, 2 per cent - 3 parts per million 45 46 carbon monoxide in that remaining 20 per cent, is the 47 figure that you see exaggerated?

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1 That is the danger of using that - you can exaggerate Α. the final number. That's similar for air free samples or 2 anything else you're doing. Again, you're down looking at 3 4 the accuracies of the instrument. 5 Let's say you've got 100 parts per million CO in that 6 Q. 7 remaining 20 per cent. Is the figure reported, such as we see here, parts per million, or is it parts per 20 per cent 8 of a million? 9 It's air free parts per million - oh, sorry, methane 10 Α. free parts per million. Again, I prefer to look at the 11 long-term trends, so I try and look at the variability in 12 13 the analysis and try to draw a line through where the 14 average is and see if that is increasing or decreasing. 15 My question is this, though: if you were going to 16 Q. take methane free CO, can you use the figure calculated and 17 compare it to the TARP trigger values, or are the TARP 18 trigger values inapplicable for methane free CO? 19 You would have to have a methane free CO TARP 20 Α. 21 established. 22 Again, tell me if I have this right: 23 Q. does the use of the methane free CO calculation take out any potential 24 variability in the results because of fluctuations in the 25 amount of methane? 26 That's the purpose, yes. 27 Α. 28 So it enables you to look at a trend much more 29 Q. clearly? 30 Α. Correct. 31 32 Now can I ask you to have a look at some of the trends 33 Q. for the day of the incident itself. The first slide is for 34 goaf hole number 10. You understood that because this was 35 a new hole, it hadn't yet been connected to the Citect 36 37 system? That's correct. 38 Α. 39 40 So the only data we have is from manually collected Q. bag samples that were taken? 41 These aren't bag samples; these are analyses done by 42 Α. 43 the field technicians with a hand-held instrument 44 But again they're manually collected? 45 Q. 46 Α. Manually collected, yes. 47

1 Q. But they showed that at 5 minutes to 3 on the morning 2 of 6 May what was coming out of hole 10, which was the one that was either at the face or very close to it, was 3 4 17 per cent oxygen and 14 per cent methane? 5 That's correct. Α. 6 7 Q. That would be in the explosive range, would it? It would, yes. 8 Α. 9 The data you've seen shows that that well was shut 10 Q. off? 11 Yes, they were in the process of trying to commission Α. 12 13 it or see if they could bring it online. I'd imagine they saw that data and then shut it in again. 14 15 16 Q. The next slide is for the first well back in the sequence, 9.5, and we can see a spike in the amount of CO 17 at about the time of the incident, which we know was at 18 2.57 or 14:57, so about here, and we see at the same time 19 as the spike in CO, we can see a drop in the amount of 20 21 methane? 22 Α Correct. 23 The amount of CO, though, only goes up to 35 parts per 24 Q. million? 25 Α. Correct. 26 27 28 Q. The oxygen also, I should say, drops? 29 Α. Correct. 30 The drop in methane, drop in oxygen, consistent with 31 Q. 32 them being consumed in the ignition? That's what I would take, yes. 33 Α. 34 35 Q. And the CO is a product of the ignition? And the CO2 as well. 36 Α. 37 There's a spike in the CO2 at the bottom there? 38 Q. Yes, where it flatlines, the data in the csv file was 39 Α. 40 reading N/A, or not applicable, and I'm assuming that that was maxed out at 5 per cent. 41 42 43 I see, okay. If we go back one hole, so this is Q. 25 metres back, we see that at the time of the incident, 44 the methane hits 500 parts per million? 45 46 Α. CO, yes. 47

1 Q. It was 35 parts per million at 9.5, and 500 at hole 9? 2 Α. Correct. 3 4 Q. It seems to flatline. Is there a limit --5 There's a limit on that analyser at around 500 ppm. Α. 6 They sometimes will give a reading just above that, but 7 it's 500 ppm. 8 Have you seen that there is bag sample data that was 9 Q. taken, just fortuitously, a few minutes after the explosion 10 that showed CO at over 1000 parts per million? 11 I am aware of that, yes. Α. 12 13 14 So we have that spike in CO, a drop in methane, a drop Q. in oxygen and a rise in CO2? 15 Α. Correct. 16 17 Can you explain, if you can, why we might see such 18 Q. markedly different outcomes at hole 9 as opposed to what we 19 saw at hole 9.5, particularly in terms of the amount of CO 20 21 reporting to the goaf well? 22 Α. It's not my total area of expertise, but that would be due to the combustion process. For CO2 to be produced 23 would mean that there was more oxygen available, so the 24 conversion process was to carbon dioxide, and here 25 indicating a less efficient combustion process, because 26 more CO was produced. 27 28 29 A less efficient combustion process that reported to Q. hole 9 than the one that reported to 9.5? 30 Again, it's not my direct area of expertise, but 31 Α. Yes. 32 that's what it indicates to me. 33 34 Q. If we then go back 25 metres to hole 8.5, we see a similar series of events, but the CO is lower; it's at 35 about 320, or thereabouts, parts per million? 36 That's correct. 37 Α. 38 But there are concurrent drops in methane and a lesser 39 Q. 40 drop in oxygen and a small bump in carbon dioxide? Α. That's correct. 41 42 43 Going back to hole number 8, again the effects are Q. 44 even less pronounced, but there is a bump in carbon monoxide to about 250? 45 46 Α. Correct. 47

1 Q. Is the little decrease in methane consistent with the 2 combustion? At this level, you would say yes. And that's a longer 3 Α. time scale as well for the period of the graph. 4 5 But there's no particular impact upon oxygen or CO2? 6 Q. 7 Α. Not discernible in the data, no. 8 This is hole 7. The incident occurred at about this 9 Q. point here (indicating) where I'm holding the cursor. 10 Α. Yes. 11 12 13 Q. There are some impacts in the hour or so after the event showing an increase in carbon monoxide? 14 That's correct. 15 Α. 16 And a small decrease in oxygen, as well as a small 17 Q. decrease in methane? 18 Α. Yes. 19 20 Is that consistent with some level of combustion? 21 Q. 22 Α. It would be, yes. 23 24 Going further back again, 6.5, there are some Q. indicators here consistent with combustion, including the 25 rise in CO and the dip in methane? 26 Correct. Α. 27 28 29 Q. But it's a bit hard to tell from the oxygen and the C02? 30 It's very difficult to tell when - the further you get 31 Α. back in the goaf, the whole dynamics change. 32 33 34 Q. You undertook the exercise of calculating the combined CO make for the goaf wells and also the tube 26 located at 35 3-4 cut-through? 36 37 Α. That's correct. 38 In this graph, you've removed what would have been 39 Q. shown at the time of the explosion in this gap here, 40 because the amount of CO produced would have completely 41 dominated the graph and we wouldn't have been able to see 42 43 what else was going on? 44 Α. I was more interested in the long-term trends. 45 46 Q. So what do the trends show in terms of CO make, 47 firstly for the 3-4 cut-through tube?

1 Well, if - the data for 3-4 cut-through, which is in Α. 2 the reddy-brown colour, pre the event, is the data as calculated in Safegas. If anything, you could pick 3 4 a slightly downward trend over the period up to about 5 29 April and a slightly upward trend, but it would be difficult to pick in long-term trending. 6 7 8 The blue line is a combined - the dark blue line is a combined graph adding the average CO make per goaf well 9 for all the goaf - I combined all the goaf wells. 10 I calculated the average CO for the day, the average flow 11 for the day, to give me an average CO make for the day, 12 13 which I then combined to the Safegas data to draw that 14 graph, and again it's not showing an upward trend per se. 15 16 But when you look at what happened afterwards, and Q. obviously we know there was an ignition event on I think 17 8 June --18 Α. 8 June. 19 20 21 Q. If we look at the data post the event, what does that 22 show? Well, there the yellow line is the Safegas line and 23 Α. 24 the blue line is the combined line. Post the event, more and more goaf wells were shut in, and so the CO was not 25 reporting to the goaf wells. It was reporting to 26 3-4 cut-through. You see a very similar trend to what was 27 28 immediately before the first explosion. Other indicators were found of spontaneous combustion activity around 29 96 shield, so actions were taken, and you can see how late 30 the carbon monoxide trend responds to that activity. 31 It 32 only starts to - and again you'd be looking maybe about early June to say, well, yes, it's starting to go away. 33 34 So what do you say to this proposition: what do you 35 Q. say as to whether - let's say there was a small but intense 36 37 area of heating in the area of the goaf perhaps just behind the shields, is that something that would be picked up in 38 the CO make data? 39 40 Α. Not likely, no. 41 42 Q. Where would you pick it up? In the goaf stream, or even possibly the goaf wells. 43 Α. 44 What would you be looking for would be, what, 45 Q. 46 ethylene? 47 I'd be looking for ethylene, probably looking at Α.

1 absolute values of CO, hydrogen, and other values, and 2 seeing what - and trending things over time. 3 4 Did you look at the data from the goaf stream? Q. 5 Very briefly, I think I did. Α. 6 7 Q. Did you identify that there were some bag samples bag samples ought to have been taken at least once per 8 shift, if not twice per shift? 9 Yes, I'm aware of that with reading Mr Muller's 10 Α. 11 report. 12 13 Q. And some in fact weren't taken because of an apparent concern about the conditions in the roof of the tailgate? 14 There were adverse conditions at the time in the 15 Α. tailgate, yes. 16 17 Now can I move to a separate topic, then, and that's 18 Q. testing for spontaneous combustion and PUR, and again can 19 I reiterate that you understand testing is being undertaken 20 by others, perhaps as we speak, but you went through the 21 22 available information to consider the hypothesis that what might have occurred was that the polyurethane resin that 23 was injected into the face may have triggered a spontaneous 24 combustion event? 25 When I'd reviewed all the data, the last thing I did, 26 Α. I reviewed the spontaneous combustion testing reports in my 27 28 report, and there it was identified that if you step-heat, or as Dr Beamish identified, if you - PUR could create 29 a spontaneous combustion event. That's the only way he 30 identified it could occur in the Goonyella Middle seam. 31 32 The last thing I checked is the dates of PUR injection, and I found a correlation that they were very close to the date 33 of the first explosion. 34 35 36 You found in amongst the material some advice that Q. 37 Dr Beamish had given to the mine itself? That's correct. 38 Α. 39 40 Q. Both in 2014 and in 2019? That's correct. 41 Α. 42 43 What we see on the page here is an extract from Q. I think the first of those? 44 That's correct. 45 Α. 46 Where Dr Beamish speaks of the coal coming into 47 Q.

1 contact with an external heat source? That is correct. 2 Α. 3 4 Just so we're clear about this, you're not suggesting Q. 5 that the PUR would take the coal all the way to the heat required for ignition, but, rather, it would initiate 6 7 a self-heating? 8 Α. That is a possibility, yes. 9 You've included in your report, and we'll go to it 10 Q. over the page, an extract from Dr Beamish's 2014 report? 11 That is correct. Α. 12 13 14 This is figure 11 that you referred to on the previous Q. page, where he said that if you step-heat the coal and then 15 wait long enough, it will gradually heat in the logarithmic 16 curve as depicted on this page? 17 That is correct. Α. 18 19 He went on in the 2019 report to describe it in these 20 Q. 21 terms? 22 Α. That's correct. 23 24 Q. As per this diagram? Yes. 25 Α. 26 This isn't yours; this is Dr Beamish's report? 27 Q. 28 Α. That is correct. 29 Q. A report that was commissioned by and supplied to 30 31 Grosvenor? 32 Α. That is correct. 33 34 This is figure 119 from your report, and it's the Q. carbon monoxide readings for the 3-4 cut-through tube 35 bundle from 15 to 21 April and we know that there was the 36 37 injection of PUR, I forget the exact dates, but in the middle of that period. What does this data show? 38 That's showing me, using the terminology from us, 39 Α. a slight step in the CO, and that's absolute CO, not 40 I was looking to see if there was any evidence CO make. 41 of --42 43 44 Are you talking about this here (indicating)? Q. Yes. If you draw horizontally across there, the 45 Α. 46 tailgate return is around 8 ppm as opposed to running 47 between 5 to 6 ppm prior.

1 2 Q. So it's a small increase? 3 A small increase and not easy to pick unless you're Α. 4 looking for it. 5 6 Q. If we then go to your analysis for the 2nd to the 6th 7 of May for the same parameter, that is, CO in the tailgate at 3-4 cut-through, what do we see? 8 I don't see the same sort of variation. 9 Α. There's a sudden peak, which I explained, on the 6th of the 5th -10 I think that's the time of the explosion, I think. 11 0h, no, that's the early in the morning one, when the - I've 12 13 explained in my report, which was down to diesel vapours in 14 the tailgate. 15 16 Q. Diesel in the tailgate - that's this spike that we see 17 here? Yes, I believe that's the one I refer to in the report 18 Α. where there was diesel activity. 19 20 21 So taking that out of the equation, what do we see, Q. 22 though, in this area here? There's a slight step, but it wouldn't be as easily 23 Α. discernible as the earlier one. 24 25 You're not suggesting that the mine should have been 26 Q. looking at this data with this level of granularity, are 27 28 vou? 29 It's the benefit of hindsight to go back and look Α. No. at it. 30 31 32 Q. In terms of identifying what actually was going on at the time the incident occurred? 33 34 Α. Yes. 35 Those are the questions that I have. 36 MR HUNTER: 37 38 THE CHAIRPERSON: Thank you. Yes, Mr Holt. 39 40 <EXAMINATION BY MR HOLT: 41 MR HOLT: Good afternoon, Mr Watkinson. 42 Q. My name is 43 Saul Holt. I'm one of the barristers for the Anglo companies, entities that have been given leave to appear in 44 the Board of Inquiry. I just have a few questions for you. 45 46 47 You helped us with the meaning of particularly the

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1 "spontaneous" aspect of spontaneous combustion earlier. 2 You explained that "spontaneous" really meant unassisted in 3 that context. 4 Α. That is the correct way, yes. 5 And the "combustion" component of that phrase 6 Q. 7 spontaneous combustion, that relates to the end result of 8 a process which results in the ignition of coal, doesn't it? 9 That's the very end process, yes. 10 Α. 11 But the combustion, as the name suggests, is the 12 Q. 13 ignition of the coal at that point, which follows 14 a process? Α. Yes. 15 16 What has happened to get to that point is that you 17 Q. have coal sitting underground at its ambient temperature, 18 which you would accept would be normally about, what, 40, 19 45 degrees in this context? 20 It depends on the virgin rock temperature, but it's 21 Α. 22 around that number. 23 24 Q. Around that kind of figure; right? Α. 25 Yes. 26 What happens, as you've indicated very clearly, 27 Q. thank you, in your report, is that even with coal at its 28 ambient temperature and slightly above it, you're going to 29 start seeing the effects of oxidation when oxygen is 30 introduced to the coal? 31 32 Α. You are. 33 34 And the signs of oxidation that we see, in fact, Q. because of the gas evolution testing that's happened a lot 35 over the last 20 years, a lot of the gases that are 36 37 produced when heat is applied are happening even at those very low ambient or tepid temperatures of coal - starting 38 to happen? 39 40 There are temperatures determined in the gas evolution Α. 41 test, ves. 42 43 The gases that start being liberated from the coal, Q. 44 effectively, even at those ambient and slightly above ambient temperatures - we can start seeing them, as our 45 46 capacity to test has got better, at lower and lower 47 temperatures?

1 Α. There have been improvements in detection limits, yes. 2 3 One of the examples you gave, which is probably the Q. 4 quintessential example, is hydrogen; right? 5 That's correct. Α. 6 7 Q. Twenty years ago, you reasonably would have thought that any presence of hydrogen at all not only would 8 indicate hot coal but even coal at 200, 220 degrees, 9 something like that? 10 I can't answer the question on the temperature, but 11 Α. I remember that I was told hydrogen was bad. 12 13 14 We now know, of course, that almost every sample from Q. an underground coal mine will have hydrogen in it? 15 It will have 1 to 2 ppm, so there will be a level of Α. 16 hydrogen in every sample. There's probably 1 to 2 ppm in 17 this room here. 18 19 What you're talking about, when you talk in your 20 Q. report about the early signs of spontaneous combustion in 21 that first 400 metre retreat of a longwall, as I think you 22 kept explaining, which was very helpful, are signs of 23 oxidation of coal? 24 Α. Yes. 25 26 The producing of gas from the process of oxidation of 27 Q. coal? 28 29 Α. Correct. 30 Coal typically ignites at about what kind of 31 Q. 32 temperature? I think it's around 600, but don't quote me on that. Α. 33 34 35 I was going to say the same. About 600 degrees Q. Celsius is the point at which the actual combustion happens 36 37 if coal has gone through that process to get to the point of spontaneous combustion? 38 Α. Yes, correct. 39 40 Ballpark? 41 Q. Ballpark. 42 Α. 43 44 But, as we've already discussed, the process of the Q. oxidation can happen right down at 45 degrees and a little 45 46 bit above 45 degrees? 47 The oxidation process is occurring all the time, yes. Α.

1 2 Q. Absolutely. Then in between those two things, we have this notion of heating; right? We have coal that's 3 4 heating, getting hotter from that oxidation process? 5 People have used different terminologies to try to Α. differentiate heating and deep-seated oxidation and 6 7 everything else, but it's --8 I understand. I know there are different phrases and 9 Q. terminology used, but let's see if we can get on the same 10 page just for the purposes of the discussion. 11 Α. Okay. 12 13 It's right, isn't it, as I think you indicated, that 14 Q. coal at, say, 45 degrees oxidating as it does isn't 15 necessarily going to shoot up to 600 degrees; there's 16 a process that it's going to have to go through in between? 17 Yes. Α. 18 19 You used the phrase I think "take-off", and what's 20 Q. used sometimes is "runaway", the point at which coal gets 21 22 to a particular temperature where, on its own, that process of oxidation is going to lead it upwards if it's not 23 interfered with? 24 That's correct. There are a couple of points there. 25 Α. 26 Yes, and what's generally considered to be one of the 27 Q. 28 really important temperatures in that regard is 100 degrees 29 Celsius? Yes. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. The reason for that is probably obvious once we think it through, which is that that's the temperature at which 33 34 water boils? 35 Α. Correct. 36 37 And, as a result, that's the point at which the Q. moisture comes out of the coal, making it much easier, 38 because the coal is drier, for that temperature to 39 40 increase? That's correct. Α. 41 42 Before that point, that kind of runaway point, in 43 Q. effect, you can see, and will see, a process of oxidation 44 and signs of oxidation happening but in circumstances where 45 46 it will then resolve itself or the coal will not continue 47 to heat?

1 Α. That can occur, yes. 2 3 Q. Indeed it does occur regularly; right? 4 That's a regular occurrence, yes. Α. 5 Indeed, the unusual thing, fortunately, is the 6 Q. 7 temperature running away up to and past 100 degrees? 8 That's correct. Α. 9 Now, the heating process is simply that the heat 10 Q. generated by the oxidation process is exceeding any 11 dissipation of that heat from the coal? 12 13 Α. That's correct. 14 And that dissipation can happen through convection, 15 Q. conduction or evaporation? 16 Correct. 17 Α. 18 Again, as we've noted, when the heat generated by that 19 Q. oxidation process exceeds the dissipation of that heat, the 20 generation can become self-sustaining? 21 22 Α Correct. 23 24 And that's exactly what we're trying to avoid in Q. spontaneous combustion management processes, systems and 25 TARPs in an underground coal mine? 26 That is correct. Α. 27 28 29 Again just to be absolutely clear, when we Q. Thank you. read your report and you talk about early signs of 30 spontaneous combustion, what you're talking about are 31 indicators of oxidation of coal? 32 Α. Correct. 33 34 You've helped us, and we'll talk a little bit more 35 Q. about this, to understand, firstly, the types of indicators 36 37 that we might be looking for - Graham's ratio, CO/CO2 ratio, CO2 make - sorry, CO make, absolute CO? 38 Α. Correct. 39 40 And the extent to which to a greater or lesser extent 41 Q. it's possible to correlate the results of those different 42 43 techniques with the likely range of temperature of the coal that we're trying to find out about? 44 That's the objective behind Graham's ratio and CO/CO2, 45 Α. 46 yes. 47

1 Absolutely, because, for example, Graham's ratio is Q. 2 generally thought to be, when it's operating validly, a pretty good measure of intensity of heating? 3 4 Α. That's correct. 5 And CO/CO2 of course again, based on the validity of 6 Q. 7 the results, is showing heating and increase in 8 temperature? Yes, detecting those early stages. 9 Α. 10 As you've noted and were taken through - I won't need 11 Q. to do it in detail because of the very thorough job that 12 13 our learned friend Mr Hunter did - one of the primary ways in which spontaneous combustion risks are managed in 14 a longwall coal mine is through the use of TARPs? 15 Well, the TARP - the controls are actually the things 16 Α. you put in place. The TARP is you're responding to see if 17 your controls have been effective. 18 19 You're exactly right, I am sorry. My language was 20 Q. 21 imprecise. A TARP is an important response measure, as the 22 name suggests or as the acronym suggests, to signals or signs of that oxidation that we've been talking about? 23 24 Α. Yes. 25 You'd know that one of the critical things associated 26 Q. with the development of a TARP in relation to spontaneous 27 28 combustion is to establish what are called for those 29 purposes "normal" levels of the indicators that you are interested in? 30 The key thing is what is normal at your mine in your 31 Α. 32 conditions. 33 Q. You've jumped ahead and, thank you, that's saved me 34 some time. One of the ways that's done, as Mr Hunter was 35 asking you about, by competent coal mine operators is to 36 37 have testing of their own coal done? That's one of the things, yes. 38 Α. 39 40 Also, I'm sure you'd agree, to bring in expert Q. assistance when and as required? 41 You'd use expert assistance and, also, use long-term 42 Α. 43 trending from your previous panels. 44 And you did some of that in this, which was really 45 Q. 46 cool, through 101 and 102, but particularly 103 and 104? 47 I looked at - I compared 103 to 104. Α.

| 4 | |
|----|---|
| 1 | O Is to use of these welves that wight remained as well |
| 2 | Q. In terms of these values that might represent normal |
| 3 | in a particular coal mine, because of the conditions, |
| 4 | because of the nature of the coal, because of the depth, |
| 5 | because of mining techniques, everything else, "normal" |
| 6 | could be an order of magnitude different, depending on what |
| 7 | coal mine, region or area you're in? |
| 8 | A. Definitely, depending on the coal seam, definitely. |
| 9 | Normal can be substantially different. |
| 10 | |
| 11 | Q. Up to and including even more than an order of |
| 12 | magnitude on some measures, which we'll come to? |
| 13 | A. It's possible, yes. |
| 14 | |
| 15 | Q. Again, in terms of the kind of expert assistance that |
| 16 | you would expect a competent coal mine operator to engage, |
| 17 | someone like Dr Beamish would be an appropriate person to |
| 18 | be doing some of these tests? |
| 19 | A. Correct. |
| 20 | |
| 21 | Q. Mr Darren Brady, whom I'm sure you know? |
| 22 | A. Yes, I know Darren. |
| 23 | |
| 24 | Q. A former Simtars person? |
| 25 | A. Correct. |
| 26 | |
| 27 | Q. Again, the kind of person who you would want to be |
| 28 | brought in to do a full review of a spontaneous |
| 29 | combustion TARP? |
| 30 | A. Darren has done a lot of work on spontaneous |
| 31 | combustion TARPs, yes. |
| 32 | |
| 33 | Q. And the sort of person who it would be good to bring |
| 34 | in to somewhere like Grosvenor to do that kind of work? |
| 35 | A. I always talk to Dr David Cliff a lot about |
| 36 | spontaneous combustion. |
| 37 | |
| 38 | Q. Excellent. In terms of, again, the TARPs, you've |
| 39 | agreed - thank you; in fact you just volunteered it - that |
| 40 | it's a site-specific exercise? |
| 41 | A. Yes, it has to be. |
| 42 | |
| 43 | Q. And a balance in developing your spontaneous |
| 44 | combustion TARPs is that you want to set levels, especially |
| 45 | that "normal" question, the question of what's normal or |
| 46 | not - you want to set a level that's meaningful so that it |
| 47 | genuinely identifies abnormal situations; right? |
| | |

1 Α. That's correct. 2 3 Q. But at the same time that it's not set so low that it 4 normalises alarms? 5 Yes, correct. Α. 6 7 Q. You don't want to be in TARP 1 all the time, because 8 then you just normalise the idea that it's not weird to be in TARP 1; right? 9 My take on that is we should have "normal", "not 10 Α. Yes. normal", and "evacuate". 11 12 13 Q. Absolutely. We see the three levels of the TARP process which were developed, as you will know, following 14 the Moura No. 2 disaster? 15 Α. Yes. 16 17 Including by the expert panel that was set up 18 Q. following that horrific incident? 19 That's correct. Α. 20 21 22 And the kind of philosophy that underpins the TARP Q. very much still resonates with the findings of that 23 Inquiry, the way TARPs are set up, doesn't it? 24 Α. It does. 25 26 One of the key things that it does is to have these 27 Q. three levels - TARP 1, which is based around "We're just 28 out of normal", so the idea in this is that we should be 29 checking and validating the results that we're seeing; 30 that's what we should be doing at TARP 1 level? 31 That's what's currently happening. 32 Α. I believe we should be taking action once we're not normal. 33 If we accept we're not normal, we should be doing something about 34 35 it. 36 37 To be fair, that might be a recommendation for the Q. future, which is entirely valid. But for present purposes, 38 the way in which that level 1, 2, 3 TARP operates is that 39 once you get into TARP 1, the focus of the way in which the 40 system is intended to work is on confirmation of what's 41 happening, increased intensity of sampling, type of 42 sampling, those sorts of things? 43 That's normal in a level 1 TARP, yes. 44 Α. 45 46 Q. Then in level 2, on the standard structure, it's about 47 implementing actions to control whatever situation the TARP

1 is indicating that the mine is in? 2 That's normal, yes. Α. 3 4 Then level 3, as you say, no longer an acceptable Q. 5 level of risk; everyone goes to the surface, because the surface is the only safe place to be? 6 7 Α. That's correct. 8 Again, you would want and expect, particularly given 9 Q. the continued development of knowledge around gas evolution 10 testing and limits of detection, and so on, for there to be 11 regular reviews of spontaneous combustion TARP levels? 12 13 Α. I would also use real-time data from the gas analysis 14 system at the coal mine. 15 Absolutely, and you would expect that when you were 16 Q. doing those reviews and getting your experts in, and so on, 17 they would be doing precisely that? 18 That's what I'd be doing as well. 19 Α. 20 21 One of the things that you were asked a question about Q. 22 by our learned friend Mr Hunter was, again, the nature of the coal in any particular seam and, in essence, how 23 reactive or unreactive it is - you'll understand that 24 scale? 25 Yes, I do. 26 Α. 27 28 If coal is very reactive, a particular kind of coal is Q. 29 very reactive, then it's more susceptible to that process of oxidation, heating and ultimately spontaneous 30 combustion? 31 32 Α. Are you talking about laboratory tests now? 33 Yes, so applying what I think is - and you will know 34 Q. better than me - the R70? 35 The R70 is a test that's been used for numerous years 36 Α. 37 for identifying the different reactivity of different coals. 38 39 40 Q. I know you know this as a matter of instinct, but just so I'm clear, what I'm trying to establish is that what 41 that R70 test is attempting to identify is how reactive the 42 43 coal is, that is, how easily it will heat and burn, 44 effectively? 45 Α. Yes, it's a test to compare coal against coal, yes. 46 But for that parameter; right? 47 Q.

1 For that parameter, yes, exactly. For the parameter, Α. 2 ves. 3 4 It's right, isn't it, that the coal at Grosvenor is, Q. 5 on the assessments you would have seen, very unreactive? 6 Α. On the R70 test, yes. 7 By way of example, the R70 level seems to be, 8 Q. depending on the test, anything between 0.02 and about 9 0.15, something like that? 10 Α. Yes. 11 12 13 Q. In terms of black coal, some coals are up to 16 as 14 a measure on the R70 test? Some overseas coals are, yes. 15 Α. 16 Victorian brown coal, just so we can give another 17 Q. example, is about 60, so much, much more reactive? 18 Very reactive. 19 Α. 20 21 Again, thank you, you assisted us earlier with the Q. 22 various tests that might be used as indicators of oxidation of coal, and it's right, isn't it, that, as I noted before, 23 the technology and testing that underpins those tests is 24 being constantly reassessed by organisations like your own 25 with new testing, new experimental data and new work being 26 done? 27 28 Α. There's new work being done. I know Dr Beamish is doing new work with his moist adiabatic test, and he's even 29 doing a test with just using air as the - as a source. 30 But he's been involved and reassessed - and detections - the 31 32 detection abilities of GCs has improved over the years. 33 34 But some of the key tests remain, and they all focus, Q. effectively, on understanding what it is that the process 35 of oxidation of coal produces from the coal; right? 36 37 Yes, looking for the gases that come off from the Α. 38 coal. 39 40 Q. CO is one of the main things? It's an early indicator, and because it's easy to 41 Α. detect and we've got lots of good detection processes for 42 that, yes. 43 44 45 We've already talked about some of the others -Q. 46 hydrogen and ethylene as well? 47 Α. Yes.

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1 2 Q. There are others, but for present purposes --3 Α. There are others, yes. 4 5 And the ratios that you've described - we've already Q. talked a little bit about Graham's ratio. 6 The essence of 7 Graham's ratio is that it measures how much carbon monoxide you produce for how much oxygen you have used to produce 8 9 that carbon monoxide? Α. That's correct. 10 11 As that ratio increases, and it's expressed as 12 Q. 13 a ratio, as it increases to 1, in essence, recognising the variability between coals and everything else, in essence, 14 rule of thumb, the closer you get to 1, the closer you get 15 to that 100 degree mark? 16 I don't know if 1 relates to the 100 degree mark. 17 Α. I don't know. But it's been valid for all coals that as it 18 increases, you are increasing the reactivity; the intensity 19 increases. 20 21 22 Q. The idea that 1 is about 100 degrees, that's just not something you're familiar with? 23 2 is deemed as being an open fire, so --Α. 24 No. 25 Yes, but it's not necessarily a --26 Q. So the key factor, as you've identified, is the 1 27 Α. 28 00 degrees Centigrade, because that's when all the moisture will be boiled off and the reactivity can occur very 29 rapidly. The CO/CO2 ratio gives you an estimation of that. 30 31 32 THE CHAIRPERSON: Q. Mr Watkinson, please speak up. The 100 degrees Centigrade is a key figure in 33 Α. Sorry. the spontaneous combustion reaction curve. Once you've got 34 to that point, the moisture of the coal is being driven 35 off, and the reaction can occur rapidly after that. 36 That 37 period can be very, very quick, dependent upon the nature of the coal involved. 38 39 40 MR HOLT: Q. Again, that's one of the reasons why it is so important to have site-specific analysis of the coals 41 and so on that you're talking about, so you understand 42 those processes? 43 44 Everything has got to be relevant to your coal mine, Α. in your conditions, on the face you're on. 45 46 47 Q. Segueing from that, from Graham's ratio, then, into

1 the CO/CO2 ratio, you were asked some questions about the 2 value in the TARP of 0.2. 3 It appears high. Α. 4 5 You were asked also some questions about what is Q. described as a textbook value of 0.02. 6 7 Α. Yes, that is from the textbook value and the testing, 8 ves. 9 Q. A textbook value of 0.02 - tell me if you can't answer 10 this question - if you applied that to longwalls 101, 102 11 and 103, you would have been in level 1 TARP for the 12 13 entirety of the operation? 14 I can't answer that. I have a graph that showed the Α. CO/CO2 ratio for the outbye end of the 3-4 cut-through. 15 See, 0.02 is 60 degrees Centigrade. 16 17 Let's go back to that. Are you familiar with some 18 Q. work that was done by Simtars in about 2006 that in fact 19 had 0.02 at closer to 50 degrees? 20 21 Again, it's down to the accuracy of the equipment at Α. the time, and the VRT at Grosvenor may be of that order, so 22 you'd have to get an alarm that supports that level. 23 24 I guess that's the point, isn't it? 25 Q. Α. Yes. 26 27 28 Q. As you say, it's an intensely site-specific exercise? You've got to look at your raw data, not rely 29 Α. Verv. on textbook data so much, but what is your raw data telling 30 you is normal, and then you've got to detect a change from 31 32 normal. 33 In terms of ethylene, just briefly, the capacity for 34 Q. gas detection equipment, and I guess gas chromatographs in 35 particular, to detect ethylene has got better and better 36 37 and better over time? 38 Α. It has. 39 40 What, though, is currently the limit of reporting for Q. Simtars on ethylene in terms of parts per million when 41 it's --42 43 I'm not sure of the limit of reporting. Α. 44 45 You gave a couple of examples of why you might find Q. 46 ethylene at very small levels in underground coal mine environments without it being an indication of heating. 47

1 Α. Correct, yes. 2 3 You would be aware also of work being done by Simtars Q. 4 on foreign bodies, like green timber, for example, underground in coal mines and whether that might itself be 5 a source of very low levels of ethylene? 6 7 Α. Correct. 8 Now, you were taken through data from various sources 9 Q. by our learned friend Mr Hunter, and indeed you've set out 10 the data from those various sources in your report, by 11 which I mean real-time data underground, tube bundle data, 12 13 real-time goaf skid data and then later there was some 14 discussion of bag samples? Correct. 15 Α. 16 One of the things that Mr Hunter was pointing out to 17 Q. you was where in relation to a particular goaf well, for 18 example, or a particular monitoring area on a cut-through 19 there was a problem for a period of time with the data set 20 21 that you were looking at? 22 Α. There were data issues, yes. 23 24 You see those data issues in underground coal mines, Q. don't you; it's the nature of the environment at times? 25 It's the nature of the sampling and recording system, 26 Α. not necessarily the nature of the - I wouldn't expect there 27 28 to be lots of data issues. 29 But my point is the reason why, as we've seen, there 30 Q. are so many different data sources is that if the system is 31 working, then even if there is an issue, for example, with 32 a goaf well going offline, you've got other data sources 33 that you can look at to identify trends and do 34 cross-checking of particular data points? 35 Not from the goaf well. You've only got the 36 Α. twice-daily record. If a goaf well goes offline, you've 37 only got the data that's done twice per day by the surface 38 personnel. 39 40 41 Q. Exactly, but you have that to be able to do the comparison to? 42 It's not real-time data. 43 Α. 44 45 But you've got other goaf wells as well potentially, Q. 46 the ones that are online, to look at too? 47 You've got the other ones, yes. Α.

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1 2 You've got the real-time data from underground? Q. 3 You do. Α. 4 5 Again, what that is allowing you to have, as I think Q. we've seen, is effectively a suite of data where someone 6 7 like you can look at it and go, "These are the weaknesses, these are the strengths, these are the trends"? 8 You could look at all the data overall, yes. 9 Α. 10 11 Q. If we just deal briefly with that real-time data underground, I think you were saying that for the purposes 12 13 of spontaneous combustion assessment, it's the monitoring points where you're measuring all four gases - methane, 14 oxygen, carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide - which are 15 important from that perspective? 16 For spontaneous combustion, yes. 17 Α. 18 Q. 19 Here that was the 3-4 cut-through? Correct. Α. 20 21 22 Then we have the tube bundle data, which again Q. literally, as you described, is taking the gas out from 23 under the ground to allow it to be analysed on the surface? 24 Α. Correct. 25 26 The technique by which that is examined is twofold -27 Q. firstly, using infrared for analysis of the methane, carbon 28 29 monoxide and carbon dioxide? That's correct. 30 Α. 31 32 Q. And paramagnetic analysis for the oxygen, that is, the 02? 33 Α. That's correct. 34 35 Those kinds of tools for analysis are particularly 36 Q. 37 good for trend analysis? Very good. 38 Α. 39 40 The goaf skids, as you've identified, taking real-time Q. data from the goaf wells, flows into the Citect system? 41 Correct. 42 Α. 43 44 Again, that has the four gases - others as well, but Q. 45 those four gases? 46 Α. Those four gases, plus other parameters. 47

1 Q. As we see those outputs going forward, we can see that it also measures purity, flow, temperature and pressure? 2 3 It does. Α. 4 5 The bag samples - I know your analysis wasn't Q. particular to this, but the bag samples, as Mr Hunter 6 noted, are literally bag samples taken in a bag that looks 7 a bit like a wine bladder? 8 It actually is a wine bladder. 9 Α. 10 It is a wine bladder, there you go. Analysed through 11 Q. a gas chromatograph? 12 13 Α. That's correct. 14 The advantage is that it also allows you to look at 15 Q. other gases apart from those four, and other compounds, 16 particularly hydrogen, ethylene and ethane, in this 17 context? 18 And nitrogen and helium as well. 19 Α. 20 21 That data set that's coming in from those different Q. 22 locations is available on site in the control room through different skids, different kinds of software, different 23 kinds of analysis packages? 24 That's correct, yes. 25 Α. 26 Q. There's Citect, which you've already discussed? 27 28 Α. Correct. 29 Q. There's Safegas? 30 Α. Correct. 31 32 Safegas I think, as you noted, collects the data and 33 Q. manages alarms in particular? 34 Correct. 35 Α. 36 37 Q. Safegas is a Simtars system? Correct. 38 Α. 39 40 Q. There's Segas? Correct. 41 Α. 42 43 Q. That is an analytical package? Correct. 44 Α. 45 46 Q. Again, that's provided by Simtars? 47 Α. Correct.

1 2 And again with both of those, I should have said, with Q. the Safegas, the training is also provided by Simtars? 3 4 Α. That is correct. 5 There's also EzGas? 6 Q. 7 Α. Correct. 8 EzGas is effectively a software wizard to allow the 9 Q. onsite analysis of the gas chromatographic data? 10 That is correct. 11 Α. 12 13 Because you guys have fancy chemists and stuff, as Q. we've seen in this case, who are looking at all the gas 14 chromatograph lines and the peaks and everything else and 15 figuring them out? 16 Yes, they do. 17 Α. 18 That's what Mr Muller talks about a lot in his report, 19 Q. that process? 20 21 Yes, we had a look at all the data. He'll talk in Α. 22 detail. He'll reprocess the data. 23 The reprocessing, that's it. That involved chemists 24 Q. actually looking at the outputs of the gas chromatograph 25 and using their expertise to be able to identify little 26 peaks and the timings and everything else? 27 28 Α. That's correct. 29 But on site, using EzGas allows people with training 30 Q. from Simtars but who are in the control room to see the 31 32 results of the gas chromatograph on site? That's correct. 33 Α. 34 35 So things like identification of the peaks and so on Q. is happening effectively on an automated or semi-automated 36 37 basis? No, the process is they're supposed to zoom and check 38 Α. for peaks. That's the training. 39 40 I understand, but it's intended to simplify that 41 Q. process quite dramatically? 42 Yes, the software should integrate the peaks, and you 43 Α. zoom the graph to ensure that the integration occurred. 44 45 46 Q. Mr Muller's report deals with, as we've noted, that 47 process of chemists at Simtars looking at that gas

1 chromatographic data afresh? What do you mean "fresh"? 2 Α. 3 4 Afresh, so actually looking at the data again and Q. 5 analysing it themselves? Yes, they looked at each individual chromatograph to 6 Α. 7 identify what had been - if anything had been missed. 8 9 But for the purposes of your report, you were Q. effectively looking at data that came out of those systems 10 almost as the mine would have seen it? 11 Correct. Α. 12 13 As the mine workers would have seen it --14 Q. 15 Α. Correct. 16 Can we please pull up a PowerPoint that you did for 17 Q. the purposes of this Board of Inquiry, which is at 18 RSH.019.001.0583. Could we please go to 0591, Mr Operator. 19 In this PowerPoint, you pulled out verbatim some of the 20 21 conclusions from your report? 22 Α. Correct. 23 I will read this one: Q. 24 25 There were signs of the early onset of 26 spontaneous combustion activity on both 27 longwall 103 and longwall 104 in the first 28 400 metres of retreat. This is common as 29 this is the process when the longwall goaf 30 is forming and stabilising and full 31 32 [subsidence] starts to occur once the longwall has gone through "square". That 33 34 is when the longwall has retreated a greater distance that it is wide. 35 36 37 Α. That's correct. 38 Again, as we discussed at the outset of this session, 39 Q. 40 signs of the early onset of spontaneous combustion activity relates to the work that you've taken us a bit through with 41 Mr Hunter of identifying signs of oxidation of coal? 42 43 Α. Correct. 44 45 You've identified that the patterns that you saw in Q. 46 longwall 104, in effect, were similar to the patterns that vou'd seen on 103? 47

1 Α. That's correct. 2 3 And they were common, from your experience; they were Q. 4 not a pattern that was anything other than something that you would expect in that first 400 metres of longwall 5 6 retreat? 7 Α. It can vary from mine to mine. I just compared 103 with 104. 8 9 Q. But you describe that as being --10 It is a common process. We'll expect early signs of 11 Α. oxidation, and then as the oxygen reduces, the absolute 12 13 value of CO will decline. 14 Can we then go to page 0594 in that PowerPoint 15 Q. presentation. As well as having made that conclusion, you 16 then noted: 17 18 There was no evidence of the spontaneous 19 combustion activity ... 20 21 22 That is, the signs of oxidation; right? Α. Yes. 23 24 Q. 25 ... accelerating prior to the first 26 explosion. 27 28 Α. Correct. 29 30 But we saw - and one of the last sides you were shown 31 Q. showed it graphically - clear signs of that acceleration 32 before the second incident, in June? 33 Α. Correct. 34 35 I just want to see if we can deal with this aspect of 36 Q. 37 it reasonably briefly. In your report, you go through a number of the data sources that you've identified, and in 38 the course of your conclusion you identify a series of 39 40 numbered subconclusions, effectively? Α. Yes. 41 42 43 A number of those, as Mr Hunter has taken you to, Q. involved you looking at data sets and identifying these 44 signs of oxidation that you've been talking about? 45 46 Α. Yes. 47

1 That you've described in your report as being, Q. 2 effectively, common, not unexpected in that first 400 metres of progression of the longwall? 3 4 In the early start of a longwall, I expect some signs Α. 5 of spontaneous combustion activity. 6 7 Q. And, effectively, the signs that you saw, which you 8 describe in more detail in your report, are all signs which are consistent with that description, that is, of being 9 common in the first 400 metres retreat of a longwall? 10 Longwall 103 is very similar to longwall 104, so 11 Α. that's my comparison for normal for that mine. 12 13 14 And both didn't show you anything that, in your vast Q. experience, was out of the ordinary? 15 16 It showed normal - it showed an - what I would expect, Α. an oxidation process occurring and an oxidation process 17 declining. 18 19 Q. Then in terms of the absence of any evidence of 20 acceleration of that oxidation activity, again even though 21 22 your report, very properly, goes through all of those data sets, presents all the graphs and so on, your conclusion 23 remains that there were no signs of acceleration prior 24 25 to --There was no signs of acceleration, no. 26 Α. 27 Can I just deal, then, with a couple of very specific 28 Q. 29 The first is if we could go, please, to your first issues. report, WMA.001.002.0009. Might we go, please, to 0104 of 30 that report, and might we call out, please, number 4 at the 31 top of the page. This is one of that series of numbered 32 subconclusions that you and I spoke about a moment ago? 33 34 Α. Yes. 35 I just want to be clear, you note here: 36 Q. 37 The maximum Graham's ratio seen on the tube 38 bundle system at 0.72 at longwall 104 B1 39 40 cut-through seal on 30 March 2020 prior to the first explosion. 41 42 43 Α. That's correct. 44 Just while we're talking about Graham's ratio, in 45 Q. 46 terms of the validity of an output of the application of Graham's ratio, it's right, isn't it, that to be valid, the 47

1 oxygen deficiency needs to have a value of at least 0.2; 2 that's generally accepted? 3 0.2 or 0.3, yes. Α. 4 5 So if it's less than that, essentially, we start Q. seeing - I think maybe Mr Muller or maybe you describe it 6 7 this way - gross errors? 8 Yes, in Safegas it's normally determined as invalid. Α. 9 If I suggested to you that the 0.72 Graham's ratio, 10 Q. the one that's identified as the highest, had an oxygen 11 deficiency calculation for that sample of 0.078, that would 12 make it an invalid sample - an invalid result? 13 Yes, if you look at the graphs at that period in time, 14 Α. there's very, very low CO and high oxygen, so those are 15 unreliable. In fact, I said that earlier. 16 17 Q. It's just that one --18 Yes, it's just - all I did was I looked at: that was 19 Α. the data, that's what's reported. 20 21 22 Exactly, and so I'm just trying to link the very Q. proper caution that you indicate needs to be exercised with 23 Graham's ratio figures to that very number. 24 25 Α. Yes. 26 And it would be identified, effectively, as invalid? Q. 27 28 Α. Yes. 29 You identify in your report, and indeed it was 30 Q. referred to you by Mr Hunter, what you describe as products 31 of combustion found post event in some of the goaf wells? 32 Yes, there was carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, 33 Α. 34 yes. 35 We looked at some of those graphs with Mr Hunter 36 Q. 37 earlier, where we saw the big spike of carbon monoxide occurring --38 Α. Yes. 39 40 -- at or around the time of the incident on 6 May? 41 Q. Α. Yes. 42 43 44 In terms of those, you described those as products of Q. Equally - and please just give whatever answer 45 combustion. 46 you need to on this - equally, on the assumption that there was, as we know, effectively a methane-generated explosion 47

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1 in the longwall --2 Correct. Α. 3 4 -- the heat and flame generated by that in the Q. vicinity of coal would be likely, would it not, to pyrolyse 5 the coal and, as a result, to create some products that 6 7 would look the same, effectively, such as CO, that might 8 report to the goaf wells? Yes, any heat on the coal at those hot temperatures 9 Α. from a methane ignition would - and there could be small 10 particles of coal burnt within the combustion process, 11 because that dust would be raised. 12 13 Exactly. I guess the point out of all of that is the 14 Q. presence of products of combustion, like CO, in a spike 15 like that at the point of or immediately following 16 a methane explosion underground may well simply be 17 consistent with the methane explosion heating the coal? 18 It could be. I just looked at the data. 19 Α. 20 21 I understand. Thank you. Can we then finally go, Q. 22 please, to Mr Hunter's PowerPoint. I'm sorry, I don't have a number for this one, but I'm sure you have it. Could we 23 go, please, as an example - it's noted as page 31 in the 24 bottom right-hand corner, Mr Operator. As we're getting to 25 that, when you're looking at data sets such as these, 26 you're looking for a number of things, but you're looking 27 28 for absolute values - yes? Correct, yes. 29 Α. 30 And you're also looking for trends; right? 31 Q. 32 Α. Trends is the important thing. 33 Well, trends is the important thing, but absolute 34 Q. values are important as well, particularly for CO; right? 35 Well, you trigger a TARP normally on an absolute 36 Α. 37 value. You can trigger on rates of change, but that's complex calculations. 38 39 40 I understand, but it's something one should definitely Q. consider: right? 41 Yes, if you're looking at - you're looking for 42 Α. 43 changes, a change from normal, that's where the trend is useful. 44 45 46 Q. Sure. But if you want to work out, as we are in this process, what was actually going on, then as we understand 47

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1 it - not "as we understand it" - if we assume that spontaneous combustion occurred here, we assume that as the 2 3 theory is put, we know that methane ignites only at 4 550 degrees? 5 540, yes, thereabouts. Α. 6 7 Q. 540, 550 degrees. Understanding what the data is 8 telling us about the temperature of any event or oxidation process or anything that was going on is important; right? 9 Correct. 10 Α. 11 12 Q. If we look just by way of example at page 31, 13 Mr Hunter was taking you to graphs like this and identifying rates of change or trends? 14 Yes, we were looking at the increase in CO. 15 Α. 16 You made the point, I think, that when you're looking 17 Q. at trends, it's also important to be very conscious of the 18 scale of the graph you're looking at, that is, you want to 19 see the trends over a long term? 20 Yes, the careful thing is the longer the term, the 21 Α. 22 better it is. And also, you have to be careful of the Y axis, because that can exaggerate things as well. 23 24 Absolutely. And when you zoom in on just a particular 25 Q. area or piece of time like this, you can see what look like 26 the Himalayas, but when you look at it over a reasonable 27 28 period of time, that doesn't actually necessarily happen? 29 Long-term trends are important. Α. 30 In addition, here, for example, absolute values are 31 Q. 32 important as well; right? Yes. Α. 33 34 35 And here, if we look at the right-hand side, we can Q. see carbon monoxide in parts per million? 36 37 Α. Correct. 38 And there, as you've noted previously, we can see 39 Q. 100 parts per million, which is the level 1 TARP trigger 40 mostly? On one of the TARPs, it's 130? 41 It's 130 on the goaf wells, I believe. 42 Α. 43 44 On the goaf wells, and 100 on the others? Q. 45 Α. Yes. 46 Again, quite apart from the trend that we see there, 47 Q.

1 what we're seeing in terms of absolute CO are levels that are sitting within normal for that mine as assessed? 2 3 Yes. Α. 4 5 MR HUNTER: Thank you. That's the cross-examination. 6 7 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr Crawshaw? 8 MR CRAWSHAW: 9 No questions, thank you, Mr Chair. 10 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms Grant? 11 12 13 MS GRANT: No questions. 14 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr Trost? 15 16 17 MR TROST: No questions, Mr Martin. 18 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr O'Brien? 19 20 21 MR O'BRIEN: No questions. 22 THE CHAIRPERSON: Ms Holliday? 23 24 <EXAMINATION BY MS HOLLIDAY: 25 26 MS HOLLIDAY: I have only one question, so I will be 27 Q. finished by lunchtime. It concerns nitrogen inertisation 28 and, more particularly, what effect it has on ratios. 29 Ιf I could focus firstly on Graham's ratio? 30 Depending on the calculation you're doing, it can 31 Α. create an underestimation of the absolute value of Graham's 32 ratio. 33 34 So it affects the reliability, then, of Graham's 35 Q. ratio? 36 It affects the absolute value when you're looking at 37 Α. 38 absolute values, yes. 39 Should that be taken into account, for example, in 40 Q. relation to TARPs if you are using nitrogen inertisation? 41 Yes, it should. 42 Α. 43 44 MS HOLLIDAY: I have no other questions, thank you, Mr Martin. 45 46 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Mr Clough does have some 47

.17/03/2021 (18) Transcript produced by Epiq © Copyright State of Queensland (Queensland Coal Mining Board of Inquiry) 2020 1 questions, so we will take the luncheon break and be back 2 at 2.15.

4 LUNCHEON ADJOURNMENT

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<EXAMINATION BY MR HUNTER:</pre>

MR HUNTER: Q. You were asked some questions about the idea that there was a flame that propagated on the face, if I recall the way it was put to you, and I want to ask you about that in the context of what we can see reported to the two closest goaf wells to that point, so 9.5 and 9.

14 It might help if we went back to the PowerPoint, please, in particular to slide numbers 41 and 42. 15 Do vou 16 see that? You might recall that I was asking you some questions about the difference between what reported to 17 this goaf well, which was CO at a maximum of a bit over 18 35 parts per million, and what reported to the next well, 19 which is number 9 - if we could go to the next slide, 20 please, Mr Operator - where what reported was, at least on 21 22 that data, 500 ppm and we know from a bag sample over 1000 ppm. 23

I'm just wondering whether there is a plausible 25 explanation for a scenario whereby there was an initiation 26 of the event at or close to the face and it propagated back 27 28 into the goaf, with the result that more products of coal 29 combustion reported to goaf hole 9 50 metres from the face and fewer to 9.5, about 20 metres from the face? 30 That's a very good question. You would have to look 31 Α. 32 at all the goaf dynamics with the effects of the negative pressures from the goaf wells, explosion propagation. 33 An 34 explosion propagates in all directions from the source of ignition, and the variety on that will depend on the gas 35 concentrations. 36

The further into the goaf you go, the more methane there is and there's less oxygen. As you come on to the face, there is more oxygen and less methane. The explosive ranges of methane are well known, but 12 per cent oxygen, there or thereabouts, is the acknowledged nose point that's the lowest point that oxygen will propagate an explosion.

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So, I mean, as I was asked earlier, there could have been products - the heat from the flame will obviously

1 combust the methane. Any coal dust which is lifting into 2 that flame will be combusted as part of that process as well, and there will be other gases emitted from the coal, 3 4 and the products of combustion are from both coal and 5 methane at that time. 6 7 Q. Does the combustion of methane produce CO? 8 It would tend to be in a low oxygen atmosphere, but, Α. I mean, in normal combustion it's carbon dioxide plus water 9 in full combustion. 10 11 12 Q. But combustion of coal will give you CO? 13 Yes, it - open flame will give you more CO2, but there Α. 14 will be a larger proportion of CO, yes. 15 16 Q. So the high levels of CO reporting to well 9 would suggest that there was greater combustion of coal in the 17 vicinity of that well, as opposed to 9.5, where there were 18 relatively low levels of CO? 19 Yes, and again dependent on the oxygen concentration 20 Α. 21 for what the combustion process was there at that time. 22 Do the data from those two wells tell us anything 23 Q. about where the ignition occurred? 24 On their own, no. You'd have to use other parameters 25 Α. and even look at investigating CFD, computer fluidised 26 dynamics, of the goaf well and put all the parameters in. 27 28 I can only go from the data we have, as the gases reported, and my original analysis - the explosion will radiate in 29 all directions from the point of ignition, and it will 30 cease when it runs out of oxygen or fuel. 31 32 That's the only question I have in 33 MR HUNTER: 34 re-examination. 35 THE CHAIRPERSON: Mr Clough. 36 Yes. 37 MR CLOUGH: Mr Watkinson, I have a couple of 38 Q. questions. You spoke a number of times about how trends 39 40 are often more important than absolute TARP levels or Did I hear you correctly on that? 41 triggers. That is correct. 42 Α. 43 44 So is there actually an issue at mine site level where Q. TARPs are actually based on absolute values, and is it 45 46 realistic that a control room operator would examine 47 trends?

1 It's not realistic that a control room operator would Α. 2 be looking at trends all the time. He'd need an absolute number to look at. Some mines only have one control room 3 4 operator, so he's not only got the gas monitoring data to 5 look at, but he's also looking at the remainder of the mine operational parameters, so he's very, very busy, and as 6 7 already identified, he also has to run the gas 8 chromatograph data as well. 9 So again the question, is it realistic that a site 10 Q. would actually be examining trends, or would that be a job 11 that somebody external to the site would do? 12 13 Α. I would envisage it's a job that the ventilation 14 officer or someone under his command would do, not necessarily the control room operator. 15 16 The second question is in relation to the practice of 17 Q. setting TARP levels based on historical performance from 18 previous longwalls, particularly establishing what is 19 normal. We had a conversation about that, I believe. 20 21 Α. Yes, that's correct. 22 So how do we actually know if the historical trends 23 Q. are actually anywhere near a thermal runaway event? 24 Just because the previous longwalls have had a certain gas 25 emission rate, is there any way to know what the factor of 26 safety is between the previous longwall performance and an 27 28 accelerated heating? No, that's the problem. What is normal at the mine 29 Α. might be abnormal in the context of spontaneous combustion 30 activity. That sort of shows in the CO make graph. 31 When 32 I drew that, for a period of time, I relied on CO make. That was what we were asked to do in the first approved 33 standard that came out from the regulator in 1997. But 34 when you look at that graph, there's a very discernible 35 difference, so you'd have to react very, very quickly to 36 37 a change. 38 Do you have any suggestions on perhaps a better 39 Q. 40 methodology of establishing what's normal? It's got to be mine specific. The problem comes when 41 Α. you're in a - I think as our mines have got deeper, their 42 "normal" has become more high up on the activity curve. 43 An example of that is when I was at Moranbah North in the 44 early days, we had a very, very low CO make trigger, and 45 46 I can't remember the absolute number, but I believe it was 47 low.

1 2 I was at 5 South when we sealed - at North Goonvella when we sealed 5 South in, and the trigger level there was 3 4 20 litres make, which was a direct derivation from the 5 Moura No. 2 data. As we're going deeper, our CO make appears to be increasing. So the key thing is to detect 6 7 a change from "normal", which could be other parameters 8 which you need to investigate. There could be other ratios which need to be - as we now have all this data to analyse. 9 I don't know which one will show the best data. 10 The 11 appearance of ethylene could be one. 12 13 So correct me if I'm wrong, what I've heard is that Q. 14 the deeper we go, the more difficult it is to establish TARPs? 15 No, it's not just in relation to depth. 16 Α. I'm just giving you an example of the Goonyella Middle seam. If you 17 look at - personal experience, Moranbah North, 18 longwall 101, we had zero seamgas. We measured seamgas in 19 parts per million on our gas chromatograph. I had higher 20 levels of oxygen in the goaf, and we didn't have 21 22 a spontaneous combustion. 23 24 The next question. We spoke about the CO/CO2 ratio Q. within the active goaf spontaneous combustion TARP. 25 Did you analyse the data up to the event on 8 June, the gas 26 trends data? 27 28 Α. I can't remember whether I did or not, sorry. In the graphs, I think I looked at the CO - I looked definitely at 29 the CO make. I'd have to look at my report. 30 31 32 Q. So you're not aware of whether the CO/CO2 ratio in the TARPs was triggered before the event on 8 June? 33 34 I don't recall drawing the graph. Again, when Α. I looked at the CO make, I used the - the reason I looked 35 at the CO make up to 8 June was because I derived the total 36 37 CO make for the longwall panel using the data from the goaf wells, and I was looking to see if there was any difference 38 in it. That's all I did. The focus of our inquiry was 39 40 primarily on event number one. 41 Mr Holt mentioned that heat can cause pyrolysis of 42 Q. 43 coal and create gas products that resemble those that were 44 measured in the goaf well, so I'm just seeking your opinion on how likely it is that a methane ignition confined to the 45 46 longwall face would create pyrolysis of coal some 25 to 47 50 metres back into the goaf.

1 Any methane explosion will go in all directions, and Α. it's more likely that with oxygen concentration in the 2 goaf, the explosion went back into the - either started in 3 4 the goaf or went back into the goaf. 5 6 Q. So potentially there was an ignition of gas at the bottom of those wells or close to the bottom of those 7 wells? 8 9 Α. There was an ignition of methane somewhere and it travelled in all directions. Where it initiated from, I'm 10 11 not sure. 12 13 I'm not asking where it initiated from but whether or Q. not it potentially propagated back to around the base of 14 those wells? 15 I would say the first two or three wells, yes, and 16 Α. then the pressure wave would push the gases back into the 17 qoaf, further in. 18 19 I have just one last question, and it's in relation to 20 Q. the interaction of the goaf wells with the longwall return. 21 22 Is it possible that a small heating around the base of a goaf well that most, if not all, of the evolved gases 23 could actually be drawn up the goaf well and not report to 24 the goaf stream and the longwall return? 25 That's quite possible, yes, with a vacuum pressure on 26 Α. the goaf wells. 27 28 29 MR CLOUGH: I have no more questions, Mr Martin. 30 THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, thank you. Mr Hunter? 31 32 MR HUNTER: Might Mr Watkinson stand down? There is some 33 possibility that he might be required to return later in 34 this schedule of hearings. 35 36 37 THE CHAIRPERSON: All right. Mr Watkinson, thank you. I won't excuse you at this stage. You may be back, it 38 sounds, but we'll see. 39 40 <THE WITNESS WITHDREW 41 42 43 MR HUNTER: The next witness is Mr Sean Muller. He was to be called after lunch tomorrow, but given that we've moved 44 at a pace faster than anticipated, he has been arranged for 45 46 10 o'clock tomorrow. 47

| 1 | THE CHAIRPERSON: Yes, thank you. We will adjourn and |
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| 2 | resume at 10 o'clock tomorrow. |
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| 4 | AT 2.28PM THE BOARD OF INQUIRY WAS ADJOURNED |
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| 41 | |
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| 43 44 | |
| 44 45 | |
| 45 46 | |
| 40 47 | |
| 41 | |
| | |

| 0 | 103 [7] - 1697:46, 1697:47, 1703:12, 1708:28, | 2020 [3] - 1643:18, 1651:39, 1710:40 | 1653:39, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1654:22, | 1692:6, 1692:10 |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | 1703:12, 1708:28, 1708:28, 1708:47, 1709:7, | 2021 [2] - 1643:41, 1720:5 | 1654:4, 1654:22, 1671:43, 1672:37, | 7 |
| 0.02 [9] - 1663:41, | | | | (|
| 1669:31, 1669:40, | 1710:11 | 21 [3] - 1656:7, 1674:25, | 1673:1, 1678:7 | |
| 1670:15, 1701:9, | 104 [12] - 1650:18, 1651:5, | 1691:36 | 39 [5] - 1650:46, 1652:15, | 7 [3] - 1680:17, 1680:18, |
| | 1659:10, 1669:14, | 21.5 [1] - 1676:43 | 1653:36, 1654:3, | 1688:9 |
| 1703:6, 1703:10, | 1669:15, 1697:46, | 22 [6] - 1650:20, 1672:46, | 1672:16 | 70 [1] - 1680:46 |
| 1703:16, 1703:20 | 1697:47, 1708:28, | 1673:3, 1673:5, 1673:6, | | |
| 0.04 [1] - 1669:23 | 1708:46, 1709:8, | 1677:12 | 4 | 75 [2] - 1679:37, 1682:3 |
| 0.078 [1] - 1711:12 | 1710:11, 1710:39 | 220 [1] - 1694:9 | | - |
| 0.15 [2] - 1662:8, 1701:10 | 10am [2] - 1643:41, 1644:5 | 2290 [3] - 1660:47, 1661:3, | | 8 |
| 0.2 [11] - 1662:7, 1662:11, | 10AM [1] - 1720:5 | 1676:14 | 4 [7] - 1650:28, 1651:35, | |
| 1663:29, 1663:33, | 11 [2] - 1678:13, 1691:14 | 23 [2] - 1669:8, 1674:12 | 1652:34, 1664:9, | 0 |
| 1663:37, 1663:46, | 119 [1] - 1691:34 | 24 [2] - 1677:23, 1678:43 | 1680:35, 1682:8, | 8 [15] - 1667:6, 1667:10, |
| 1669:27, 1669:31, | 12 [3] - 1678:10, 1680:3, | | 1710:31 | 1667:11, 1675:22, |
| 1703:2, 1711:1, 1711:3 | | 25 [7] - 1679:3, 1679:23, | 40 [5] - 1652:15, 1654:5, | 1680:29, 1681:28, |
| 0.265 [1] - 1670:6 | 1715:41 | 1679:36, 1683:27, | 1654:9, 1680:46, | 1684:2, 1684:13, |
| •• | 120 [1] - 1657:32 | 1686:44, 1687:34, | 1693:19 | 1687:43, 1689:18, |
| 0.3 [8] - 1661:10, 1661:13, | 13 [1] - 1683:24 | 1718:46 | 40-41 [4] - 1650:47, | 1689:19, 1691:46, |
| 1661:22, 1670:36, | 130 [3] - 1681:40, 1713:41, | 250 [1] - 1687:45 | | 1718:26, 1718:33, |
| 1678:35, 1678:42, | 1713:42 | 26 [3] - 1650:24, 1651:18, | 1672:33, 1673:34, | 1718:36 |
| 1678:43, 1711:3 | 14 [2] - 1683:24, 1686:4 | 1688:35 | 1674:13 | 8.5 [4] - 1679:36, 1681:47, |
| 0.35 [1] - 1662:8 | 14-day [1] - 1645:41 | 27 [2] - 1675:22, 1676:9 | 400 [15] - 1650:21, | 1684:21, 1687:34 |
| 0.72 [2] - 1710:39, 1711:10 | 14:57 [1] - 1686:19 | 29 [5] - 1678:9, 1678:13, | 1651:39, 1651:47, | <i>'</i> |
| 00 [1] - 1702:28 | | , | 1652:20, 1668:21, | 80 [4] - 1657:31, 1680:46, |
| 01 [1] - 1643:18 | 15 [2] - 1668:28, 1691:36 | 1678:18, 1678:22, | 1668:40, 1668:41, | 1684:43, 1684:44 |
| 0104 [1] - 1710:30 | 150 [2] - 1684:25, 1684:38 | 1689:5 | 1669:10, 1669:15, | |
| | 16 [1] - 1701:13 | 2nd [1] - 1692:6 | 1670:29, 1694:22, | 9 |
| 0591 [1] - 1708:19 | 17 [5] - 1643:36, 1643:41, | | 1708:29, 1709:5, | |
| 0594 [1] - 1709:15 | 1670:18, 1670:41, | 3 | 1710:3, 1710:10 | |
| | 1686:4 | | 41 [1] - 1715:15 | 9 [10] - 1679:36, 1682:45, |
| 1 | 18 [3] - 1643:42, 1675:44, | | | 1684:35, 1687:1, |
| | 1720:5 | 3 [16] - 1651:4, 1651:34, | 42 [1] - 1715:15 | 1687:19, 1687:30, |
| | 19 [2] - 1670:25, 1674:28 | 1660:47, 1661:4, | 45 [4] - 1693:20, 1694:45, | 1715:12, 1715:20, |
| 1 [25] - 1657:3, 1659:32, | | 1664:44, 1664:47, | 1694:46, 1695:15 | 1715:29, 1716:16 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, | 1925 [1] - 1658:26 | 1665:6, 1665:14, | 4th [2] - 1681:11, 1681:37 | 9.5 [9] - 1679:36, 1683:11, |
| 1664:17, 1664:46, | 1960s [2] - 1646:13, | 1666:29, 1674:36, | | 1686:17, 1687:1, |
| 1670:35, 1678:35, | 1662:42 | 1676:14, 1684:45, | 5 | |
| 1681:41, 1694:16, | 1997 [2] - 1656:44, | | 3 | 1687:20, 1687:30, |
| 1694:17, 1699:7, | 1717:34 | 1686:1, 1699:39, 1700:4 | | 1715:12, 1715:30, |
| 1699:9, 1699:28, | 1999 [1] - 1643:15 | 3-4 [26] - 1650:24, | 5 [9] - 1667:15, 1678:4, | 1716:18 |
| | | 1651:31, 1659:10, | 1680:35, 1682:8, | 93 [1] - 1664:45 |
| 1699:31, 1699:39, | 2 | 1659:12, 1659:35, | 1686:1, 1686:41, | 96 [3] - 1655:16, 1655:28, |
| 1699:40, 1699:44, | Ľ | 1659:36, 1663:1, | 1691:47, 1718:2, 1718:3 | 1689:30 |
| 1702:13, 1702:15, | | 1663:25, 1664:9, | 50 [6] - 1679:36, 1680:46, | |
| 1702:17, 1702:22, | 2 [21] - 1645:47, 1656:17, | 1664:15, 1665:24, | | Α |
| 1702:27, 1703:12, | 1656:20, 1656:22, | 1665:28, 1665:32, | 1682:45, 1703:20, | A |
| 1713:40 | 1657:3, 1660:26, | 1668:40, 1668:42, | 1715:29, 1718:47 | |
| 1.5 [1] - 1653:24 | | 1669:10, 1669:16, | 500 [5] - 1686:45, 1687:1, | abilities [1] - 1701:32 |
| 10 [17] - 1654:33, 1668:28, | 1664:3, 1665:8, | 1670:30, 1688:36, | 1687:5, 1687:7, 1715:22 | able [8] - 1648:26, |
| 1675:3, 1677:13, | 1669:36, 1672:39, | | 53 [2] - 1665:1, 1680:16 | 1664:12, 1668:45, |
| 1677:39, 1678:13, | 1679:41, 1680:25, | 1688:47, 1689:1, | 540 [2] - 1713:5, 1713:7 | 1669:3, 1670:21, |
| 1679:26, 1679:31, | 1684:45, 1694:16, | 1689:27, 1691:35, | 550 [2] - 1713:4, 1713:7 | |
| | 1694:17, 1699:15, | 1692:8, 1703:15, | 5th [8] - 1680:44, 1681:12, | 1688:42, 1704:41, |
| 1680:28, 1682:9, | 1699:39, 1699:46, | 1705:19 | 1681:38, 1681:42, | 1707:26 |
| 1683:18, 1683:23, | 1702:24, 1718:5 | 30 [1] - 1710:40 | | abnormal [2] - 1698:47, |
| 1685:35, 1686:2, | 2.15 [1] - 1715:2 | 300 [1] - 1668:20 | 1683:6, 1683:9, 1692:10 | 1717:30 |
| 1719:46, 1720:2 | 2.28PM [1] - 1720:4 | 31 [4] - 1680:15, 1680:16, | | absence [1] - 1710:20 |
| 100 [17] - 1658:32, | 2.57 [1] - 1686:19 | 1712:24, 1713:12 | 6 | absolute [20] - 1660:22, |
| 1658:36, 1662:12, | | 320 [1] - 1687:36 | | 1671:23, 1682:28, |
| 1662:13, 1663:34, | 20 [9] - 1657:40, 1657:41, | 35 [5] - 1654:29, 1654:37, | 6 | 1684:10, 1690:1, |
| | 1677:29, 1684:46, | | 6 [11] - 1645:21, 1654:3, | 1691:40, 1696:38, |
| 1680:37, 1684:24, | 1685:7, 1685:8, | 1686:24, 1687:1, | 1655:18, 1669:20, | 1709:12, 1712:28, |
| | | | 1670:40, 1675:9, | 1712:34, 1712:36, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, | 1693:36, 1715:30, | 1715:19 | | |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, | | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, | 1679:41, 1680:29, | |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, | 1693:36, 1715:30, | | 1679:41, 1680:29, 1686:2, 1691:47, | 1713:31, 1714:1, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, | | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, 1713:40, 1713:44 | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, 1714:38, 1716:40, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, 1713:40, 1713:44 1000 [2] - 1687:11, | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 2014 [2] - 1690:40, | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1672:10 363 [1] - 1643:37 | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 6.5 [1] - 1688:24 | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 2014 [2] - 1690:40, 1691:11 | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1672:10 363 [1] - 1643:37 37 [3] - 1652:15, 1654:5, | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 6.5 [1] - 1688:24 60 [2] - 1701:18, 1703:16 | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, 1714:38, 1716:40, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, 1713:40, 1713:44 1000 [2] - 1687:11, 1715:23 | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 2014 [2] - 1690:40, 1691:11 2018 [1] - 1661:4 | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1672:10 363 [1] - 1643:37 37 [3] - 1652:15, 1654:5, 1654:9 | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 6.5 [1] - 1688:24 60 [2] - 1701:18, 1703:16 600 [3] - 1694:33, 1694:35, | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, 1714:38, 1716:40, 1716:45, 1717:2, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, 1713:40, 1713:44 1000 [2] - 1687:11, | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 2014 [2] - 1690:40, 1691:11 2018 [1] - 1661:4 2019 [2] - 1690:40, | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1672:10 363 [1] - 1643:37 37 [3] - 1652:15, 1654:5, 1654:9 38 [12] - 1650:39, 1650:40, | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 6.5 [1] - 1688:24 60 [2] - 1701:18, 1703:16 600 [3] - 1694:33, 1694:35, 1695:16 | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, 1714:38, 1716:40, 1716:45, 1717:2, 1717:46 absolutely [6] - 1695:2, |
| 1684:38, 1685:6, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:16, 1702:17, 1702:22, 1702:33, 1713:40, 1713:44 1000 [2] - 1687:11, 1715:23 101 [3] - 1697:46, 1703:11, | 1693:36, 1715:30, 1718:4 200 [2] - 1672:43, 1694:9 2006 [1] - 1703:19 2014 [2] - 1690:40, 1691:11 2018 [1] - 1661:4 | 36 [5] - 1650:38, 1652:15, 1653:42, 1654:4, 1672:10 363 [1] - 1643:37 37 [3] - 1652:15, 1654:5, 1654:9 | 1686:2, 1691:47, 1711:41 6.5 [1] - 1688:24 60 [2] - 1701:18, 1703:16 600 [3] - 1694:33, 1694:35, | 1713:31, 1714:1, 1714:32, 1714:37, 1714:38, 1716:40, 1716:45, 1717:2, 1717:46 |

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1713.25 accelerated [1] - 1717:28 accelerating[1] - 1709:26 acceleration [4] - 1709:32, 1710:21, 1710:24, 1710:26 accept [3] - 1647:47, 1693:19, 1699:34 acceptable [2] - 1661:5, 1700:4 accepted [2] - 1648:2, 1711:2 access [1] - 1648:29 accident [1] - 1645:20 account [5] - 1658:47, 1665:35, 1668:3, 1668:34, 1714:40 accumulation [1] -1654:39 accuracies [2] - 1660:46, 1685:4 accuracy [3] - 1660:41, 1661:5, 1703:21 accurate [3] - 1670:10, 1670:12, 1670:14 acknowledged [1] -1715:42 acronym [1] - 1697:22 Act [1] - 1643:15 action [5] - 1657:12, 1663:13, 1675:27, 1675:36, 1699:33 actions [2] - 1689:30, 1699:47 active [3] - 1663:17, 1673:39, 1718:25 activity [21] - 1645:28, 1654:15, 1661:35, 1663:10, 1675:11, 1684:15, 1684:17, 1684:18, 1684:32, 1684:33, 1689:29, 1689:31. 1692:19. 1708:27, 1708:40, 1709:20, 1710:5, 1710:21, 1717:31, 1717:43 actual [4] - 1652:42, 1670:8, 1682:16, 1694:36 Adani [2] - 1644:47, 1645:1 added [1] - 1668:32 adding [1] - 1689:9 addition [1] - 1713:31 additional [1] - 1683:46 adiabatic [1] - 1701:29 adjourn [2] - 1680:3, 1720:1 ADJOURNED[1] - 1720:4 ADJOURNMENT [2] -1680:5. 1715:4 adjust [2] - 1662:20, 1662:21 advantage [2] - 1682:26, 1706.15 adverse [1] - 1690:15

advice [2] - 1645:14, 1690:36 affairs [1] - 1652:23 affect [1] - 1676:26 affects [2] - 1714:35, 1714:37 afresh [2] - 1708:1, 1708:4 afternoon [2] - 1681:41, 1692:42 afterwards [1] - 1689:16 **ago** [4] - 1660:10, 1663:32, 1694:7, 1710:33 agree [2] - 1667:31, 1697.40 agreed [1] - 1698:39 ahead [1] - 1697:34 air [42] - 1652:11, 1652:18, 1652:38, 1654:5, 1654:9, 1654:10, 1654:47, 1655:5, 1659:13, 1659:17, 1659:26, 1659:38, 1659:44, 1660:1, 1660:3, 1665:37, 1665:39, 1669:47, 1670:2, 1670:7, 1672:11, 1673:36, 1673:37, 1674:26, 1674:27, 1674:37, 1674:45, 1674:46, 1674:47. 1675:17. 1676:45, 1676:46, 1677:16, 1677:18, 1677:19, 1677:21, 1678:9, 1678:16, 1678:46, 1685:2, 1685:10, 1701:30 airflow [2] - 1656:4, 1662:44 airway [1] - 1668:39 alarm [21] - 1646:8, 1647:46, 1648:1, 1648:2, 1648:3, 1648:12, 1676:35, 1676:39, 1676:42, 1677:2, 1677:9, 1677:12. 1677:15. 1677:18, 1677:20, 1703:23 alarms [9] - 1646:1, 1646:2, 1648:31, 1675:16, 1675:17, 1676:33. 1676:36. 1699:4, 1706:34 albeit [1] - 1673:33 allow [2] - 1705:24, 1707:9 allowing [1] - 1705:5 allows [2] - 1706:15, 1707:30 almost [2] - 1694:14, 1708:11 alternates [1] - 1646:31 aluminium [1] - 1649:17 ambient [6] - 1656:12, 1693:18, 1693:29, 1693:38, 1693:44,

_.17/03/2021 (18)—

1693.45 amount [23] - 1656:9, 1659:38, 1663:5, 1663:6, 1663:7, 1668:20, 1673:33, 1673:34, 1674:7, 1674:24, 1677:36. 1680:33, 1681:31, 1681:32, 1683:4, 1683:17, 1683:22, 1685:26, 1686:17, 1686:20, 1686:24, 1687:20. 1688:41 analyse [3] - 1645:26, 1718:9, 1718:26 analysed [3] - 1649:13, 1705:24, 1706:11 analyser [7] - 1646:23, 1646:24, 1646:31, 1646:45, 1670:8, 1687:5 analysers [2] - 1660:45, 1675:15 analyses [2] - 1646:24, 1685:42 analysing [3] - 1668:38, 1676:19, 1708:5 analysis [28] - 1645:25, 1646:9, 1646:22, 1646:40, 1648:42, 1653:46, 1657:31, 1659:14, 1660:4, 1661:27, 1662:27, 1663:44, 1666:4, 1679:17, 1681:26, 1685:13, 1692:6, 1700:13, 1702:41, 1705:28, 1705:32, 1705:36, 1705:37, 1706:5. 1706:24. 1707:10, 1716:29 analytical [1] - 1706:43 Andrew [1] - 1643:29 Anglo [1] - 1692:43 answer [4] - 1694:11, 1703:10, 1703:14, 1711:45 anticipated [1] - 1719:45 apart [7] - 1644:39, 1657:8, 1657:21, 1680:28, 1682:9, 1706:16, 1713:47 apologies [1] - 1647:23 apologise [1] - 1677:47 apparent [1] - 1690:13 appear [4] - 1669:43, 1678:19, 1678:20, 1692:44 appearance [1] - 1718:11 applicable [1] - 1686:40 application [1] - 1710:46 applied [2] - 1693:37, 1703:11 applying [1] - 1700:34 appropriate [3] - 1663:39, 1663:46, 1698:17 appropriateness [2] -1663:37, 1667:9

approved [1] - 1717:33 approximate [2] -1653:29, 1679:27 approximating [1] -1658:45 April [23] - 1651:39, 1669:19, 1670:18, 1670:41. 1670:47. 1672:32, 1673:3, 1673:5, 1673:6, 1673:35, 1675:22, 1675:44, 1676:9, 1677:12, 1677:28, 1677:43. 1678:13. 1678:18, 1678:22, 1678:43, 1679:3, 1689:5, 1691:36 area [11] - 1651:26, 1680:42, 1680:43, 1687:22. 1687:31. 1689:37, 1692:22, 1698:7, 1704:19, 1713.26 arranged [1] - 1719:45 arrangement [3] - 1652:5, 1654:25, 1654:26 arrangements [1] -1654:46 arrestor [1] - 1646:17 arrows [3] - 1652:6, 1652:9, 1652:11 art [1] - 1664:33 AS [1] - 1676:14 AS/NZS [1] - 1660:47 ascertain [1] - 1656:9 aspect [2] - 1693:1, 1709:36 assessed [1] - 1714:2 assessing [1] - 1682:32 assessment [1] - 1705:13 assessments [1] - 1701:5 assist [1] - 1675:25 assistance [3] - 1697:41, 1697:42, 1698:15 assisted [1] - 1701:21 assisting [1] - 1645:18 associated [1] - 1697:26 assume [6] - 1650:9, 1659:47, 1670:7, 1674:1, 1713:1, 1713:2 assuming [2] - 1670:2, 1686:40 assumption [1] - 1711:46 assumptions [1] - 1659:44 AT [2] - 1720:4, 1720:5 atmosphere [11] -1646:44, 1649:40, 1656:7, 1657:2, 1672:17, 1674:42, 1674:45, 1674:47, 1678:19, 1684:43, 1716:8 attempt [1] - 1658:28 attempting [2] - 1659:9, 1700:42 attempts [1] - 1658:29 audible [1] - 1647:46

Australia/New [1] - 1661:3 Australian [1] - 1660:45 automated [2] - 1707:36 availability [1] - 1661:39 available [7] - 1646:12, 1648:28, 1676:3, 1681:25, 1687:24, 1690:22, 1706:22 average [7] - 1680:47, 1684:38, 1685:14, 1689:9, 1689:11, 1689:12 averaging [2] - 1684:24, 1684:25 avoid [2] - 1655:33, 1696:24 aware [5] - 1671:23, 1687:12, 1690:10, 1704:3, 1718:32 axis [1] - 1713:23 В **B1** [6] - 1650:42, 1653:39,

1672:29, 1677:24, 1678:44, 1710:39 Bachelor [1] - 1644:24 background [1] - 1659:32 backwards [1] - 1653:28 bad [1] - 1694:12 bag [15] - 1649:32, 1649:44, 1649:45, 1649:47, 1685:41, 1685:42, 1687:9, 1690:7, 1690:8, 1704:14, 1706:5, 1706:6, 1706:7, 1715:22 bags [1] - 1649:37 balance [1] - 1698:43 ballpark [2] - 1694:41, 1694:42 barometric [2] - 1649:28, 1649:29 barristers [1] - 1692:43 base [2] - 1719:14, 1719:22 based [7] - 1647:31, 1665:23, 1665:37, 1697:6, 1699:28, 1716:45, 1717:18 basis [2] - 1676:15, 1707:37 Beamish [5] - 1690:29, 1690:37, 1690:47, 1698:17, 1701:28 Beamish's [2] - 1691:11, 1691:27 bear [1] - 1665:23 become [4] - 1658:33, 1658:36, 1696:21, 1717:43 becomes [1] - 1660:39 beg [2] - 1658:35, 1678:31 behind [5] - 1673:12, 1673:22, 1676:20, 1689:37, 1696:45

_____2____ Transcript produced by Epiq

below [3] - 1656:17, 1677:13, 1678:43 belts [1] - 1647:33 benefit [1] - 1692:29 best [3] - 1664:21, 1664:36, 1718:10 better [11] - 1648:43, 1656:45, 1661:25, 1666:44, 1693:46, 1700:35, 1703:36, 1703:37, 1713:22, 1717:39 between [17] - 1646:31, 1657:31, 1662:8, 1671:43, 1672:4, 1677:35, 1678:9, 1680:28, 1680:44, 1682:8, 1691:47, 1695:2, 1695:17, 1701:9. 1702:14. 1715:17. 1717:27 bi [1] - 1677:4 bi-weekly [1] - 1677:4 big [1] - 1711:37 bit [9] - 1669:13, 1683:15, 1688:29, 1694:46, 1696:35, 1702:6, 1706:8, 1708:41, 1715:18 black [2] - 1656:15, 1701.13 bladder [7] - 1649:17, 1649:18, 1649:20, 1706:8, 1706:9, 1706:11 **blue** [9] - 1653:27, 1669:17, 1670:29, 1672:36, 1674:20, 1677:37, 1689:8, 1689:24 BOARD [2] - 1643:11, 1720:4 Board [6] - 1643:18, 1643:27, 1643:30, 1645:7, 1692:45, 1708.18 bodies [1] - 1704:4 boiled [1] - 1702:29 boils [1] - 1695:34 book [1] - 1656:16 boreholes [1] - 1657:11 boring [1] - 1657:13 bottom [11] - 1651:8, 1651:46, 1658:43, 1659:4, 1659:19, 1669:14, 1686:38, 1712:25, 1719:7 Brady [1] - 1698:21 break [2] - 1679:45, 1715:1 breaking [4] - 1657:14, 1657:17, 1657:18 breathing [4] - 1649:24, 1649:25, 1649:27 briefly [4] - 1690:5. 1703:34, 1705:11, 1709:37 bring [3] - 1686:13,

1697:40, 1698:33 brings [1] - 1662:45 Brisbane [2] - 1643:36, 1643.37 British [1] - 1667:32 brought [1] - 1698:28 brown [2] - 1689:2, 1701:17 build [2] - 1673:37, 1673:38 built [1] - 1673:36 bulk [1] - 1662:16 bulkhead [2] - 1654:32, 1654:38 bump [2] - 1687:40, 1687:44 bundle [33] - 1645:27, 1645:31, 1645:35, 1646:11, 1646:12, 1646:13, 1647:3, 1648:8, 1648:15, 1649:16. 1651:18. 1651:29, 1653:1, 1653:36, 1653:39, 1654:1. 1654:13. 1654:18, 1658:16, 1660:6, 1661:25, 1662:24, 1671:43, 1672:3, 1672:16, 1675:6, 1677:2, 1678:12, 1678:23, 1691:36, 1704:12, 1705:22, 1710:39 bundles [8] - 1646:11, 1647:35. 1649:33. 1650:16, 1650:34, 1653:33, 1653:47, 1668.41 burn [1] - 1700:43 burnt [1] - 1712:11 busy [1] - 1717:6 **BY** [4] - 1644:7, 1692:40, 1714:25, 1715:6 С calculate [6] - 1651:26, 1659:8, 1659:10, 1669:3. 1678:26. 1678:28 calculated [4] - 1669:9, 1685:17, 1689:3, 1689:11 calculating [2] - 1662:19, 1688:34 calculation [22] - 1662:22, 1662:30, 1662:38, 1664:13, 1666:3, 1666:7, 1669:19, 1670:2. 1670:5. 1670:11, 1678:28, 1681:15, 1682:31, 1682:37, 1683:44, 1684:2, 1684:21, 1684:42, 1684:44, 1685:24, 1711:12,

1714:31

.17/03/2021 (18)

calculations [10] -1651:27, 1665:37, 1665:40, 1668:1, 1668.2 1668.26 1682:40, 1683:30, 1683:40, 1712:38 calibrations [1] - 1661:6 cannot [1] - 1675:37 capacity [2] - 1693:46, 1703:34 carbon [57] - 1646:24, 1646:25, 1647:11, 1647:33, 1656:37, 1656.41 1658.30 1659:14, 1659:24, 1659:26, 1659:27, 1661:34, 1661:35, 1661:37, 1661:38, 1662:43, 1663:6, 1663:7, 1665:45, 1667:44, 1668:12, 1672:20, 1674:20, 1677:20, 1677:36, 1677:38, 1678:3, 1680:33, 1680:34, 1681:32, 1682:22, 1682:47, 1683:1, 1683:7, 1683:20, 1683:44, 1684:46, 1687:25, 1687:40, 1687:44, 1688:14, 1689:31, 1691:35, 1702:7, 1702:9, 1705:15, 1705:28, 1705:29, 1711:33, 1711:37, 1713:36, 1716:9 careful [2] - 1713:21, 1713:22 case [3] - 1654:47, 1655:26, 1707:14 caused [1] - 1670:23 caution [1] - 1711:23 cease [1] - 1716:31 ceases [1] - 1656:16 cells [1] - 1647:12 celsius [1] - 1694:36 Celsius [1] - 1695:29 cent [33] - 1656:7, 1656:17, 1656:20, 1656:22, 1661:23, 1667:6, 1667:10, 1667:11, 1667:15, 1670.36 1674.25 1676:43, 1677:13, 1677:29, 1680:29, 1682:8, 1682:9, 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1686:4, 1686:41, 1715:41 Centigrade [3] - 1702:28, 1702:33, 1703:16

certain [1] - 1717:25 CFD [2] - 1673:20, 1716:26 chair [1] - 1714:9 Chairperson [1] - 1643:27 CHAIRPERSON [18] -1644:1, 1654:7, 1673:3, 1679:44, 1680:3, 1680:7, 1692:38, 1702:32, 1714:7, 1714:11, 1714:15, 1714:19, 1714:23, 1714:47, 1716:36, 1719:31, 1719:37, 1720:1 chance [1] - 1666:44 chances [1] - 1673:30 change [20] - 1675:46, 1680:35, 1680:36, 1680:39, 1681:4, 1681:10. 1681:11. 1681:12, 1681:16, 1683:7, 1684:24, 1684:37, 1688:32, 1703:31, 1712:37, 1712:43, 1713:14, 1717:37, 1718:7 changes [2] - 1655:46, 1712:43 check [2] - 1675:6, 1707:38 checked [1] - 1690:32 checking [2] - 1699:30, 1704:35 chemists [4] - 1679:19, 1707:13, 1707:24, 1707:47 chock [2] - 1655:16, 1655:27 chromatograph [18] -1645:38, 1648:40, 1648:41, 1648:45, 1649:5, 1649:19, 1656:43, 1660:6, 1666:5, 1679:13, 1679:14, 1706:12, 1707:15, 1707:25, 1707:32. 1708:6. 1717:8, 1718:20 chromatographic [2] -1707:10, 1708:1 chromatographs [3] -1648:37, 1656:45, 1703.35 circle [1] - 1655:23 circumstances [1] -1695:45 Citect [11] - 1645:42, 1648:20, 1648:22, 1648:24, 1648:29, 1648:31, 1679:9, 1682:36, 1685:36, 1705:41, 1706:27 clear [10] - 1648:3, 1648:6, 1651:29, 1671:42, 1684:36, 1691:4, 1696:29, 1700:41,

1709:32, 1710:36 clearly [2] - 1685:30, 1693:27 Cliff [1] - 1698:35 close [6] - 1673:47, 1678:46, 1686:3, 1690:33, 1715:27, 1719:7 closed [1] - 1681:37 closer [5] - 1653:19, 1654:3, 1702:15, 1703:20 closest [2] - 1683:11, 1715:12 CLOUGH [2] - 1716:38, 1719:29 **Clough** [3] - 1643:29, 1714:47, 1716:36 clutter [1] - 1672:15 **CO** [99] - 1651:27, 1656:24, 1656:34, 1661:41. 1662:41. 1663:4, 1663:9, 1664:45, 1664:47, 1665:10, 1666:23, 1668:20, 1668:23, 1668:26, 1668:32, 1672:40, 1672:47, 1673:1, 1673:8, 1673:9, 1673:33, 1674:8, 1674:13, 1675:4, 1675:8, 1675:13, 1675:14, 1675:23, 1675:28, 1675:39, 1676:2, 1676:5, 1676:30, 1677:23, 1678:10, 1678:46, 1681:6, 1681:39, 1682:12, 1682:25, 1682:26, 1682:37, 1684:9, 1684:10, 1685:6, 1685:17, 1685:19, 1685:20, 1685:24, 1686:17, 1686:20, 1686:24, 1686:35, 1686:46. 1687:11, 1687:14, 1687:20, 1687:27, 1687:35, 1688:26, 1688:35, 1688:41, 1688:46, 1689:9, 1689:11, 1689:12, 1689:25, 1689:39, 1690:1, 1691:40, 1691:41, 1692:7, 1696:38, 1701:40, 1709:13, 1711:15, 1712:7, 1712:15, 1712:35, 1713:15, 1714:1, 1715:18, 1716:7. 1716:12. 1716:14, 1716:16, 1716:19, 1717:31, 1717:32, 1717:45, 1718:5, 1718:29, 1718:30, 1718:35,

1718:36. 1718:37

CO/CO2 [21] - 1660:31,

Transcript produced by Epiq

centigrade [2] - 1657:32,

1662:13

| 1661:32, 1661:44, |
|--|
| 1000-11 1000-10 |
| 1662:11, 1662:19, |
| 1663:29, 1663:33, |
| |
| 1663:38, 1663:46, |
| 1669:4, 1669:8, |
| |
| 1669:27, 1670:11, |
| 4000-07 4000-45 |
| 1696:37, 1696:45, |
| 1697:6, 1702:30, |
| |
| 1703:1, 1703:15, |
| |
| 1718:24, 1718:32 |
| CO2 [11] - 1662:15, |
| |
| 1662:17, 1665:35, |
| 1696.36 1696.39 |
| 1686:36, 1686:38, |
| 1687:15, 1687:23, |
| |
| 1688:6, 1688:30, |
| 1606.38 1716.13 |
| 1696:38, 1716:13 |
| coal [95] - 1644:43, |
| |
| 1644:45, 1645:14, |
| 1655:37, 1656:2, |
| 1000.07, 1000.2, |
| 1656:11, 1656:12, |
| 4050.00 4057.0 |
| 1656:36, 1657:9, |
| 1657:23, 1657:27, |
| 1001.20, 1001.21, |
| 1657:38, 1657:44, |
| |
| 1658:9, 1659:30, |
| 1660:20, 1661:47, |
| |
| 1663:5, 1663:6, |
| 1663:33, 1663:45, |
| |
| 1667:32, 1671:20, |
| 1001.02, 1011.20, |
| 1673:31, 1676:4, |
| 1681:3, 1690:47, |
| 1001.3, 1090.47, |
| 1691:5, 1691:15, |
| 1002-0 1002-12 |
| 1693:8, 1693:13, |
| 1693:18, 1693:28, |
| 1000110, 1000120, |
| 1693:31, 1693:38, |
| 1693:43, 1694:9, |
| |
| 1694:15, 1694:24, |
| |
| 1694:28, 1694:31, |
| 1694:37, 1695:3, |
| |
| 1695:15, 1695:21, |
| 1605.38 1605.30 |
| 1695:38, 1695:39, |
| 1695:46, 1696:12, |
| |
| 1696:26, 1696:32, |
| 1696.43 1697.15 |
| 1696:43, 1697:15, |
| 1697:36, 1697:37, |
| 1698:3, 1698:4, 1698:7, |
| |
| 1698:8, 1698:16, |
| |
| 1700:14, 1700:23, |
| 1700:28, 1700:43, |
| 1700.15 1701.1 |
| 1700:45, 1701:4, |
| |
| 1701.13 1701.17 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, 1701:13, 1701:15, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, 1701:13, 1701:15, 1702:14, 1702:18, |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, 1701:13, 1701:15, 1702:14, 1702:18, 1702:41 |
| 1701:13, 1701:17, 1701:23, 1701:36, 1701:38, 1702:35, 1702:38, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1708:42, 1712:5, 1712:6, 1712:9, 1712:11, 1712:18, 1715:28, 1716:1, 1716:3, 1716:4, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1718:43, 1718:46 COAL [1] - 1643:11 Coal [1] - 1643:15 coals [6] - 1700:38, 1701:13, 1701:15, 1702:14, 1702:18, |

collected [3] - 1685:40, 1685:45, 1685:46 collects [1] - 1706:33 colloquially [1] - 1655:45 colour [1] - 1689:2 columns [1] - 1648:47 combination [1] - 1665:6 combined [7] - 1668:27, 1688:34, 1689:8, 1689:9, 1689:10, 1689:13, 1689:24 combust [2] - 1656:2, 1716:1 combusted [1] - 1716:2 combustion [63] -1645:15. 1645:28. 1647:4, 1654:14, 1655:32, 1655:35, 1655:36, 1655:37, 1659:29, 1666:16, 1684:18, 1684:33, 1687.23 1687.26 1687:29, 1688:2, 1688:21, 1688:25, 1689:29, 1690:19, 1690:25, 1690:27, 1690:30, 1693:1, 1693:6, 1693:7, 1693:12, 1694:21, 1694:36, 1694:38, 1696:25, 1696:31, 1697:14, 1697:28, 1698:29, 1698:31, 1698:36. 1698:44. 1700:12, 1700:31, 1702:34, 1705:13, 1705:17, 1708:27, 1708:40, 1709:20, 1710:5, 1711:32, 1711:45, 1712:11, 1712:15, 1713:2, 1715:29, 1716:4, 1716:7. 1716:9. 1716:10, 1716:12, 1716:17, 1716:21, 1717:30, 1718:22, 1718:25 coming [8] - 1652:29, 1664:14, 1664:20, 1676:5, 1678:23, 1686:2, 1690:47, 1706:21 command [1] - 1717:14 commenced [1] - 1674:29 commences [1] - 1674:35 commencing [1] - 1674:35 commission [1] - 1686:12 commissioned [1] -1691:30 common [14] - 1654:25, 1654:26, 1656:41, 1657:43, 1657:46, 1658:25, 1659:43, 1659:47, 1683:45, 1708:29, 1709:3, 1709:11, 1710:2, 1710:10

-.17/03/2021 (18)_

companies [1] - 1692:44 compare [4] - 1659:38, 1674:7, 1685:18, 1700:45 compared [2] - 1697:47, 1709:7 comparison [2] - 1704:42, 1710:12 competent [2] - 1697:36, 1698:16 completely [2] - 1682:17, 1688:41 complex [1] - 1712:38 **component** [1] - 1693:6 components [1] - 1649:6 compounds [1] - 1706:16 computer [1] - 1716:26 concentrated [4] - 1654:1, 1664:36, 1664:41, 1666:43 concentration [3] -1673:17, 1716:20, 1719:2 concentrations [2] -1652:41, 1715:36 concern [4] - 1658:7, 1683:18, 1683:22, 1690:14 concerned [1] - 1671:38 concerns [1] - 1714:28 conclusion [3] - 1709:16, 1709:39, 1710:23 conclusions [1] - 1708:21 concrete [1] - 1673:30 concurrent [1] - 1687:39 conditions [5] - 1690:14, 1690:15, 1697:32, 1698.3 1702.45 conduction [1] - 1696:16 configurable [1] - 1648:15 configure [4] - 1649:10, 1649:11. 1662:38. 1677:1 configured [1] - 1662:31 configuring [1] - 1662:29 confined [2] - 1653:46, 1718:45 confirmation [1] - 1699:41 conjunction [1] - 1665:43 connected [1] - 1685:36 connection [1] - 1645:19 conscious [1] - 1713:18 consider [2] - 1690:22, 1712:41 considered [1] - 1695:27 consistent [7] - 1674:45, 1686:31, 1688:1. 1688:21, 1688:25, 1710:9, 1712:18 constant [2] - 1662:44, 1670:6 constantly [1] - 1701:25 consumed [3] - 1658:32, 1659:40, 1686:32 contact [1] - 1691:1 contains [1] - 1684:43

1675:36 1671:18, 1671:31, context [5] - 1693:3, 1671:35, 1672:30, 1693:20, 1706:18, 1672:34, 1672:44, 1715:11, 1717:30 1674:18, 1674:21, 1674:38, 1678:37, continue [1] - 1695:46 1679:19, 1679:24, continued [1] - 1700:10 1679:34. 1679:38. control [14] - 1647:40, 1647:47. 1648:26. 1680:23, 1680:30, 1648:28, 1649:19, 1681:17, 1681:29, 1681:33, 1682:1, 1654:27, 1665:47, 1699:47, 1706:22, 1682:10, 1682:14, 1683:12, 1683:13, 1707:31, 1716:46, 1683:31. 1683:32. 1717:1, 1717:3, 1717:15 1683:36, 1684:5, controller [2] - 1647:22, 1685:31, 1685:38, 1647:23 1686:5, 1686:22, controls [2] - 1697:16, 1686:26, 1686:29, 1697:18 1687:2, 1687:16, convection [1] - 1696:15 1687:37. 1687:41. convenient [1] - 1679:46 1687:46, 1688:15, conversation [1] -1688:27, 1688:37, 1717:20 1690:38. 1690:41. conversion [1] - 1687:25 1690:45, 1691:2, conveyed [1] - 1647:39 1691:12, 1691:18, conveyor [1] - 1647:33 1691:22, 1691:28, cool [1] - 1697:46 1691:32, 1693:4, cooled [1] - 1659:31 1694:5, 1694:29, corner [6] - 1651:47, 1694:39, 1695:25, 1655:2, 1659:18, 1695:35, 1695:41, 1659:20, 1669:14, 1696:8, 1696:13, 1712:25 1696:17, 1696:22, correct [184] - 1644:11, 1696:27, 1696:33, 1644:15, 1644:26, 1696:39, 1697:4, 1644:30, 1644:41, 1698:19, 1698:25, 1644:45, 1645:1, 1699:1, 1699:5, 1645:5, 1645:8, 1699:20, 1700:7, 1646:33. 1646:37. 1702:10, 1704:1, 1647:37, 1648:10, 1704:7, 1704:15, 1648:13, 1648:17, 1705:20, 1705:25, 1650:26, 1650:36, 1705:30, 1705:34, 1650:40, 1651:1, 1705:42, 1706:13, 1651:12, 1651:16, 1706:25, 1706:28, 1651:22, 1651:36, 1706:31, 1706:35, 1651:43, 1652:2, 1706:38, 1706:41, 1652:7, 1652:16, 1706:44, 1706:47, 1653:5, 1653:22, 1707:4, 1707:7, 1653:25, 1653:34, 1707:11, 1707:28, 1653:37, 1653:40, 1707:33, 1708:12, 1653:43. 1654:1. 1708:15. 1708:22. 1654:19, 1654:23, 1708:37, 1708:43, 1654:30, 1654:44, 1709:1, 1709:29, 1655:9. 1655:19. 1709:34, 1710:43, 1655:24, 1655:29, 1712:2, 1712:29, 1657:40, 1658:4, 1713:10, 1713:37, 1658:18. 1658:21. 1716:42, 1717:21, 1659:6, 1659:41, 1718:13 1662:17, 1663:2, correctly [2] - 1646:27, 1663:14, 1663:18, 1716:41 1663:22, 1663:26, correlate [2] - 1675:7, 1663:35, 1664:6, 1696.42 1664:10, 1664:25, correlates [1] - 1682:25 1664:31, 1667:3, correlation [3] - 1677:35, 1667:7, 1668:43, 1682:16, 1690:33 1669:5, 1669:11, corresponding [2] -1669:17, 1669:21, 1675:3, 1675:35 1669:24, 1669:27, count [1] - 1659:32 1669:28, 1669:34, couple [8] - 1675:19, 1670:27, 1670:31, 1680:26, 1680:36,

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content [2] - 1659:44,

diagram [1] - 1691:24

1681:23, 1695:25, 1703:45, 1710:28, 1716:38 course [9] - 1645:31, 1650:3, 1650:10, 1659:3, 1680:1, 1681:6, 1694:14, 1697:6. 1709:39 Court [2] - 1643:36 Crawshaw [1] - 1714:7 CRAWSHAW [1] - 1714:9 create [5] - 1690:29, 1712:6, 1714:32, 1718:43, 1718:46 created [1] - 1657:12 critical [1] - 1697:26 cross [4] - 1651:25, 1662:5, 1704:35, 1714:5 cross-checking [1] -1704:35 cross-examination [1] -1714.5 cross-sectional [1] -1651:25 cross-validated [1] -1662:5 csv [2] - 1645:41, 1686:39 cubic [1] - 1662:44 current [3] - 1644:33, 1645:12, 1645:13 cursor [6] - 1651:9, 1652:1, 1653:21, 1653:28, 1669:32, 1688:10 curve [3] - 1691:17, 1702:34, 1717:43 cut [45] - 1650:24, 1650:39, 1650:42, 1650:47, 1651:31, 1651:34. 1651:35. 1652:14, 1653:39, 1653:42, 1653:46, 1659:10, 1659:12, 1659:35, 1663:1, 1663:25, 1664:9, 1664:15, 1665:24. 1665:28, 1665:32, 1668:40, 1668:42, 1669:10, 1669:16, 1670:30, 1672:29, 1672:33, 1672:37, 1673:1, 1673:34, 1674:13, 1677:24, 1678:7, 1678:45, 1688.36 1688.47 1689:1, 1689:27, 1691:35, 1692:8, 1703:15, 1704:19, 1705:19, 1710:40 cut-through [43] -1650:24, 1650:39, 1650:42, 1650:47, 1651:31, 1651:34, 1651:35, 1653:39, 1653:42, 1659:10,

1664:9, 1664:15, 1665:24, 1665:28, 1665:32, 1668:40, 1668:42, 1669:10, 1669:16, 1670:30, 1672:29, 1672:33, 1672:37. 1673:1. 1673:34, 1674:13, 1677:24, 1678:7, 1678:45, 1688:36, 1688:47, 1689:1, 1689:27, 1691:35, 1692.8 1703.15 1704:19, 1705:19, 1710:40 cut-throughs [2] -1652:14, 1653:46 cutter [1] - 1657:19 CV [1] - 1645:7 D daily [1] - 1704:37 danger [2] - 1660:21, 1685:1 dark [1] - 1689:8 Darren [3] - 1698:21, 1698:22, 1698:30 data [120] - 1645:25, 1645:26, 1645:27, 1645:32, 1645:35, 1645:36, 1645:38, 1645:40, 1646:7, 1647:14, 1647:35, 1647:39. 1648:9. 1648:20, 1648:24, 1648:26, 1648:28, 1648:34, 1652:27, 1654:1, 1658:8, 1663:24, 1663:47, 1668:27, 1668:39, 1670:16, 1671:4, 1671:33, 1675:26, 1676:25, 1678:19, 1678:22, 1678:31, 1678:40, 1678:41, 1678:42, 1679:9, 1679:14, 1679:15, 1679:17, 1679:40, 1680:17, 1680:25, 1680:44, 1681:25, 1681:35, 1682:24, 1682:32, 1682:41, 1682:42, 1683:15, 1684:39, 1685:40, 1686:10, 1686:14, 1686:39, 1687:9, 1688:7, 1689:1, 1689:2, 1689:13, 1689:21, 1689:39, 1690:4, 1690:26, 1691:38, 1692:27, 1700:13, 1701:26, 1703:29, 1703:30, 1704:9, 1704:11, 1704:12, 1704:13, 1704:20, 1704:22, 1704:24,

1704:28, 1704:31, 1704:33, 1704:35, 1704:38, 1704:43, 1705:2, 1705:6, 1705:9, 1705:11, 1705:22, 1705:41, 1706:21, 1706:33. 1707:10. 1707:21, 1707:22, 1708:1, 1708:4, 1708:10, 1709:38. 1709:44, 1710:22, 1711:20, 1712:19, 1712.26 1713.7 1715:22, 1716:23, 1716:28, 1717:4, 1717:8, 1718:5, 1718:9, 1718:10, 1718:26, 1718:27, 1718:37 date [5] - 1650:31, 1653:29, 1672:21, 1679:28, 1690:33 dates [2] - 1690:32, 1691:37 David [1] - 1698:35 days [3] - 1672:46, 1676:4, 1717.45 deal [3] - 1705:11, 1709:36, 1710:28 deals [1] - 1707:46 decline [2] - 1656:33, 1709:13 declining [1] - 1710:18 decrease [4] - 1682:25, 1688:1, 1688:17, 1688:18 decreasing [1] - 1685:14 deemed [1] - 1702:24 deep [1] - 1695:6 deep-seated [1] - 1695:6 deeper [3] - 1717:42, 1718:5. 1718:14 defer [2] - 1653:17, 1667:11 deficiency [4] - 1658:31, 1661:16. 1711:1. 1711:12 defined [1] - 1660:1 definitely [4] - 1698:8, 1712:40, 1718:29 degree [5] - 1644:24, 1657:23, 1657:24, 1702:16, 1702:17 degrees [20] - 1657:32, 1662:12, 1662:13, 1663:34, 1693:20, 1694:9, 1694:35, 1694:45, 1694:46, 1695:15, 1695:16, 1695:28, 1696:7, 1702:22, 1702:28, 1702:33, 1703:16, 1703:20, 1713:4, 1713:7 denominator [1] - 1660:39 dependent [2] - 1702:37, 1716:20 depict [2] - 1652:9, 1653:29

depicted [9] - 1654:21, 1655:22, 1658:43, 1659:4, 1672:10, 1672:25, 1672:39, 1678:36, 1691:17 depicts [1] - 1680:16 deplete [1] - 1673:40 depth [3] - 1668:21. 1698:4, 1718:16 deputy [2] - 1664:28, 1664.38 derivation [2] - 1655:43, 1718:4 derived [4] - 1659:1, 1660:25. 1662:42. 1718:36 describe [5] - 1691:20, 1709:10, 1710:8, 1711:6, 1711:31 described [6] - 1657:37, 1702:5, 1703:6, 1705:23, 1710:1, 1711:44 description [3] - 1658:40, 1658:41, 1710:9 designed [1] - 1673:26 desirability [4] - 1665:4, 1665:36, 1666:30, 1667:27 desirable [3] - 1652:23, 1662:19, 1666:39 detail [7] - 1663:47, 1665:26, 1668:39, 1671:24, 1697:12, 1707:22, 1710:8 detailed [1] - 1648:43 detect [8] - 1647:4, 1655:34, 1665:23, 1666:46, 1701:42, 1703:31, 1703:36, 1718:6 detected [3] - 1663:9, 1664:17, 1674:4 detecting [4] - 1656:46, 1666:44, 1684:44, 1697:9 detection [7] - 1664:4, 1665:10, 1694:1, 1700:11, 1701:32, 1701:42, 1703:35 detections [1] - 1701:31 detector [2] - 1649:2 determine [5] - 1647:32, 1660:4, 1660:20, 1666:6, 1676:16 determined [3] - 1681:39, 1693:40, 1711:8 determines [2] - 1660:45, 1661:4 determining [2] - 1668:19, 1677:17 developed [2] - 1645:46, 1699.14developing [1] - 1698:43 development [2] -1697:27, 1700:10 device [1] - 1680:21

diameter [3] - 1646:15, 1668:21 diesel [3] - 1692:13, 1692:16, 1692:19 differ [1] - 1666:29 difference [4] - 1647:14, 1715:17, 1717:36, 1718:38 differences [1] - 1657:30 different [17] - 1657:27, 1665:10, 1667:28, 1667:34, 1687:19, 1695:5, 1695:9, 1696:42, 1698:6. 1698:9, 1700:37, 1704:31, 1706:21, 1706:23 differentiate [2] - 1663:8, 1695:6 differently [1] - 1657:27 difficult [11] - 1652:43. 1656:9, 1656:17, 1660:44, 1665:27, 1665:31, 1669:13, 1671:4, 1688:31, 1689:6, 1718:14 digits [1] - 1679:32 dilute [2] - 1668:11, 1676:18 dilution [15] - 1652:37, 1652:40, 1658:47, 1659:3, 1660:37, 1661:17, 1662:20, 1662:21, 1665:27, 1665:35, 1666:9, 1666:46, 1668:3, 1681:13, 1684:4 dioxide [12] - 1646:25, 1647:11, 1661:35, 1661:37, 1661:38, 1677:20, 1687:25, 1687:40, 1705:15, 1705:29, 1711:33, 1716:9 dip [1] - 1688:26 direct [3] - 1649:15, 1687:31, 1718:4 direction [1] - 1652:11 directions [4] - 1715:34, 1716:30, 1719:1, 1719:10 disaster [1] - 1699:15 discernible [3] - 1688:7, 1692:24, 1717:35 discrete [4] - 1646:16. 1647:13, 1647:33, 1647:42 discuss [1] - 1651:27 discussed [3] - 1694:44, 1706:27, 1708:39 discussion [2] - 1695:11, 1704.14 display [2] - 1647:40, 1647:43 displayed [2] - 1650:5, 1670:34

-.17/03/2021 (18)-

1659:12, 1659:35,

1663:1, 1663:25,

Transcript produced by Epiq

| dissipated [1] - 1656:4 | 1659:3, 1675:16, | energy [1] - 1656:32 | 1665:26 | 1682:30, 1688:34, |
|--|------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| dissipation [3] - 1696:12, | 1675:26, 1687:23 | engage [1] - 1698:16 | evaluation [1] - 1664:36 | 1698:40, 1703:28 |
| 1696:15, 1696:20 | during [2] - 1650:10, | engineer [1] - 1644:13 | evaporation [1] - 1696:16 | exercised [1] - 1711:23 |
| distance [3] - 1646:40, | 1678:12 | English [1] - 1655:43 | event [17] - 1655:19, | exothermic [1] - 1655:3 |
| 1647:20, 1708:35 | dust [2] - 1712:12, 1716:1 | ensure [1] - 1707:44 | 1661:18, 1681:40, | expect [18] - 1659:27, |
| divided [1] - 1661:35 | dynamics [3] - 1688:32, | entered [1] - 1675:5 | 1688:14, 1689:2, | 1660:29, 1663:41, |
| | 1715:32, 1716:27 | | 1689:17, 1689:21, | 1664:38, 1665:42, |
| document [2] - 1651:46, | 17 13.32, 17 10.27 | entirely [1] - 1699:38 | | 1672:11, 1672:13, |
| 1672:39 | | entirety [1] - 1703:13 | 1689:24, 1690:25, | |
| dominated [1] - 1688:42 | E | entities [1] - 1692:44 | 1690:30, 1711:32, | 1672:16, 1673:46, |
| done [23] - 1646:9, | | environment [2] - | 1713:8, 1715:27, | 1674:46, 1698:16, |
| 1657:29, 1657:40, | early [14] - 1672:32, | 1683:46, 1704:25 | 1717:24, 1718:26, | 1700:9, 1700:16, |
| 1662:25, 1668:1, | 1673:35, 1677:27, | environmental [1] - | 1718:33, 1718:40 | 1704:27, 1709:5, |
| 1668:3, 1668:26, | 1689:33, 1692:12, | 1647:10 | events [5] - 1655:18, | 1709:11, 1710:4, |
| 1671:24, 1671:27, | | environments [1] - | 1670:40, 1682:17, | 1710:16 |
| 1673:20, 1678:29, | 1694:21, 1696:30, | 1703:47 | 1682:18, 1687:35 | expected [1] - 1675:41 |
| 1679:17, 1681:22, | 1697:9, 1701:41, | envisage [1] - 1717:13 | eventually [1] - 1655:46 | experience [4] - 1667:3 |
| 1683:31, 1685:42, | 1708:26, 1708:40, | equal [4] - 1664:4, | everywhere [1] - 1673:43 | 1709:3, 1710:15, |
| 1697:35, 1697:37, | 1709:11, 1710:4, | 1664:46, 1664:47 | evidence [5] - 1645:28, | 1718:18 |
| 1698:30, 1701:27, | 1717:45 | equally [2] - 1711:45, | 1650:10, 1691:41, | experimental [1] - 1701 |
| 1701:28, 1703:19, | easier [1] - 1695:38 | 1711:46 | 1709:19, 1710:20 | expert [4] - 1697:40, |
| 1704:3, 1704:38 | easily [2] - 1692:23, | | evolution [5] - 1657:30, | 1697:42, 1698:15, |
| double [1] - 1654:22 | 1700:43 | equation [1] - 1692:21 | 1657:37, 1693:35, | 1699:18 |
| double [1] - 1654:22 down [11] - 1654:10, | easy [2] - 1692:3, 1701:41 | equations [1] - 1661:41 | 1693:40, 1700:10 | expertise [3] - 1687:22, |
| ••• | effect [5] - 1665:35, | equipment [2] - 1703:21, | ' | • |
| 1657:14, 1657:15, | 1684:3, 1695:44, | 1703:35 | evolved [1] - 1719:23 | 1687:31, 1707:26 |
| 1657:17, 1657:18, | 1708:46, 1714:29 | equivalent [3] - 1674:26, | exact [1] - 1691:37 | experts [1] - 1700:17 |
| 1683:20, 1685:3, | effective [1] - 1697:18 | 1677:16, 1678:8 | exactly [7] - 1656:9, | explain [14] - 1645:31, |
| 1692:13, 1694:45, | | error [1] - 1661:21 | 1696:24, 1697:20, | 1654:36, 1669:45, |
| 1703:21, 1719:33 | effectively [15] - 1677:42, | errors [1] - 1711:7 | 1701:1, 1704:41, | 1670:21, 1671:3, |
| downcast [2] - 1654:10, | 1678:10, 1693:44, | especially [1] - 1698:44 | 1711:22, 1712:14 | 1673:9, 1674:40, |
| 1655:8 | 1700:44, 1701:35, | essence [4] - 1700:23, | exaggerate [2] - 1685:1, | 1675:4, 1675:25, |
| downward [1] - 1689:4 | 1705:6, 1707:9, | | 1713:23 | 1675:37, 1677:41, |
| downwards [2] - 1679:3, | 1707:36, 1708:10, | 1702:6, 1702:13, | exaggerated [1] - 1684:47 | 1681:8, 1684:41, |
| 1683:4 | 1709:40, 1710:2, | 1702:14 | examination [2] - 1714:5, | 1687:18 |
| Dr [8] - 1690:29, 1690:37, | 1710:7, 1711:27, | essentially [2] - 1679:32, | 1716:34 | explained [4] - 1681:12, |
| 1690:47, 1691:11, | 1711:47, 1712:7 | 1711:5 | EXAMINATION [4] - | 1692:10, 1692:13, |
| 1691:27, 1698:17, | effectiveness [1] - | establish [5] - 1665:41, | 1644:7, 1692:40, | 1693:2 |
| | 1665:22 | 1676:18, 1697:28, | , , | explaining [1] - 1694:23 |
| 1698:35, 1701:28 | effects [9] - 1652:40, | 1700:41, 1718:14 | 1714:25, 1715:6 | • • • • • • |
| drainage [4] - 1675:46, | 1665:27, 1666:9, | established [1] - 1685:21 | examine [1] - 1716:46 | explains [1] - 1677:41 |
| 1680:17, 1680:19, | 1666:44, 1666:46, | establishing [2] - 1717:19, | examined [1] - 1705:27 | explanation [3] - 1645:4 |
| 1680:21 | 1668:3, 1687:43, | 1717:40 | examining [1] - 1717:11 | 1648:43, 1715:26 |
| dramatically [1] - 1707:42 | 1693:30, 1715:32 | Establishment [1] - | example [25] - 1644:44, | explosion [25] - 1645:47 |
| draw [4] - 1669:30, | efficient [2] - 1687:26, | 1643:18 | 1654:22, 1657:9, | 1647:30, 1647:31, |
| 1685:13, 1689:13, | 1687:29 | estimate [1] - 1664:16 | 1659:9, 1663:1, | 1654:37, 1675:8, |
| 1691:45 | | estimation [1] - 1702:30 | 1664:44, 1665:17, | 1675:12, 1683:5, |
| drawing [1] - 1718:34 | eight [1] - 1644:34 | ethane [1] - 1706:17 | 1665:19, 1666:24, | 1683:25, 1684:26, |
| drawn [1] - 1719:24 | eighths [1] - 1646:15 | | 1671:42, 1674:12, | 1687:10, 1688:40, |
| drew [1] - 1717:32 | either [7] - 1647:43, | ethylene [29] - 1656:42, | 1682:31, 1694:4, | 1689:28, 1690:34, |
| drier [1] - 1695:39 | 1649:15, 1663:5, | 1657:5, 1657:10, | 1697:1, 1701:8, | 1692:11, 1709:27, |
| drilled [1] - 1679:22 | 1665:37, 1673:37, | 1657:12, 1657:21, | 1701:18, 1704:4, | 1710:41, 1711:47, |
| drilling [2] - 1657:11, | 1686:3, 1719:3 | 1657:25, 1657:34, | 1704:19, 1704:32, | 1712:17, 1712:18, |
| 0.1 | either/or [1] - 1666:15 | 1657:35, 1658:12, | , , | 1715:33, 1715:34, |
| 1657:12 | electrochemical [1] - | 1664:4, 1664:14, | 1712:24, 1713:12, | 1715:44, 1716:29, |
| driven [1] - 1702:35 | 1647:12 | 1664:20, 1664:46, | 1713:31, 1714:40, | |
| drop [15] - 1673:16, | electronic [1] - 1647:15 | 1665:10, 1666:45, | 1717:44, 1718:17 | 1719:1, 1719:3 |
| 1674:28, 1674:34, | eliminated [1] - 1666:9 | 1666:46, 1667:36, | examples [2] - 1694:3, | explosive [2] - 1686:7, |
| 1675:3, 1675:35, | | 1667:40, 1667:46, | 1703:45 | 1715:40 |
| 1675:41, 1675:44, | elsewhere [1] - 1666:29 | 1689:46, 1689:47, | exceedances [1] - | export [1] - 1645:42 |
| 1676:6, 1681:10, | emergency [1] - 1645:15 | 1701:46, 1703:34, | 1645:26 | expressed [2] - 1667:29 |
| 1686:20, 1686:31, | emission [1] - 1717:26 | 1703:36, 1703:41, | exceeded [2] - 1673:1, | 1702:12 |
| 1687:14, 1687:40 | emitted [1] - 1716:3 | 1703:46, 1704:6, | 1673:8 | extent [3] - 1657:1, |
| dropped [1] - 1675:39 | employed [1] - 1683:40 | 1706:17, 1718:11 | exceeding [1] - 1696:11 | 1696:41 |
| dropping [3] - 1676:6, | enables [2] - 1668:47, | | exceeds [1] - 1696:20 | external [5] - 1646:15, |
| 1677:42, 1683:19 | 1685:29 | evacuate [1] - 1649:18 | excellent [1] - 1698:38 | 1655:44, 1691:1, |
| | end [8] - 1651:5, 1674:24, | evacuate" [1] - 1699:11 | | 1717:12 |
| drops [8] - 1656:34, | 1677:28, 1677:43, | evacuation [2] - 1665:14, | excess [1] - 1663:34 | |
| 1670:43, 1675:12, | 1681:11, 1693:7, | 1665:17 | excuse [1] - 1719:38 | extract [2] - 1690:43, |
| 1675:23, 1675:28, | | evaluate [2] - 1665:43, | executive [1] - 1644:13 | 1691:11 |
| 1686:28, 1687:39 | 1693:10, 1703:15 | 1683:47 | exercise [7] - 1668:38, | EzGas [3] - 1707:6, |
| | ondonvour (4) 1600.10 | | | |
| lue [6] - 1645:31, 1650:3, | endeavour [1] - 1680:12 | evaluated [2] - 1663:47, | 1671:33, 1681:19, | 1707:9, 1707:30 |

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| - | 1650.22 1660.7 | fourtoon (1) 1644-07 | 1694-21 1602-25 | 1661.17 1662.10 |
|--|--|--|---|--|
| F | 1659:22, 1669:7, 1669:8, 1674:27, | fourteen [1] - 1644:37 free [24] - 1650:11, | 1684:31, 1693:35, 1693:40, 1694:27, | 1661:17, 1663:10, 1663:17, 1664:14, |
| | 1685:34, 1686:16, | 1665:37, 1665:38, | 1700:10, 1700:13, | 1664:21, 1664:22, |
| face [23] - 1650:21, | 1689:28, 1690:34, | 1665:39, 1666:3, | 1703:35, 1705:23, | 1664:24, 1664:29, |
| 1650:28, 1653:29, | 1690:44, 1694:22, | 1681:15, 1682:26, | 1706:12, 1707:10, | 1664:30, 1664:33, |
| 1655:16, 1657:13, | 1708:28, 1709:5, | 1682:31, 1682:37, | 1707:14, 1707:25, | 1665:25, 1665:34, |
| 1660:35, 1664:9, | 1709:26, 1710:2, | 1682:40, 1683:30, | 1707:32, 1707:47, | 1666:36, 1666:39, |
| 1673:22, 1679:27, | 1710:10, 1710:29, | 1683:44, 1684:2, | 1715:35, 1717:4, | 1667:2, 1667:30, |
| 1679:32, 1682:4, | 1710:41, 1717:33, | 1684:9, 1684:20, | 1717:7, 1717:25, | 1667:39, 1667:45, |
| 1682:45, 1683:12, | 1719:16 | 1684:42, 1685:2, | 1718:20, 1718:26, | 1668:2, 1668:10, |
| 1683:27, 1686:3, | firstly [6] - 1675:22, | 1685:10, 1685:11, | 1718:43, 1719:6 | 1668:14, 1668:27, |
| 1690:24, 1702:45, | 1683:17, 1688:47, | 1685:17, 1685:19, | gases [27] - 1647:11, | 1671:10, 1671:34, |
| 1715:9, 1715:27, 1715:29, 1715:30, | 1696:36, 1705:28, | 1685:20, 1685:24 | 1647:26, 1647:28, | 1671:38, 1672:7, |
| 1715:40, 1718:46 | 1714:30 | fresh [28] - 1654:5, | 1649:1, 1649:9, | 1672:8, 1672:12, |
| fact [6] - 1683:34, | five [1] - 1646:15 | 1654:9, 1659:12, | 1649:10, 1649:11, 1656:36, 1656:42, | 1672:13, 1672:16, 1672:29, 1672:47, |
| 1690:13, 1693:34, | five-eighths [1] - 1646:15 flame [6] - 1646:17, | 1659:17, 1659:26, 1660:1, 1660:3, | 1657:39, 1658:3, | 1673:10, 1673:11, |
| 1698:39, 1703:19, | 1712:4, 1715:9, | 1669:47, 1670:2, | 1658:15, 1666:43, | 1673:35, 1673:43, |
| 1711:16 | 1715:47, 1716:2, | 1670:7, 1672:10, | 1668:4, 1668:12, | 1674:42, 1674:44, |
| factor [2] - 1702:27, | 1716:13 | 1674:26, 1674:27, | 1693:36, 1693:43, | 1674:46, 1675:46, |
| 1717:26 | flatline [1] - 1687:4 | 1674:37, 1674:45, | 1701:37, 1705:14, | 1676:32, 1676:38, |
| failed [3] - 1676:10, | flatlines [1] - 1686:39 | 1674:46, 1674:47, | 1705:44, 1705:45, | 1677:2, 1677:6, |
| 1676:22, 1676:28 | flexi [1] - 1654:29 | 1675:17, 1676:45, | 1705:46, 1706:16, | 1678:19, 1678:23, |
| failure [1] - 1676:29 | flow [7] - 1675:15, | 1676:46, 1677:16, | 1716:3, 1716:28, | 1679:9, 1679:15, |
| fair [2] - 1656:28, 1699:37 | 1675:16, 1681:31, | 1677:18, 1677:19, | 1719:17, 1719:23 | 1679:21, 1679:22, |
| fall [1] - 1677:4 | 1681:38, 1689:11, | 1677:21, 1678:9, | GC [5] - 1649:5, 1649:10, | 1679:31, 1680:17, |
| falls [2] - 1677:32, 1678:43 | 1706:2 | 1678:16, 1678:46, | 1649:14, 1649:20, | 1680:18, 1680:21, |
| familiar [4] - 1649:46, | flows [1] - 1705:41 | 1708:2 | 1679:17 | 1681:37, 1682:26, |
| 1654:46, 1702:23, | fluctuations [3] - 1678:39, | friend [3] - 1697:13, | GCs [1] - 1701:32 | 1684:13, 1684:21, |
| 1703:18 | 1678:40, 1685:25 | 1700:22, 1704:10 | general [6] - 1644:43, | 1684:29, 1685:35, |
| fan [2] - 1654:47, 1655:8 | fluidised [1] - 1716:26 | fuel [1] - 1716:31 | 1655:27, 1655:29, | 1687:21, 1688:32, |
| fancy [1] - 1707:13 | focus [6] - 1645:25, | full [5] - 1644:9, 1658:23, | 1658:40, 1658:41, | 1688:35, 1689:9, |
| far [1] - 1679:32 | 1645:47, 1699:40, | 1698:28, 1708:31, | 1671:38 | 1689:10, 1689:25, |
| faster [1] - 1719:45 | 1701:34, 1714:30, | 1716:10 | generally [4] - 1658:6, | 1689:26, 1689:37, 1689:43, 1690:4, |
| fed [1] - 1648:20 | 1718:39 | future [2] - 1682:34, | 1695:27, 1697:2, 1711:2 | 1704:13, 1704:18, |
| feed [2] - 1647:35, 1648:9 | followed [1] - 1672:47 | 1699:38 | generate [1] - 1668:45 generated [6] - 1674:8, | 1704:33, 1704:36, |
| few [2] - 1687:10, 1692:45 | following [3] - 1699:14, | <u> </u> | 1674:13, 1696:11, | 1704:37, 1704:45, |
| fewer [1] - 1715:30 | 1699:19, 1712:16 | G | 1696:19, 1711:47, | 1705:40, 1705:41, |
| Fi [1] - 1647:15 | follows [1] - 1693:13 | | 1712:4 | 1708:30, 1711:32, |
| field [1] - 1685:43 figure [13] - 1659:23, | foreign [1] - 1704:4 | gap [1] - 1688:40 | generation [1] - 1696:21 | 1712:8, 1713:42, |
| 1659:34, 1662:7, | forget [1] - 1691:37 | gas [81] - 1645:25, | genuinely [1] - 1698:47 | 1713:44, 1715:12, |
| 1663:41, 1669:8, | form [5] - 1645:32, 1658:44, 1658:46, | 1645:26, 1645:38, | George [1] - 1643:37 | 1715:18, 1715:28, |
| 1679:2, 1684:47, | 1659:1 | 1646:20, 1646:23, | Germany [1] - 1662:42 | 1715:29, 1715:32, |
| 1685:7, 1685:17, | former [1] - 1698:24 | 1646:24, 1647:44, | given [10] - 1652:37, | 1715:33, 1715:38, |
| 1691:14, 1691:34, | forming [2] - 1671:11, | 1648:22, 1648:23, | 1661:17, 1678:39, | 1716:27, 1718:21, |
| 1693:24, 1702:33 | 1708:31 | 1648:34, 1648:37, | 1682:41, 1682:42, | 1718:25, 1718:37, |
| figures [4] - 1659:8, | formulae [1] - 1658:39 | 1648:40, 1648:41, | 1682:43, 1690:37, | 1718:44, 1718:47, |
| 1660:24, 1666:13, | forth [1] - 1679:37 | 1648:42, 1648:44, | 1692:44, 1700:9, | 1719:3, 1719:4, |
| 1711:24 | fortuitously [1] - 1687:10 | 1648:45, 1648:46, 1649:3, 1649:5, 1649:6, | 1719:44 | 1719:18, 1719:21, |
| figuring [1] - 1707:16 | fortunately [1] - 1696:6 | 1649:3, 1649:5, 1649:6, 1649:19, 1649:22, | GM002 [1] - 1651:15 | 1719:23, 1719:24, |
| file [5] - 1645:37, 1645:39, | forward [5] - 1673:16, | 1651:14, 1652:27, | GMS15 [1] - 1680:18 | 1719:25, 1719:27 |
| 1645:41, 1686:39 | 1675:2, 1675:19, | 1652:29, 1652:41, | goaf [136] - 1645:40, | Goonyella [3] - 1690:31, 1718:2, 1718:17 |
| fill [1] - 1649:18 | 1680:13, 1706:1 | 1655:31, 1656:37, | 1648:19, 1648:23, | gradually [1] - 1691:16 |
| filter [1] - 1646:18 | forwards [1] - 1653:28 | 1656:41, 1656:43, | 1649:43, 1649:44, | Graham [2] - 1659:1, |
| final [5] - 1659:5, 1659:8, | Four [1] - 1652:35 | 1656:45, 1657:29, | 1649:45, 1650:1, | 1660:25 |
| 1659:34, 1660:38, | four [17] - 1646:24, | 1657:37, 1658:8, | 1650:35, 1650:43, | Graham's [38] - 1658:26, |
| 1685:2 | 1647:10, 1647:25, | 1660:6, 1660:44, | 1652:9, 1652:19, | 1658:28, 1658:44, |
| finalised [1] - 1671:30 | 1647:28, 1647:44, | 1660:45, 1661:38, | 1652:29, 1652:47, 1653:3, 1653:8 | 1659:10, 1659:43, |
| finally [1] - 1712:21 | 1648:22, 1648:23, | 1664:35, 1664:36, | 1653:3, 1653:8, 1653:10, 1653:45, | 1660:2, 1660:11, |
| findings [1] - 1699:23 | 1649:9, 1651:14, | 1664:41, 1666:4, | 1653:10, 1653:45, 1653:45, | 1660:26, 1660:33, |
| • • • • | 1658:15, 1668:40, | 1666:5, 1668:40, | 1654:18, 1654:27, | 1660:36, 1661:24, |
| finished [1] - 1714:28 | | 1668:46, 1675:31, | | 1664:45, 1668:14, |
| finished [1] - 1714:28 fire [7] - 1655:40, 1655:47, | 1680:16, 1705:14, | | 1654:43 1655.2 | , |
| finished [1] - 1714:28 fire [7] - 1655:40, 1655:47, 1660:25, 1660:29, | 1705:44, 1705:45, | 1675:33, 1676:15, | 1654:43, 1655:2, 1655:21, 1655:27. | 1670:25, 1670:39, |
| finished [1] - 1714:28 fire [7] - 1655:40, 1655:47, 1660:25, 1660:29, 1660:30, 1661:38, | 1705:44, 1705:45, 1705:46, 1706:16 | 1675:33, 1676:15, 1679:13, 1679:14, | 1655:21, 1655:27, | |
| finished [1] - 1714:28 fire [7] - 1655:40, 1655:47, 1660:25, 1660:29, | 1705:44, 1705:45, | 1675:33, 1676:15, | | 1670:25, 1670:39, |

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1678:42, 1678:45, 1679:2, 1696:37, 1696:45, 1697:1, 1702:6, 1702:7, 1702:47, 1710:38, 1710:45, 1710:47, 1711:10. 1711:24. 1714:30, 1714:32, 1714:35 grant [1] - 1714:11 GRANT [1] - 1714:13 granularity [1] - 1692:27 graph [20] - 1669:7, 1670:34. 1672:25. 1674:12, 1674:27, 1677:37, 1678:32, 1683:24, 1684:36, 1688:4, 1688:39, 1688:42, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1703:14, 1707:44, 1713:19, 1717:31, 1717:35, 1718:34 graphically [1] - 1709:32 graphs [10] - 1656:21, 1668:31, 1668:45, 1669:19, 1674:11, 1710:23, 1711:14, 1711:36, 1713:13, 1718:29 great [1] - 1668:38 greater [8] - 1664:4, 1664:45, 1664:46, 1664:47, 1665:1, 1696:41, 1708:35, 1716:17 green [2] - 1672:32, 1704:4 GRO4 [1] - 1653:12 GRO4M001 [1] - 1653:20 gross [1] - 1711:7 Grosvenor [8] - 1645:21, 1645:42, 1659:22, 1663:17, 1691:31, 1698:34, 1701:4, 1703:22 ground [1] - 1705:24 auess [4] - 1671:5. 1703:25, 1703:35, 1712:14 guys [1] - 1707:13 н half [2] - 1644:33, 1646:14 half-inch [1] - 1646:14 hand [10] - 1649:22, 1651:9, 1651:47, 1655:2, 1659:20, 1664:40. 1669:14. 1685:43, 1712:25,

1713:35

hand-held [3] - 1649:22,

1664:40, 1685:43

hard [1] - 1688:29

hay [1] - 1655:38

head [1] - 1668:25

heading [5] - 1652:6, 1652:10, 1652:19, 1652:41, 1652:42 Health [1] - 1643:15 hear [1] - 1716:41 heard [1] - 1718:13 hearings [1] - 1719:35 heat [23] - 1656:4, 1656:11, 1657:12, 1657:14, 1657:24, 1657:28, 1657:38, 1690:28, 1691:1, 1691:5, 1691:15, 1691:16, 1693:37, 1695:47, 1696:10, 1696:12, 1696:19, 1696:20, 1700:43, 1712:4, 1712:9, 1715:47, 1718:42 heated [1] - 1663:34 heating [17] - 1657:22, 1658:29, 1660:15, 1665:25, 1689:37, 1691:7. 1695:3. 1695:4. 1695:6, 1696:10, 1697:3, 1697:7, 1700:30, 1703:47, 1712:18, 1717:28, 1719:22 heats [1] - 1656:36 held [4] - 1649:22, 1655:17, 1664:40, 1685:43 helium [1] - 1706:19 help [1] - 1715:14 helped [2] - 1692:47, 1696:35 helpful [1] - 1694:23 high [6] - 1667:12, 1682:28, 1703:3, 1711:15, 1716:16, 1717:43 higher [2] - 1675:8, 1718:20 highest [1] - 1711:11 highlight [1] - 1682:30 Himalayas [1] - 1713:27 hindsight [1] - 1692:29 historical [2] - 1717:18, 1717:23 hits [1] - 1686:45 hmm [1] - 1667:21 hold [1] - 1644:24 holding [1] - 1688:10 hole [20] - 1680:18, 1681:47, 1682:45, 1683:11. 1684:2. 1684:13, 1684:21, 1684:35, 1685:35, 1685:36, 1686:2, 1686:43, 1687:1, 1687:19, 1687:20, 1687:30, 1687:34, 1687:43, 1688:9, 1715:29 Holliday [1] - 1714:23 HOLLIDAY [3] - 1714:25, .17/03/2021 (18)—

1714:27, 1714:44 Holt [3] - 1692:38, 1692:43, 1718:42 HOLT [3] - 1692:40, 1692:42, 1702:40 honours [1] - 1644:25 horizontal [3] - 1672:43, 1678:36. 1679:26 horizontally [2] - 1669:32, 1691:45 horrific [1] - 1699:19 hot [4] - 1656:12, 1660:20, 1694:9, 1712:9 hotter [2] - 1659:31, 1695.4 hour [1] - 1688:13 hours [2] - 1646:46, 1647:20 hundred [1] - 1673:22 Hunter [15] - 1644:1, 1679:44, 1680:7, 1697:13, 1697:35, 1700:22, 1704:10, 1704:17, 1706:6, 1708:42, 1709:43, 1711:31, 1711:36, 1713:13, 1719:31 HUNTER [14] - 1644:3, 1644:7, 1644:9, 1654:12, 1673:5, 1680:1, 1680:9, 1692:36, 1714:5, 1715:6, 1715:8, 1716:33, 1719:33, 1719.43 Hunter's [1] - 1712:22 hydrogen [11] - 1656:42, 1656:44, 1657:1, 1690:1. 1694:4. 1694:8. 1694:12, 1694:15, 1694:17, 1701:46, 1706:17 hypothesis [1] - 1690:22 н idea [7] - 1654:17, 1655:33, 1670:23, 1699:8. 1699:29. 1702:22. 1715:9 ideal [4] - 1647:4, 1660:36, 1665:7, 1665:9 ideally [2] - 1666:4, 1668:10 identification [1] -1707:35 identified [18] - 1653:3, 1656:10, 1663:25, 1675:15, 1675:22, 1675:44, 1676:8, 1676:10, 1690:28, 1690:29, 1690:31, 1702:27, 1705:40, 1708:45, 1709:38, 1711:11, 1711:27,

1660:9, 1680:18, 1698:47 identify [17] - 1647:29, 1649:6, 1649:21, 1654:14, 1656:43, 1658:29, 1665:24, 1665:28. 1665:31. 1679:21, 1690:7, 1700:42, 1704:34, 1707:26, 1708:7, 1709:39, 1711:30 identifying [6] - 1664:33, 1692:32, 1700:37, 1708:42, 1709:44, 1713:14 ignites [2] - 1694:31, 1713:3 ignition [13] - 1686:32, 1686:35, 1689:17, 1691:6, 1693:8, 1693:13, 1712:10, 1715:35, 1716:24, 1716:30, 1718:45, 1719:6, 1719:9 imagine [1] - 1686:13 immediate [2] - 1646:8, 1680:43 immediately [5] - 1663:28, 1673:12, 1683:24, 1689:28, 1712:16 impact [3] - 1647:5, 1661:24, 1688:6 impacts [1] - 1688:13 implementing [1] -1699:47 importance [2] - 1660:10, 1682:30 important [15] - 1666:12, 1666:13, 1666:26, 1695:28, 1697:21, 1702:41, 1705:16, 1712:32, 1712:34, 1712:35, 1713:9, 1713:18, 1713:29, 1713:32, 1716:40 imprecise [1] - 1697:21 improved [1] - 1701:32 improvements [1] -1694:1 inapplicable [1] - 1685:19 inbye [5] - 1669:17, 1669:42, 1669:46, 1669:47, 1670:10 inch [1] - 1646:14 incident [20] - 1650:31, 1653:30, 1672:22, 1679:6, 1679:28, 1680:26, 1681:44, 1682:36, 1683:12, 1683:19, 1683:25, 1684:8. 1685:34. 1686:18, 1686:44, 1688:9, 1692:33, 1699:19, 1709:33, 1711:41 include [1] - 1664:3 included [1] - 1691:10

including [5] - 1655:15, 1668:39, 1688:25, 1698:11, 1699:18 increase [15] - 1666:8, 1670:41, 1670:44, 1670:46, 1681:39, 1682:24, 1683:1. 1684:9, 1684:26, 1688:14, 1692:2, 1692:3, 1695:40, 1697:7, 1713:15 increased [4] - 1684:15, 1684:32, 1699:42 increases [5] - 1676:2. 1702:12, 1702:13, 1702:19, 1702:20 increasing [3] - 1685:14, 1702:19, 1718:6 indeed [5] - 1652:15, 1696:3, 1696:6, 1704:10, 1711:30 independent [2] -1682:17, 1682:18 indicate [8] - 1649:24, 1651:10, 1652:11, 1652:21, 1660:30, 1673:21, 1694:9, 1711:23 indicated [2] - 1693:27, 1695.14indicates [4] - 1647:41, 1670:21, 1679:27, 1687:32 indicating [11] - 1651:15, 1652:1, 1653:24, 1655:22, 1674:31, 1680:42, 1684:32, 1687:26, 1688:10, 1691:44, 1700:1 indication [4] - 1660:23, 1661:46, 1684:15, 1703:47 indicator [4] - 1656:42, 1656:45, 1658:12, 1701:41 indicators [6] - 1688:25, 1689:28. 1696:32. 1696:36. 1697:29. 1701:22 individual [3] - 1647:41, 1657:47, 1708:6 industry [2] - 1644:40, 1645:3 inertisation [6] - 1675:27, 1675:30, 1675:33, 1677:44, 1714:28, 1714:41 influence [1] - 1655:44 information [4] - 1645:34, 1682:38, 1683:46, 1690:22 infrared [1] - 1705:28 ingress [5] - 1654:27, 1654:43, 1655:34, 1675:35, 1677:5 initial [6] - 1645:40, 1659:5, 1659:8,

-8-Transcript produced by Epiq

identifies [4] - 1651:46,

1717.7

1659:23, 1660:1, 1660:5 initiate [1] - 1691:6 initiated [2] - 1719:10, 1719.13 initiation [1] - 1715:26 injectable [1] - 1671:21 injected [3] - 1671:5, 1671:9, 1690:24 injection [3] - 1675:40, 1690:32, 1691:37 input [1] - 1657:24 INQUIRY [2] - 1643:11, 1720:4 inquiry [1] - 1718:39 Inquiry [4] - 1643:18, 1692:45. 1699:24. 1708:18 inside [1] - 1654:18 inspectorate [2] -1645:14, 1645:35 Inspectorate [1] - 1645:19 instance [1] - 1655:38 instantaneous [1] -1647:17 instinct [1] - 1700:40 instrument [5] - 1648:41, 1649:22, 1664:40, 1685:4, 1685:43 insubstantial [1] - 1668:22 insufficient [1] - 1656:4 intake [2] - 1655:11, 1655.12 integrate [1] - 1707:43 integration [1] - 1707:44 intended [2] - 1699:41, 1707:41 intense [2] - 1665:25, 1689:36 intensely [1] - 1703:28 intensity [5] - 1658:29, 1660:16, 1697:3, 1699:42, 1702:19 interaction [1] - 1719:21 interest [2] - 1649:11, 1656:37 interested [5] - 1676:40, 1677:5, 1680:16, 1688:44, 1697:30 interfaces [1] - 1646:2 interfered [1] - 1695:24 interpretation [1] -1674:41 intervals [2] - 1646:21, 1679:23 introduce [1] - 1648:44 introduced [2] - 1675:46, 1693:31 invalid [4] - 1711:8, 1711:13, 1711:27 investigate [3] - 1647:47, 1676:35, 1718:8 investigated [1] - 1658:25 investigating [1] - 1716:26 investigation [2] -1645:20, 1645:24 involve [1] - 1679:13 involved [7] - 1644:40,

1664:27, 1671:26, 1701:31, 1702:38, 1707:24, 1709:44 involves [1] - 1665:14 involving [2] - 1671:20, 1675:30 issue [4] - 1652:37, 1660:41. 1704:32. 1716:44 issues [7] - 1645:14, 1659:14, 1675:15, 1704:22, 1704:24, 1704:28, 1710:29 itself [6] - 1672:7, 1672:8, 1685:34, 1690:37, 1695:46, 1704:5 J **job** [3] - 1697:12, 1717:11, 1684:8 1717:13 jump [1] - 1675:19 jumped [1] - 1697:34 June [7] - 1689:18, 1689:19, 1689:33, 1709.33 1718.26 1718:33, 1718:36 Κ keen [3] - 1666:31, 1666:34, 1667:31 keep [5] - 1644:20, 1654:8, 1656:40, 1665:47, 1680:12 keeps [1] - 1646:19 kept [1] - 1694:23 key [9] - 1656:45, 1665:46, 1666:15, 1697:31, 1699:27, 1701:34, 1702:27, 1702:33, 1718:6 kilometres [6] - 1646:41, 1650:28, 1652:34, 1652:35, 1659:35, 1664:9 kind [8] - 1693:24, 1694:31. 1695:43. 1698:15, 1698:27, 1698:34, 1699:22, 1700:28 kinds [3] - 1705:36, 1706:23, 1706:24 Kingdom [1] - 1644:29 knowledge [1] - 1700:10 known [7] - 1645:19, 1645:36, 1647:30, 1658:43. 1676:15. 1680:17, 1715:41 kPa [2] - 1654:29, 1654:37 L L" [1] - 1653:12

label [1] - 1651:15

.17/03/2021 (18)

labelled [1] - 1675:21 labels [1] - 1654:36 laboratory [1] - 1700:32 lag [1] - 1647:1 language [1] - 1697:20 large [6] - 1660:38, 1660:39, 1663:6, 1667:44, 1668:10, 1668:11 larger [1] - 1716:14 last [7] - 1645:21, 1679:31, 1690:26, 1690:32, 1693:36, 1709:31, 1719:20 lastly [1] - 1655:14 late [2] - 1646:13, 1689:30 lateral [1] - 1653:13 lead [3] - 1670:40, 1684:8, 1695:23 lead-up [2] - 1670:40, leak [7] - 1673:26, 1673:29, 1676:8, 1676:11, 1676:17, 1676:22, 1676:28 leakage [1] - 1673:30 leaks [1] - 1676:15 learned [3] - 1697:13, 1700:22, 1704:10 least [8] - 1650:31, 1654:21, 1656:21, 1656:22, 1657:1, 1690:8, 1711:1, 1715:21 leave [1] - 1692:44 left [5] - 1651:9, 1651:47, 1655:2, 1669:14, 1673.35 left-hand [4] - 1651:9, 1651:47, 1655:2, 1669.14legislation [1] - 1647:27 less [12] - 1663:29, 1666:44, 1667:6, 1667:15, 1670:16, 1678:4, 1687:26, 1687:29, 1687:44, 1711:5, 1715:39, 1715:40 lesser [3] - 1673:33, 1687:39, 1696:41 level [47] - 1656:29. 1656:30, 1656:33, 1664:3, 1664:44, 1665:6, 1665:8, 1665:14, 1666:29, 1667:33, 1667:34, 1669:31, 1669:36, 1670:35, 1670:43, 1672:28, 1672:39, 1674:37, 1677:8, 1677:10, 1677:28, 1677:42, 1678:2, 1678:8, 1678:10, 1678:35, 1680:27, 1681:41, 1684:32, 1688:3, 1688:21, 1692:27, 1694:16,

1698:46, 1699:31, 1699:39, 1699:44, 1699:46, 1700:4, 1700:5, 1701:8, 1703:12, 1703:23, 1713:40, 1716:44, 1718:3 levels [21] - 1659:5, 1668:46, 1672:20, 1672:47, 1674:3, 1677:35, 1677:38, 1682:7, 1697:29, 1698:44. 1699:13. 1699:28, 1700:12, 1703:46, 1704:6, 1714:1, 1716:16, 1716:19, 1716:40, 1717:18, 1718:21 liberated [2] - 1658:3, 1693:43 lies [1] - 1662:8 lifting [1] - 1716:1 light [1] - 1648:6 likely [10] - 1661:17, 1663:44, 1671:47, 1672:7, 1675:45, 1689:40, 1696:43, 1712:5, 1718:45, 1719:2 limit [4] - 1687:4, 1687:5, 1703:40, 1703:43 limitations [1] - 1663:4 limits [3] - 1661:5, 1694:1, 1700:11 line [13] - 1653:27, 1655:15, 1669:30, 1672:43, 1678:36, 1679:26, 1685:13, 1689:8, 1689:23, 1689:24 lines [1] - 1707:15 link [1] - 1711:22 literally [2] - 1705:23, 1706:7 literature [1] - 1660:9 litres [5] - 1662:45, 1664:45, 1665:1, 1668:28, 1718:4 located [10] - 1647:13, 1650:24, 1650:35, 1650:38, 1653:21, 1655:1, 1655:22, 1668:41, 1671:43, 1688:35 location [14] - 1647:43, 1650:35, 1651:38, 1653:29, 1653:33, 1655:27, 1655:29, 1659:36, 1660:36, 1664:18, 1671:38, 1678:24, 1679:27, 1684:15 locations [11] - 1646:16, 1646:28, 1646:32, 1647:13, 1647:27, 1647:28, 1650:15, 1653:1, 1655:15, 1678:27, 1706:22

locators [1] - 1647:41 logarithmic [1] - 1691:16 logic [2] - 1647:22, 1647:23 long-term [7] - 1646:2, 1646:8, 1685:12, 1688:44, 1689:6, 1697:42. 1713:29 longwall [35] - 1650:18, 1651:5, 1655:15, 1659:10, 1663:20, 1665:24, 1667:29, 1671:20, 1673:40, 1673:42, 1673:46, 1674:29, 1674:34, 1694:22, 1697:15, 1708:28, 1708:30, 1708:33, 1708:34, 1708:46, 1709:5, 1710:3, 1710:4, 1710:10, 1710:11, 1710:39, 1712:1, 1717:27, 1718:19, 1718:37, 1718:46, 1719:21, 1719:25 longwalls [3] - 1703:11, 1717:19, 1717:25 look [54] - 1645:27, 1645:28, 1650:12, 1651:3, 1656:24, 1660:24, 1662:26, 1662:27, 1663:16, 1664:35, 1665:45, 1665:46, 1666:4, 1669:13, 1670:16, 1672:20, 1674:3, 1674:27, 1676:33, 1678:44, 1679:9, 1679:40, 1680:40, 1680:43, 1682:23, 1682:24, 1685:11, 1685:12, 1685:29, 1685:33, 1689:16, 1689:21, 1690:4, 1692:29. 1703:29. 1704:34, 1704:46, 1705:7, 1705:9, 1706:15, 1707:21, 1711:14, 1712:7, 1713:12, 1713:26, 1713:27, 1713:35, 1715:31, 1716:26, 1717:3, 1717:5, 1717:35, 1718:18, 1718:30 looked [12] - 1666:21, 1679:15, 1681:23, 1697:47, 1708:6, 1711:19, 1711:36, 1712:19, 1718:29, 1718:35 looking [48] - 1658:8, 1658:30, 1661:34, 1665:9, 1665:26, 1666:12, 1666:13, 1667:15, 1671:4, 1671:33, 1675:21, 1677:11, 1681:9,

____9____ Transcript produced by Epiq

1683:23, 1684:3, 1685:3, 1689:32, 1689:45, 1689:47, 1691:41, 1692:4, 1692:27, 1696:37, 1701:37. 1704:21. 1707:14, 1707:25, 1707:47, 1708:4, 1708:10, 1709:44, 1712:26, 1712:27, 1712:31, 1712:42, 1713:15, 1713:17, 1713:19, 1714:37, 1717:2, 1717:5, 1718:38 looks [1] - 1706:7 low [13] - 1661:36, 1668:16, 1672:28, 1677:38, 1678:46, 1693:38, 1699:3, 1704:6, 1711:15, 1716:8, 1716:19, 1717:45, 1717:47 lower [5] - 1661:36, 1670:43, 1687:35, 1693:46 lowest [1] - 1715:43 lubrication [1] - 1657:19 lunch [1] - 1719:44 luncheon [1] - 1715:1 LUNCHEON [1] - 1715:4 lunchtime [1] - 1714:28

1681:24, 1682:26,

Μ

M001.5 [1] - 1655:21 machines [1] - 1657:13 Magistrates [1] - 1643:36 magnitude [2] - 1698:6, 1698:12 main [1] - 1701:40 maingate [7] - 1650:38, 1653:20, 1659:18, 1672:36, 1672:47, 1673:12, 1673:22 mains [1] - 1651:8 maintained [1] - 1660:46 managed [1] - 1697:14 management [1] - 1696:25 manager [1] - 1644:43 manages [1] - 1706:34 manually [3] - 1685:40, 1685:45, 1685:46 map [2] - 1647:41, 1647:42 MARCH [1] - 1720:5 March [5] - 1643:41, 1672:21, 1674:28, 1677:27, 1710:40 mark [4] - 1677:29, 1680:29, 1702:16, 1702:17 marked [2] - 1653:7, 1653:20 markedly [2] - 1679:2, 1687:19

.17/03/2021 (18)

markings [1] - 1651:10 Martin [6] - 1643:26, 1644:3, 1644:9, 1714:17, 1714:45, 1719.29 MARTIN [1] - 1644:5 massive [3] - 1647:5, 1663:9. 1676:29 material [2] - 1645:33, 1690:36 mathematics [1] - 1662:27 matter [3] - 1647:20, 1662:29, 1700:40 matters [1] - 1645:16 maxed [1] - 1686:41 maximum [2] - 1710:38, 1715:18 mean [14] - 1648:34, 1652:18, 1660:19, 1663:12, 1668:4, 1673:19, 1676:29, 1681:8, 1681:44, 1687:24, 1704:12, 1708:2, 1715:46, 1716:9 meaning [1] - 1692:47 meaningful [3] - 1658:33, 1658:36, 1698:46 means [2] - 1655:44, 1659:13 meant [2] - 1669:36, 1693:2 measure [5] - 1658:17, 1660:15, 1697:3, 1697:21, 1701:14 measured [8] - 1652:30, 1656:23, 1658:16, 1659:34, 1659:36, 1664:8, 1718:19, 1718:44 measurement [3] -1660:43, 1661:8, 1661:22 measures [4] - 1660:6, 1698:12, 1702:7, 1706:2 measuring [3] - 1660:34, 1672:16, 1705:14 medium [1] - 1648:46 Member [2] - 1643:27, 1643.30 mentioned [7] - 1646:11, 1648:37, 1655:32, 1661:32, 1662:41, 1663:12, 1718:42 methane [68] - 1645:26, 1646:25, 1647:12, 1658:47, 1659:3. 1662:16. 1665:38. 1665:39, 1666:3, 1666:7, 1666:10, 1666:45, 1667:25, 1667:33, 1668:11, 1673:16. 1677:19. 1681:10. 1681:13. 1681:15, 1682:25, 1682:26, 1682:31, 1682:37, 1682:40, 1683:5, 1683:7,

| 1683.10 1683.30 |
|--|
| 1683:19, 1683:30, |
| 1683:44, 1683:45, 1684:2, 1684:3, 1684:9, |
| 1684:20, 1684:42, |
| 1684:43, 1685:10, |
| 1685:17, 1685:19, |
| 1685:20, 1685:24, |
| 1685:26, 1686:4, |
| 1686:21 1686:31 |
| 1686:21, 1686:31, |
| 1686:45, 1687:14, 1687:39, 1688:1, |
| 1688:18, 1688:26, |
| |
| 1705:14, 1705:28, 1711:47, 1712:10, |
| 1712:17, 1712:18, |
| 1713:3, 1715:38, |
| |
| 1715:40, 1715:41, 1716:1, 1716:5, 1716:7, |
| 1718:45, 1719:1, 1719:9 |
| |
| methane-generated [1] - |
| 1711:47 |
| methanometers [1] - |
| 1647:29 |
| methodology [2] - |
| 1683:39, 1717:40 |
| metre [8] - 1651:39, |
| 1651:47, 1652:20, |
| 1668:40, 1669:10, |
| 1670:29, 1679:23, |
| 1694:22 |
| metres [22] - 1650:21, |
| 1654:33, 1662:44, |
| 1668:21, 1668:41, |
| 1669:15, 1673:22, |
| 1679:36, 1679:37, |
| 1682:3, 1682:45, |
| 1683:27, 1686:44, |
| 1687:34, 1708:29, |
| 1709:5, 1710:3, |
| 1710:10, 1715:29, 1715:30, 1718:47 |
| mid [1] - 1669:19 |
| mid-April [1] - 1669:19 |
| midday [1] - 1683:9 |
| Middle [2] - 1690:31, |
| 1718:17 |
| middle [4] - 1670:47, |
| 1683:6, 1683:8, 1691:38 |
| might [27] - 1650:3, |
| 1651:3, 1665:31, |
| 1669:45, 1671:3, |
| 1675:4, 1675:19, |
| 1675:25, 1677:41, |
| 1679:45, 1681:15, |
| 1687.18 1690.23 |
| 1687:18, 1690:23, 1696:37, 1698:2, |
| 1699:37, 1701:22, |
| 1703:45, 1704:5, |
| 1710:30, 1710:31, |
| 1712:7, 1715:14, |
| 1715:16, 1717:30, |
| 1719:33, 1719:34 |
| million [24] - 1657:3, |
| 1661:40, 1662:43, |
| 1664:5, 1664:15, |
| 1664:47, 1672:40, |
| 1684:45, 1685:6, |
| 1605.0 1605.0 |

1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:25, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1703:41, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1718:20 mind [1] - 1665:23 mine [50] - 1644:43, 1644:45, 1645:21, 1645:35, 1646:28, 1647:13, 1647:28, 1647:31, 1647:39, 1647:41, 1649:17, 1649:29, 1651:5, 1651:42, 1656:15, 1657:44, 1657:45, 1657:46, 1658:2, 1658:9, 1658:11, 1659:12, 1659:22, 1675:5, 1681:25, 1690:37, 1692:26, 1694:15, 1696:26, 1697:15, 1697:31, 1697:36, 1698:3, 1698:7, 1698:16, 1700:1, 1700:14, 1702:44, 1703:46, 1708:11. 1708:14. 1709:7, 1710:12, 1714:2, 1716:44, 1717:5, 1717:29, 1717:41 mine's [2] - 1647:15, 1648:20 mined [1] - 1657:45 minerals [1] - 1655:38 mines [9] - 1644:18, 1644:21, 1645:14, 1657:43, 1704:5, 1704:24, 1717:3, 1717:42 Mines [1] - 1645:18 MINING [1] - 1643:11 Mining [1] - 1643:15 mining [4] - 1644:13, 1644:25, 1657:8, 1698:5 minus [2] - 1661:13, 1661:14 minute [5] - 1646:21, 1662:45, 1664:45, 1665:1, 1668:28 minutes [3] - 1680:26, 1686:1, 1687:10 mirror [2] - 1677:3, 1677:4 miss [1] - 1652:27 missed [1] - 1708:7 mmm-hmm [1] - 1667:21 moist [1] - 1701:29 moisture [3] - 1695:38, 1702:28, 1702:35 moment [5] - 1651:10, 1660:10, 1663:32, 1676:32, 1710:33 monitoring [4] - 1668:27, 1704:19, 1705:13, 1717:4 monitors [2] - 1647:10,

1647:33 monoxide [45] - 1646:24, 1647:11, 1647:33, 1656:37, 1656:41, 1658:30, 1659:14, 1659:24, 1659:26, 1659:27. 1661:34. 1661:37, 1662:43, 1663:6, 1663:7, 1665:45, 1667:44, 1668:12, 1672:20, 1674:20, 1677:20, 1677:36. 1677:38. 1678:3, 1680:33, 1680:34, 1681:32, 1682:22, 1682:47, 1683:1, 1683:7, 1683:20, 1683:44, 1684·46 1687·45 1688:14, 1689:31, 1691:35, 1702:7, 1702:9, 1705:15, 1705:29, 1711:33, 1711:37, 1713:36 monthly [1] - 1676:15 Moranbah [2] - 1717:44, 1718:18 morning [3] - 1679:45, 1686:1, 1692:12 most [4] - 1664:36, 1664:41, 1666:43, 1719:23 mostly [1] - 1713:41 Moura [3] - 1645:47, 1699:15, 1718:5 move [3] - 1656:32, 1680:13, 1690:18 moved [2] - 1680:22, 1719:44 movement [1] - 1652:12 moving [5] - 1646:20, 1652:1, 1653:27, 1669:32, 1673:42 MR [22] - 1644:3, 1644:7, 1644:9, 1654:12, 1673:5, 1680:1, 1680:9, 1692:36. 1692:40. 1692:42, 1702:40, 1714:5, 1714:9, 1714:17, 1714:21, 1715:6, 1715:8, 1716:33, 1716:38, 1719:29, 1719:33, 1719.43 **MS** [4] - 1714:13, 1714:25, 1714:27, 1714:44 Muller [10] - 1648:42, 1650:3, 1679:18, 1681:22, 1681:23, 1683:31, 1683:40, 1707:19, 1711:6, 1719:43 Muller's [2] - 1690:10, 1707:46 multiple [2] - 1669:37, 1669:40 multiplied [2] - 1658:32,

Transcript produced by Epiq

1685:8, 1685:9,

1660:10, 1695:22,

Ν N/A [1] - 1686:40 name [6] - 1644:9, 1647:43, 1648:42, 1692:42, 1693:12, 1697:22 naturally [1] - 1656:38 nature [6] - 1698:4, 1700:22, 1702:37, 1704:25, 1704:26, 1704:27 near [2] - 1647:17, 1717:24 necessarily [7] - 1665:41, 1666:16, 1695:16, 1702:26, 1704:27, 1713:28, 1717:15 need [11] - 1650:10, 1656:43, 1661:40, 1664:14, 1666:4, 1667:16, 1697:11, 1711:46, 1717:2, 1718:8, 1718:9 needed [2] - 1646:1, 1656:10 needs [2] - 1711:1, 1711:23 negative [1] - 1715:32 never [1] - 1670:35 new [6] - 1685:36, 1701:26, 1701:28, 1701:29 New [2] - 1656:15, 1663:8 next [12] - 1651:3. 1651:38, 1652:45, 1670:25, 1671:37, 1681:28, 1684:20, 1686:16, 1715:19, 1715:20, 1718:24, 1719:43 nitrogen [15] - 1660:3, 1660:4, 1660:6, 1666:6, 1675:31, 1675:33, 1675:40, 1675:45, 1677:46, 1677:47, 1706:19, 1714:28, 1714:41 nominal [2] - 1660:11, 1662.2 non [1] - 1647:31 non-explosion [1] -1647:31 none [2] - 1659:28, 1682:42 normal [49] - 1655:46, 1656:7, 1656:28, 1656:33. 1656:34. 1657:2, 1657:6, 1659:31, 1663:28, 1663:39, 1666:18, 1667:5, 1667:10, 1668:35, 1671:10, 1673:15, 1673:19. 1673:36, 1673:37, _.17/03/2021 (18)_

1658:36

1677:3, 1677:8, 1677:10, 1681:25, 1697:29, 1697:31, 1698:2, 1698:5, 1698:9, 1698:45, 1699:10, 1699:11, 1699:29, 1699:33. 1699:34. 1699:44, 1700:2, 1703:31, 1703:32, 1710:12, 1710:16, 1712:43, 1714:2, 1716:9, 1717:20, 1717:29. 1717:40. 1717:43, 1718:7 normalise [1] - 1699:8 normalises [1] - 1699:4 normally [8] - 1649:20, 1649:21, 1673:30, 1677:1, 1677:3, 1693:19, 1711:8, 1712:36 North [3] - 1717:44, 1718:2, 1718:18 nose [1] - 1715:42 note [1] - 1710:36 noted [9] - 1696:19, 1697:11, 1701:23, 1706:7, 1706:33, 1707:46, 1709:17, 1712:24, 1713:39 notes [1] - 1650:6 notice [1] - 1664:44 Notice [1] - 1643:18 notion [1] - 1695:3 number [33] - 1644:28, 1651:18, 1651:34, 1651:35, 1655:16, 1655:28. 1657:29. 1658:25, 1658:33, 1658:37, 1664:17, 1676:3, 1679:26, 1679:31, 1680:17, 1680:18, 1684:2, 1685:2, 1685:35, 1687:43, 1693:22, 1709:38, 1709:43, 1710:31. 1711:24. 1712:23, 1712:27, 1715:20, 1716:39, 1717:3, 1717:46, 1718:40 numbered [2] - 1709:40, 1710:32 numbers [2] - 1682:28, 1715:15 numerous [1] - 1700:36 Ο O'Brien [1] - 1714:19 O'BRIEN [1] - 1714:21 o'clock [2] - 1719:46, 1720:2 02 [1] - 1705:33 objection [1] - 1650:9 objective [2] - 1647:3, 1696:45

obvious [1] - 1695:32 obviously [6] - 1658:16, 1662:8, 1662:12, 1666:45, 1689:17, 1715:47 occasionally[1] - 1662:37 occasions [3] - 1663:8, 1669:37. 1669:41 occur [8] - 1656:3, 1656:38, 1690:31, 1696:1, 1696:3, 1702:29, 1702:36, 1708:32 occurred [9] - 1645:20, 1675:37, 1680:26, 1688:9, 1690:23, 1692:33, 1707:44, 1713:2, 1716:24 occurrence [1] - 1696:4 occurring [7] - 1656:26, 1661:29. 1661:30. 1681:3, 1694:47, 1710:17, 1711:38 **OF** [2] - 1643:11, 1720:4 offer [1] - 1664:12 officer [2] - 1665:42, 1717:14 offline [2] - 1704:33, 1704:37 often [3] - 1649:17, 1661:40, 1716:40 oil [5] - 1657:14, 1657:15, 1657:17, 1657:18 old [1] - 1655:43 once [6] - 1690:8, 1695:32, 1699:33, 1699:40, 1702:34, 1708:32 one [59] - 1646:35, 1646:46, 1647:26, 1649:36, 1650:20, 1651:15, 1652:4, 1653:12, 1654:29, 1655:42, 1656:10, 1656:44, 1658:25, 1658:40, 1659:8, 1659:18, 1659:19, 1659:20, 1661:39, 1665:10, 1665:11, 1665:18, 1665:44, 1669:15, 1670:12, 1674:12, 1676:39, 1686:2, 1686:43, 1687:30, 1692:12, 1692:18, 1692:24, 1692:43, 1694:3, 1695:27, 1697:13, 1697:26, 1697:35, 1697:38, 1699:27, 1700:21, 1701:40, 1702:40, 1704:17, 1708:24, 1709:31, 1710:32, 1711:11, 1711:18, 1712:23, 1712:40, 1713:41, 1714:27, 1717:3,

1718:40, 1719:20 ones [2] - 1704:46, 1704:47 online [2] - 1686:13, 1704:46 onset [3] - 1647:4, 1708:26, 1708:40 onsite [1] - 1707:10 onwards [1] - 1678:22 open [4] - 1655:47, 1661:38, 1702:24, 1716:13 operate [1] - 1665:47 operates [1] - 1699:39 operating [2] - 1683:11, 1697:2 operation [4] - 1649:46, 1668:35, 1674:29, 1703:13 operational [1] - 1717:6 Operator [4] - 1650:4, 1708:19, 1712:25, 1715:21 operator [12] - 1647:39, 1647:47, 1648:26, 1648:28, 1649:20, 1665:47, 1698:16, 1716:46, 1717:1, 1717:4, 1717:15 operators [1] - 1697:36 opinion [3] - 1666:29, 1667:27, 1718:44 opposed [6] - 1652:41. 1669:31, 1670:7, 1687:19, 1691:46, 1716.18 order [4] - 1675:20, 1698:6, 1698:11, 1703.22 ordinary [1] - 1710:15 organisations [1] -1701:25 original [1] - 1716:29 originally [1] - 1660:25 originates [1] - 1658:26 otherwise [2] - 1649:36, 1667:9 ought [1] - 1690:8 outbye [11] - 1650:21, 1651:5, 1652:10, 1652:32, 1669:43, 1669:46, 1670:1, 1670:12, 1670:14, 1676:17, 1703:15 outcome [1] - 1647:5 outcomes [1] - 1687:19 output [2] - 1678:31, 1710:46 outputs [2] - 1706:1, 1707:25 outset [1] - 1708:39 overall [3] - 1644:36, 1680:44, 1705:9 overestimated [1] -1676·30 overseas [1] - 1701:15 own [6] - 1657:46,

1697:37, 1701:25, 1716:25 oxidating [1] - 1695:15 oxidation [34] - 1655:39, 1656:16, 1656:29, 1656:30, 1657:9, 1681:3, 1681:4, 1681:5, 1693:30, 1693:34, 1694:24, 1694:27, 1694:45, 1694:47, 1695:4, 1695:6, 1695:23, 1695:44, 1695:45, 1696:11, 1696:20, 1696:32, 1697:23, 1700:30, 1701:22, 1701:36, 1708:42, 1709:12, 1709:22, 1709:45, 1710:17, 1710:21, 1713:8 oxidise [1] - 1655:38 oxygen [112] - 1646:25, 1647:11, 1654:27, 1654:43, 1655:34, 1656:3, 1656:6, 1656:7, 1656:10, 1656:13, 1656:17, 1656:18, 1656:20, 1656:22, 1656:24, 1656:33, 1658:31, 1658:32, 1659:5, 1659:9, 1659:14, 1659:23, 1659:34, 1659:38, 1660:3, 1660:5, 1660:38, 1660:43, 1660:44, 1661:9, 1661:10. 1661:13. 1661:16, 1661:22, 1661:27, 1661:39, 1667:5, 1667:10, 1667:24, 1667:33, 1668:16, 1673:15, 1673:16, 1673:19, 1673:21, 1673:25, 1673:38, 1673:40, 1673:43, 1674:3, 1674:7, 1674:13, 1674:17, 1674:24, 1674:28, 1674:34, 1674:37, 1675:7, 1675:12, 1675:16, 1675:34, 1675:36, 1675:41. 1675:44. 1676:3, 1676:6, 1676:30, 1676:39, 1676:42, 1677:1, 1677:5, 1677:9, 1677:24, 1677:28, 1677:35, 1677:41, 1678:8, 1678:46, 1680:27, 1682:7, 1682:13, 1683:17, 1683:18, 1683:22, 1686:4, 1686:28, 1686:31, 1687:15, 1687:24, 1687:40, 1688:6, 1688:17,

-11-Transcript produced by Epiq

1718:10, 1718:11,

previously [1] - 1713:39

| 1688:29, 1693:30, | 1686:45, 1687:1, |
|---|---|
| 1702:8, 1705:15, | 1687:11, 1687:36, |
| 1705:32, 1709:12, | 1703:41, 1713:36, |
| 1711:1, 1711:11, | 1713:40, 1715:19, |
| 1711:15, 1715:39, | 1718:20 |
| 1715:40, 1715:41, | |
| 1715:40, 1715:41, 1715:8, | past [5] - 1652:19, 1664:35, 1665:40, |
| , , | , , |
| 1716:20, 1716:31, | 1673:21, 1696:7 |
| 1718:21, 1719:2 | pattern [2] - 1681:5, |
| | 1709:4 |
| Р | patterns [2] - 1708:45, |
| | 1708:46 |
| pace [1] - 1719:45 | peak [3] - 1669:23, |
| package [1] - 1706:43 | 1670:18, 1692:10 |
| | peaks [6] - 1672:32, |
| packages [2] - 1664:34, 1706:24 | 1707:15, 1707:27, |
| | 1707:35, 1707:39, |
| page [10] - 1659:47, | 1707:43 |
| 1690:43, 1691:11, | peer [1] - 1683:34 |
| 1691:15, 1691:17, | penetrate [1] - 1673:21 |
| 1695:11, 1709:15, | penetration [4] - 1673:1 |
| 1710:32, 1712:24, | 1673:19, 1673:39, |
| 1713:12 | 1673:43 |
| panel [2] - 1699:18, | people [5] - 1661:39, |
| 1718:37 | 1665:39, 1665:43, |
| panels [1] - 1697:43 | 1695:5, 1707:30 |
| paramagnetic [1] - | per [65] - 1656:7, 1656:1 |
| 1705:32 | 1656:20, 1656:22, |
| parameter [6] - 1665:18, | 1657:3, 1661:23, |
| 1665:44, 1692:7, | 1661:40, 1662:43, |
| 1700:47, 1701:1 | 1662:44, 1662:45, |
| parameters [7] - 1665:6, | 1664:5, 1664:15, |
| 1665:46, 1705:46, | 1664:47, 1667:6, |
| 1716:25, 1716:27, | 1667:10, 1667:11, |
| 1717:6, 1718:7 | 1667:15, 1670:36, |
| pardon [2] - 1658:35, | 1672:40, 1674:25, |
| 1678:31 | 1676:43, 1677:13, |
| part [14] - 1651:4, 1657:8, | 1677:29, 1680:29, |
| | |
| 1660:47, 1661:4, | 1682.8 1682.9 |
| 1660:47, 1661:4, 1664:4, 1664:15, | 1682:8, 1682:9, 1683:18, 1683:23, |
| | 1683:18, 1683:23, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:35, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, 1714:29, 1717:19 | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 period [14] - 1672:21, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, 1714:29, 1717:19 parts [22] - 1657:3, 1661:40, 1662:43, 1664:47, 1672:40, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 period [14] - 1672:21, 1678:8, 1678:12, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1663:44, 1665:23, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, 1714:29, 1717:19 parts [22] - 1657:3, 1661:40, 1662:43, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 period [14] - 1672:21, 1678:8, 1678:12, 1678:18, 1679:40, |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, 1714:29, 1717:19 parts [22] - 1657:3, 1661:40, 1662:43, 1664:47, 1672:40, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 period [14] - 1672:21, 1678:8, 1678:12, 1678:18, 1679:40, 1683:2, 1688:4, 1689: |
| 1664:4, 1664:15, 1665:11, 1667:16, 1675:34, 1676:14, 1681:12, 1682:40, 1683:34, 1716:2 particles [1] - 1712:11 particular [21] - 1649:37, 1658:3, 1666:30, 1671:20, 1676:39, 1681:24, 1688:6, 1695:22, 1698:3, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1700:23, 1700:28, 1703:36, 1704:18, 1704:19, 1704:35, 1706:6, 1706:34, 1713:25, 1715:15 particularly [11] - 1660:42, 1668:12, 1687:20, 1692:47, 1697:46, 1700:9, 1705:36, 1706:17, 1712:35, 1714:29, 1717:19 parts [22] - 1657:3, 1661:40, 1662:43, 1664:47, 1672:40, 1684:45, 1685:6, | 1683:18, 1683:23, 1683:24, 1684:43, 1684:44, 1684:45, 1684:46, 1685:6, 1685:7, 1685:8, 1685:10, 1685:11, 1686:4, 1686:24, 1686:41, 1686:45, 1687:1, 1687:11, 1687:36, 1689:9, 1689:14, 1690:8, 1690:9, 1691:24, 1703:41, 1704:38, 1713:36, 1713:40, 1715:19, 1715:41, 1718:20 percentage [1] - 1661:4 performance [2] - 1717:18, 1717:27 performed [1] - 1665:37 perhaps [5] - 1659:47, 1675:19, 1689:37, 1690:21, 1717:39 period [14] - 1672:21, 1678:8, 1678:12, 1678:18, 1679:40, |

1000-00 1000-00

4000.45 4007.4

1704:20, 1711:14, 1713:28, 1717:32 periods [1] - 1674:23 permeable [1] - 1673:24 person [5] - 1649:21, 1698:17, 1698:24, 1698:27, 1698:33 personal [1] - 1718:18 personally [1] - 1671:26 personnel [1] - 1704:39 perspective[1] - 1705:16 philosophy [1] - 1699:22 phrase [2] - 1693:6, 1695:20 phrases [1] - 1695:9 physically [1] - 1649:36 pick [5] - 1664:20, 1689:3, 1689:6, 1689:42, 1692:3 picked [3] - 1652:31, 1652:32, 1689:38 673:15, picture [1] - 1655:14 piece [1] - 1713:26 place [4] - 1664:21, 1683:15, 1697:17, 1700.6 placed [1] - 1647:29 656:17, places [1] - 1656:22 plan [5] - 1651:4, 1651:42, 1663:13, 1671:43, 1671:45 plausible [1] - 1715:25 play [1] - 1663:1 played [1] - 1645:24 PLC [1] - 1647:22 PLCs [1] - 1647:19 **plus** [6] - 1648:29, 1661:13, 1661:14, 1679:19, 1705:46, 1716.9 point [45] - 1646:40, 1648:15, 1649:37, 1654:17, 1655:5, 1655:40, 1655:46, 1655:47, 1656:31, 1659:23, 1660:30, 1660:34, 1661:16, 1671:13, 1672:3, 1673:1, 1673:8, 1673:9, 1673:41, 1673:45, 1675:5, 1675:45, 1676:17, 1676:26, 1677:15, 1678:3, 1688:10, 1693:13, 1693:17, 1694:36, 1694:37, 1695:21, 561:41 1695:37, 1695:43, 1702:35, 1703:25, 1704:30, 1712:14, 65:37 1712:16, 1713:17, 1715:12, 1715:42, 1715:43, 1716:30 pointing [1] - 1704:17 points [10] - 1646:39, 1652:46, 1658:7, 1659:39, 1663:20, 1689:4. 1666:25, 1695:25, 1704:35, 1705:14

policy [1] - 1647:32 polyethylene [1] - 1646:13 polyurethane [2] -1671:21, 1690:23 portable [1] - 1680:21 possibility [5] - 1652:21, 1654:39, 1667:46, 1691:8, 1719:34 possible [16] - 1648:12, 1648:31, 1649:5, 1649:43, 1649:45, 1649:47, 1659:28, 1662:24, 1662:26, 1662:38, 1662:39, 1665:20, 1696:42, 1698:13, 1719:22, 1719:26 possibly [1] - 1689:43 post [3] - 1689:21, 1689:24, 1711:32 potential [2] - 1678:39, 1685:24 potentially [3] - 1704:45, 1719:6, 1719:14 power [1] - 1646:16 PowerPoint [6] - 1650:4, 1708:17, 1708:20, 1709:15, 1712:22, 1715:14 ppm [16] - 1659:32, 1664:17, 1677:39, 1678:4. 1680:37. 1680:46, 1681:40, 1687:5, 1687:7, 1691:46, 1691:47, 1694:16, 1694:17, 1715:22, 1715:23 practice [2] - 1683:45, 1717:17 pre [1] - 1689:2 precedes [1] - 1676:26 precise [1] - 1664:13 precisely [1] - 1700:18 predominant [1] - 1661:38 prefer [1] - 1685:11 prescribed [1] - 1647:9 prescribes [1] - 1647:27 presence [3] - 1658:12, 1694:8, 1712:15 present [5] - 1648:3, 1653:28, 1657:1, 1699:38, 1702:2 presentation [1] - 1709:16 presents [1] - 1710:23 pressure [6] - 1649:28, 1649:29, 1649:30, 1706:2, 1719:17, 1719:26 pressures [1] - 1715:33 presumably [3] - 1646:39, 1664:28, 1664:38 pretty [1] - 1697:3 prevent [2] - 1654:42, 1655:35 previous [5] - 1691:14, 1697:43, 1717:19, 1717:25, 1717:27

primarily [2] - 1645:27, 1718:40 primary [5] - 1645:25, 1647:3, 1649:11, 1656:37, 1697:13 problem [3] - 1704:20, 1717:29. 1717:41 process [46] - 1649:1, 1649:17, 1655:37, 1655:39, 1655:45, 1657:8, 1658:32, 1659:29, 1675:34, 1677:4, 1683:35, 1686:12, 1687:23, 1687:25, 1687:26, 1687:29, 1693:8, 1693:10, 1693:14, 1694:27, 1694:37, 1694:44, 1694:47. 1695:4, 1695:17, 1695:22, 1695:44, 1696:10. 1696:11. 1696:20, 1699:14, 1700:29, 1701:35, 1707:20, 1707:38, 1707:42, 1707:47, 1708:30, 1709:11, 1710:17, 1712:11, 1712:47, 1713:9, 1716:2, 1716:21 processes [3] - 1696:25, 1701:42, 1702:43 produce [4] - 1657:9, 1702:8, 1716:7 produced [9] - 1645:37, 1656:25, 1658:30, 1661:35, 1673:34, 1687:23, 1687:27. 1688:41, 1693:37 produces [1] - 1701:36 producing [1] - 1694:27 product [2] - 1671:21, 1686:35 production [1] - 1673:9 products [8] - 1711:31, 1711:44, 1712:6. 1712:15, 1715:28, 1715:47, 1716:4, 1718.43 Professional [4] - 1646:3, 1646:5, 1646:9, 1668:47 program [6] - 1645:38, 1645:39. 1645:46. 1646:2, 1646:3, 1646:6 programmable [2] -1647:22, 1647:23 progression [1] - 1710:3 pronounced [1] - 1687:44 proof [2] - 1673:26, 1673:29 propagate [1] - 1715:43 propagated [3] - 1715:9, 1715:27, 1719:14 propagates [1] - 1715:34 propagation [1] - 1715:33 proper [1] - 1711:23

Transcript produced by Epiq

properly [1] - 1710:22 proportion [3] - 1667:44, 1668:11, 1716:14 proportionally [1] - 1666:8 proposed [1] - 1644:45 proposition [1] - 1689:35 provided [5] - 1645:7, 1645:36. 1645:41. 1706:46, 1707:3 providing [1] - 1645:13 proximity [1] - 1673:47 pull [1] - 1708:17 pulled [1] - 1708:20 pump [2] - 1646:19, 1646:22 pumps [1] - 1646:18 PUR [9] - 1671:5. 1671:9. 1671:13, 1671:21, 1690:19, 1690:29, 1690:32, 1691:5, 1691:37 pure [1] - 1659:1 purge [1] - 1646:19 purity [1] - 1706:2 purpose [6] - 1645:47, 1651:24, 1651:25, 1654:12, 1654:42, 1685:27 purposes [8] - 1659:43, 1695:11, 1697:29, 1699:38, 1702:2, 1705:12, 1708:9, 1708.18 push [1] - 1719:17 pushes [1] - 1646:22 pushing [1] - 1648:46 put [8] - 1664:34, 1672:8, 1673:41, 1676:16, 1697:17, 1713:3, 1715:10, 1716:27 pyrolyse [1] - 1712:5 pyrolysis [2] - 1718:42, 1718:46

Q

QLD [1] - 1643:37 qualifications [1] -1644:29 quantities [2] - 1652:38, 1660:37 quantity [1] - 1651:26 quarter [1] - 1680:3 QUEENSLAND [1] -1643.11 Queensland [1] - 1645:18 questions [14] - 1692:36, 1692:45, 1703:1, 1703:5, 1714:9, 1714:13, 1714:17, 1714.21 1714.44 1715:1, 1715:8, 1715:17, 1716:39, 1719:29 quick [1] - 1702:37 quicker [2] - 1656:12,

1666.47 quickly [3] - 1669:1, 1673:42, 1717:36 quintessential [1] - 1694:4 quite [6] - 1646:39, 1656:32, 1673:14, 1707:42, 1713:47, 1719:26 quote [1] - 1694:33 R **R70** [6] - 1700:35, 1700:36, 1700:42, 1701:6, 1701:8, 1701:14 radiate [1] - 1716:29 raised [2] - 1647:46, 1712:12 raising [1] - 1646:1 range [2] - 1686:7, 1696:43 ranges [2] - 1657:31, 1715.41 rapid [1] - 1684:26 rapidly [2] - 1702:30, 1702:36 rate [1] - 1717:26 rated [2] - 1654:33, 1654:38 rates [2] - 1712:37, 1713:14 rather [2] - 1658:37, 1691:6 ratio [60] - 1658:26, 1658:28, 1658:41, 1658:44, 1659:4, 1659:11, 1659:44, 1660:2, 1660:3, 1660:11, 1660:21, 1660:26, 1660:33, 1660:36, 1661:24, 1661:32, 1661:34, 1661:44, 1662:11, 1662:19. 1663:29. 1663:33, 1663:38, 1664:46, 1668:14, 1669:27, 1670:25, 1670:39, 1670:42, 1670:46. 1678:26. 1678.28 1678.35 1678:41, 1678:42, 1678:45, 1679:2, 1696:37, 1696:38, 1696:45, 1697:1, 1702:6, 1702:7, 1702:12, 1702:13, 1702:30, 1702:47, 1703:1, 1703:15, 1710:38, 1710:45,

1702:5, 1714:29, 1718:8 raw [12] - 1658:8, 1658:17, 1658:23, 1666:13, 1668:4, 1671:4, 1679:15, 1681:6, 1681:24, 1682:42, 1703:29. 1703:30 Ray [1] - 1667:11 re [2] - 1675:5, 1716:34 re-entered [1] - 1675:5 re-examination [1] -1716:34 reached [5] - 1666:25, 1669:37, 1669:40, 1669:42, 1670:15 react [2] - 1656:12, 1717:36 reacted [1] - 1676:4 reacting [1] - 1659:30 reaction [3] - 1656:3, 1702:34, 1702:36 reactive [6] - 1700:24, 1700:28, 1700:29, 1700:42, 1701:18, 1701.19 reactivity [4] - 1656:25, 1700:37, 1702:19, 1702:29 read [2] - 1696:30, 1708:24 reading [9] - 1677:19, 1677:21, 1678:16, 1684:24, 1684:25, 1686:40, 1687:6, 1690.10 readings [4] - 1647:44, 1649:22, 1678:45, 1691.35 real [19] - 1645:27, 1645:32, 1645:36, 1647:7, 1647:8, 1647:25, 1647:35, 1648:8, 1648:16, 1658:20, 1662:25, 1679:9, 1700:13, 1704:12, 1704:13, 1704:43, 1705:2, 1705:11, 1705:40 real-time [19] - 1645:27, 1645:32, 1645:36, 1647:7, 1647:8, 1647:25, 1647:35, 1648:8, 1648:16, 1658:20. 1662:25. 1679:9, 1700:13, 1704:12, 1704:13, 1704:43, 1705:2, 1705:11, 1705:40 realistic [3] - 1716:46, 1717:1, 1717:10 reality [2] - 1671:47, 1673:28 really [7] - 1652:24, 1656:29, 1665:26, 1672:15, 1693:2, 1695:28, 1697:45 rear [2] - 1650:43, 1655:34

reason [4] - 1648:45, 1695:32, 1704:30, 1718.35 reasonable [3] - 1673:46, 1674:1, 1713:27 reasonably [3] - 1678:44, 1694.7 1709.37 reasons [1] - 1702:40 reassessed [2] - 1701:25, 1701:31 recognise [1] - 1651:4 recognised [2] - 1655:42, 1658:6 recognising [1] - 1702:13 recommendation [1] -1699:37 record [3] - 1646:7, 1651:45, 1704:37 recording [1] - 1704:26 records [1] - 1646:1 red [7] - 1648:1, 1652:6, 1655:15, 1669:32, 1670:29. 1672:28. 1674.17 reddy [1] - 1689:2 reddy-brown [1] - 1689:2 reduces [1] - 1709:12 refer [4] - 1654:36, 1655:17, 1667:36, 1692.18 reference [7] - 1649:23, 1659:13, 1659:17, 1659:23, 1661:26, 1663:24, 1670:1 references [1] - 1667:17 referred [3] - 1660:9, 1691:14, 1711:31 referring [2] - 1649:28, 1650:9 reflect [1] - 1669:19 reflected [1] - 1677:36 reflects [1] - 1676:19 refresher [1] - 1679:21 regard [1] - 1695:28 regarded [1] - 1656:44 regarding [1] - 1645:15 region [1] - 1698:7 registered [1] - 1664:15 regular [2] - 1696:4, 1700:12 regularly [1] - 1696:3 regulations [1] - 1647:9 regulator [1] - 1717:34 reissued [1] - 1661:4 reiterate [1] - 1690:20 related [1] - 1645:16 relates [4] - 1681:31, 1693:7, 1702:17, 1708:41 relating [1] - 1659:15 relation [8] - 1667:29, 1676:38, 1697:27, 1704:18, 1714:41, 1717:17, 1718:16, 1719.20 relatively [1] - 1716:19 released [1] - 1657:25

relevant [3] - 1650:17, 1652:27, 1702:44 reliability [3] - 1676:26, 1678:40, 1714:35 reliable [1] - 1678:44 relied [1] - 1717:32 rely [1] - 1703:29 remain [1] - 1701:34 remainder [1] - 1717:5 remaining [2] - 1684:46, 1685:7 remains [1] - 1710:24 remarkable [1] - 1683:43 remember [8] - 1661:10, 1661:40, 1668:25, 1676.43 1694.12 1717:46, 1718:28 reminder [1] - 1671:37 remote [1] - 1661:17 remove [1] - 1684:43 removed [1] - 1688:39 report [31] - 1669:8, 1675:14, 1683:34, 1690:11. 1690:28. 1691:10, 1691:11, 1691:20, 1691:27, 1691:30, 1691:34, 1692:13, 1692:18, 1693:28, 1694:21, 1696:30. 1704:11. 1707:19, 1707:46, 1708:9, 1708:21, 1709:37, 1710:1, 1710:8, 1710:22, 1710:30, 1710:31, 1711:30, 1712:8, 1718:30, 1719:24 reported [11] - 1667:45, 1685:7, 1687:29, 1687:30, 1711:20, 1715:11, 1715:17, 1715:19. 1715:21. 1715:29, 1716:28 reporting [8] - 1684:14, 1684:31, 1687:21, 1689:26, 1703:40, 1703:43, 1716:16 reports [3] - 1650:5, 1655:17, 1690:27 represent [1] - 1698:2 representative [2] -1674:42, 1674:44 reprocess [1] - 1707:22 reprocessing [1] -1707:24 required [6] - 1650:20, 1656:2. 1656:6. 1691:6. 1697:41, 1719:34 requires [1] - 1676:14 requiring [1] - 1665:5 rescue [1] - 1656:15 research [2] - 1644:18, 1644:21 resemble [1] - 1718:43 resin [2] - 1671:21. 1690:23 resistance [2] - 1654:37,

-.17/03/2021 (18)-

1710:47, 1711:10,

1711:24, 1714:30,

1714:33, 1714:36,

1718:24, 1718:32

ratios [11] - 1647:44,

1655:31, 1658:8,

1658:24, 1666:21,

1666:22, 1669:3,

Transcript produced by Epiq

1660:25, 1660:29

1654:38 resolve [1] - 1695:46 resonates [1] - 1699:23 respect [5] - 1648:34, 1668:2, 1668:14, 1668:19, 1678:12 respond [2] - 1666:1, 1666:17 responding [1] - 1697:17 responds [2] - 1657:27, 1689:31 response [5] - 1645:15, 1663:13, 1675:39, 1676:6, 1697:21 result [5] - 1693:7, 1695:37, 1711:13, 1712:6, 1715:28 results [7] - 1671:30, 1685:25, 1693:8, 1696:42, 1697:7, 1699:30. 1707:32 resume [1] - 1720:2 retains [1] - 1656:11 retreat [4] - 1694:22, 1708:29, 1709:6, 1710:10 retreated [1] - 1708:34 return [8] - 1663:21, 1665:24, 1667:29, 1668:39, 1691:46, 1719:21, 1719:25, 1719.34 revealed [1] - 1663:45 review [2] - 1683:35, 1698:28 reviewed [3] - 1683:34, 1690:26, 1690:27 reviews [2] - 1700:12, 1700.17 rich [1] - 1683:45 richest [1] - 1664:35 right-hand [3] - 1659:20, 1712:25, 1713:35 rise [3] - 1675:4, 1687:15, 1688:26 rises [2] - 1675:13, 1675:14 rising [1] - 1678:5 risk [4] - 1647:30, 1647:31, 1700:5 risk-based [1] - 1647:31 risks [1] - 1697:14 roadway [2] - 1652:39, 1655:1 roadways [1] - 1659:30 rock [1] - 1693:21 role [3] - 1645:12, 1645:13, 1645:24 roof [1] - 1690:14 room [13] - 1647:40, 1647:47, 1648:26, 1648:28, 1649:19, 1665:47. 1694:18. 1706:22, 1707:31, 1716:46. 1717:1. 1717:3. 1717:15 roughly [2] - 1677:27,

1679:23 RSH.019.001.0574 [1] -1645:10 RSH.019.001.0583 [1] -1708:19 RSHQ [1] - 1645:19 rule [1] - 1702:15 run [3] - 1646:14, 1646:16, 1717:7 runaway [3] - 1695:21, 1695:43, 1717:24 running [4] - 1680:45, 1680:46, 1691:46, 1696:7 runs [2] - 1646:46, 1716:31 S safe [2] - 1664:41, 1700:6 Safegas [23] - 1645:38, 1645:45, 1645:46, 1646:7, 1647:36, 1648:9, 1648:12, 1658:16, 1662:29, 1662:31, 1662:38, 1668:45, 1669:9, 1676:33, 1678:29, 1689:3, 1689:13, 1689:23, 1706:30, 1706:33, 1706:37, 1707:3, 1711:8 Safety [1] - 1643:15 safety [3] - 1644:18, 1644:21, 1717:27 sample [28] - 1646:20, 1646:21, 1646:23, 1646:35, 1646:43, 1648:44, 1648:46, 1649:6, 1649:21, 1649:23, 1649:40, 1649:44, 1649:45, 1664:29, 1664:42, 1674:41, 1676:15, 1676:17, 1676:18, 1676:19, 1676:20, 1687:9, 1694:14, 1694:17, 1711:12, 1711:13. 1715:22 samples [14] - 1649:13, 1649:15, 1649:32, 1649:47, 1664:24, 1685:2, 1685:41, 1685:42, 1690:7, 1690:8. 1704:14. 1706:5, 1706:6, 1706:7 sampling [5] - 1652:45, 1675:17, 1699:42, 1699:43, 1704:26 satisfied [1] - 1683:39 Saul [1] - 1692:43 saved [1] - 1697:34 saw [7] - 1662:47, 1686:14, 1687:20, 1708:45. 1709:31. 1710:7, 1711:37 SC [1] - 1643:26 _ 17/03/2021 (18)_

SCADA [1] - 1645:43 scale [3] - 1688:4, 1700:25, 1713:19 scatter [1] - 1678:46 scattergram [1] - 1678:47 scenario [1] - 1715:26 scenarios [1] - 1657:21 schedule [1] - 1719:35 Science [1] - 1644:24 screen [6] - 1648:1, 1648:2, 1651:8, 1658:39, 1669:33, 1670:5 se [1] - 1689:14 seal [23] - 1649:23, 1649:24, 1653:1, 1654:13, 1654:22, 1654:40, 1667:30, 1672:11, 1672:29, 1672:37, 1672:47, 1673:29, 1673:36, 1673:37, 1673:38, 1673:41, 1673:47, 1674:14, 1677:10, 1677:24, 1678:7, 1678:23, 1710:40 sealed [2] - 1718:2, 1718:3 seals [19] - 1650:35, 1652:14. 1653:45. 1653:47, 1654:42, 1655:33, 1665:34, 1671:34, 1671:38, 1671:44, 1672:4, 1672:21, 1673:24, 1673:31, 1674:4, 1676:20, 1676:32, 1676:38, 1678:40 seam [4] - 1690:31, 1698:8, 1700:23, 1718:17 seamgas [5] - 1662:15, 1662:16, 1662:17, 1718:19 Sean [2] - 1648:42, 1719.43 seated [1] - 1695:6 second [4] - 1662:44, 1671:5, 1709:33, 1717:17 second-guess [1] - 1671:5 seconds [1] - 1647:20 sectional [1] - 1651:25 see [87] - 1648:26, 1651:8, 1651:10, 1652:5, 1652:15, 1653:27, 1653:45, 1654:21, 1654:29, 1655:21, 1656:20, 1656:25, 1656:33. 1657:22. 1658:39, 1663:28, 1663:41, 1664:3, 1666:28, 1667:5, 1667:19, 1668:17, 1669:13, 1669:14, 1670:46, 1672:15, 1672:46, 1674:23, 1674:28, 1674:36,

1675:35, 1676:5, 1677:36, 1678:46, 1680:25, 1680:27, 1680:33, 1680:34, 1681:35, 1681:39, 1682:7, 1682:12, 1683:16. 1684:22. 1684:23, 1684:26, 1684:47, 1685:8, 1685:14, 1686:13, 1686:17, 1686:19, 1686:20, 1686:43, 1686:44. 1687:18. 1687:34, 1688:42, 1689:27, 1689:30, 1690:43, 1691:41, 1692:8, 1692:9, 1692:16. 1692:21. 1693:34, 1695:10, 1695:44, 1697:17, 1699:13, 1703:16, 1704:24, 1706:1, 1707:31, 1709:36, 1713:20, 1713:26, 1713:36, 1713:39, 1713:47, 1715:11, 1715:16, 1718:38, 1719.39 seeing [7] - 1682:46, 1690:2, 1693:30, 1693:45. 1699:30. 1711:6, 1714:1 seeking [1] - 1718:44 Segas [5] - 1646:3, 1646:5, 1646:9, 1668:47, 1706:40 segueing [1] - 1702:47 self [2] - 1691:7, 1696:21 self-heating [1] - 1691:7 self-sustaining [1] -1696:21 semi [1] - 1707:36 semi-automated [1] -1707:36 sensor [15] - 1647:42, 1648:16, 1651:14, 1651:21, 1651:24, 1651:30, 1652:20, 1652:31, 1652:32, 1658:20, 1659:15, 1662:47, 1668:40, 1669:10 sensors [10] - 1647:25, 1647:35, 1648:23, 1651:11, 1651:14, 1651:39, 1651:47, 1660:42, 1662:25 sent [2] - 1647:14, 1648.24 separate [1] - 1690:18 separation [1] - 1649:1 sequence [3] - 1646:22, 1647:18, 1686:17 series [4] - 1648:47, 1687:35, 1709:39, 1710:32 serious [3] - 1645:20,

session [1] - 1708:39 set [19] - 1648:12, 1648.31 1662.3 1665:40, 1676:34, 1676:36, 1676:42, 1677:8. 1677:15. 1677:18, 1682:36, 1698:44, 1698:46, 1699:3, 1699:18, 1699:24, 1704:10, 1704:20, 1706:21 sets [4] - 1650:15, 1709:44, 1710:23, 1712:26 setting [2] - 1646:1, 1717:18 seven [1] - 1644:33 several [3] - 1646:41, 1659:35, 1673:21 shaft [2] - 1654:10, 1659:20 shield [1] - 1689:30 shields [1] - 1689:38 shift [2] - 1690:9 shoot [1] - 1695:16 SHORT [1] - 1680:5 short [1] - 1665:18 show [12] - 1651:38, 1652:45, 1668:46, 1671:37, 1674:11, 1683:38, 1684:7, 1688:46, 1689:22, 1691:38, 1710:14, 1718:10 showed [6] - 1686:1, 1687:11, 1703:14, 1709:32, 1710:16 showing [7] - 1651:5, 1656:21, 1678:4, 1688:14, 1689:14, 1691:39, 1697:7 shown [4] - 1671:43, 1675:11, 1688:40, 1709:31 shows [13] - 1652:47, 1653:33, 1654:3, 1655:14, 1670:25, 1670:35, 1671:45, 1674:13, 1677:27, 1684:9, 1684:36, 1686:10, 1717:31 shut [3] - 1686:10, 1686:14, 1689:25 sic [1] - 1678:9 side [13] - 1647:43, 1650:38, 1650:46, 1651:9, 1653:20, 1659:20, 1672:11, 1672:12, 1672:13, 1672:36, 1673:37, 1673:39, 1713:35 sides [1] - 1709:31 signals [1] - 1697:22 significance [6] - 1655:17, 1666:23, 1670:33, 1670:39, 1676:13,

-14 Transcript produced by Epiq

1681.36 significant [7] - 1647:1, 1647:2, 1660:12, 1661.23 1678.2 1680:32, 1683:16 signs [18] - 1693:34, 1694:21, 1694:23, 1695:45, 1696:30, 1697:23, 1708:26, 1708:40, 1708:42, 1709:11, 1709:22, 1709:32, 1709:45, 1710:4, 1710:7, 1710:8, 1710:24, 1710:26 similar [11] - 1671:33, 1675:7, 1675:11, 1675:21, 1684:10, 1684:36, 1685:2, 1687:35, 1689:27, 1708:46, 1710:11 similarly [1] - 1672:10 simple [3] - 1662:22, 1665:47, 1670:4 simplify [1] - 1707:41 simply [3] - 1662:29, 1696:10, 1712:17 Simtars [20] - 1644:14, 1644:17, 1644:32, 1644:36, 1644:39, 1645:12, 1645:13, 1645:37, 1645:39, 1646:6, 1671:17, 1698:24, 1703:19, 1703:41, 1704:3, 1706:37, 1706:46, 1707:3, 1707:31, 1707:47 site [9] - 1698:40, 1702:41, 1703:28, 1706:22, 1707:30, 1707:32. 1716:44, 1717:10, 1717:12 site-specific [3] - 1698:40, 1702:41, 1703:28 sitting [3] - 1680:27, 1693:18, 1714:2 situated [1] - 1684:30 situation [2] - 1665:7, 1699:47 situations [1] - 1698:47 skid [3] - 1680:19, 1680:21, 1704:13 skids [2] - 1705:40, 1706.23 skilled [1] - 1664:39 slide [23] - 1650:12, 1651:3, 1651:4, 1651:38, 1652:5, 1652:45, 1654:3, 1662:3, 1670:25, 1671:37, 1674:12, 1675:21, 1677:23, 1680:15, 1681:28, 1684:20, 1685:34, 1686:16, 1715:15, 1715:20 slides [2] - 1651:46,

1675:19 slight [6] - 1670:43, 1670:44, 1681:38, 1683:1, 1691:40, 1692:23 slightly [6] - 1675:8, 1682:27, 1689:4. 1689:5, 1693:29, 1693:44 slowly [1] - 1655:39 small [21] - 1655:23, 1658:37, 1660:39, 1661:18, 1663:5, 1663:7. 1665:25. 1670:41, 1675:12, 1675:14, 1676:28, 1684:23, 1687:40, 1688:17, 1689:36, 1692:2, 1692:3, 1703:46, 1712:10, 1719:22 smaller [1] - 1647:19 software [4] - 1668:47, 1706:23, 1707:9, 1707:43 solenoid [1] - 1646:18 someone [6] - 1649:36, 1664:27, 1664:38, 1698:17, 1705:6, 1717.14 sometimes [4] - 1659:32. 1660:22. 1687:6. 1695:21 somewhere [7] - 1662:8, 1673:46, 1674:24, 1680:28, 1682:7, 1698:34, 1719:9 sorry [25] - 1644:21, 1650:40, 1654:7, 1655:5, 1656:41, 1659:45, 1660:28, 1660:29, 1661:2, 1661:3, 1662:35, 1665:30, 1666:33, 1667:24, 1671:8, 1673:14, 1676:43, 1677:47. 1684:18. 1685:10, 1696:38, 1697:20, 1702:33, 1712:22, 1718:28 sort [9] - 1657:43, 1659:30, 1664:13, 1668.22 1675.11 1684:17, 1692:9, 1698:33, 1717:31 sorts [1] - 1699:43 sounds [1] - 1719:39 source [6] - 1651:46, 1666:43, 1691:1, 1701:30, 1704:6, 1715:34 sources [5] - 1704:9, 1704:11, 1704:31, 1704:33, 1709:38 south [1] - 1718:2 South [3] - 1656:15, 1663:8, 1718:3

speaking [1] - 1658:15 speaks [1] - 1690:47 specific [10] - 1657:44, 1658:10, 1658:11, 1658:12, 1662:7, 1698:40, 1702:41, 1703:28, 1710:28, 1717:41 speculation [1] - 1667:16 spike [11] - 1680:28, 1682:9, 1682:12, 1682:13, 1686:17, 1686:20, 1686:38, 1687:14, 1692:16, 1711:37, 1712:15 spoken [2] - 1649:9, 1665:34 spontaneous [45] -1645:15, 1645:28, 1647:4, 1654:14, 1655:32. 1655:35. 1655:37, 1655:43, 1659:29, 1666:16, 1684:18, 1684:33, 1689:29, 1690:19, 1690:24, 1690:27, 1690.30 1693.1 1693:2, 1693:7, 1694:21, 1694:38, 1696:25, 1696:31, 1697:14, 1697:27, 1698:28, 1698:30, 1698:36, 1698:43, 1700:12, 1700:30, 1702:34, 1705:13, 1705:17, 1708:27, 1708:40, 1709:19, 1710:5, 1713:2, 1717:30, 1718:22, 1718:25 spontaneously[1] -1656:2 sprayed [1] - 1673:30 spw [2] - 1645:36, 1645:39 square" [1] - 1708:33 stabilising [1] - 1708:31 stage [1] - 1719:38 stages [1] - 1697:9 stand [1] - 1719:33 standard [3] - 1660:45, 1699:46, 1717:34 Standard [1] - 1661:3 start [11] - 1645:45, 1650:11, 1665:45, 1674:23. 1674:36. 1677:32, 1693:30, 1693:43, 1693:45, 1710:4, 1711:5 started [2] - 1656:44, 1719:3 starting [4] - 1651:15, 1658:13, 1689:33, 1693:38 starts [3] - 1680:35, 1689:32, 1708:32 state [7] - 1648:2, 1648:3, 1652:23, 1660:1,

1663:28, 1667:5, 1667:10 statement [1] - 1665:8 statements [10] - 1665:5, 1665:7, 1666:28, 1666:31, 1666:34, 1667:19, 1667:24, 1667:28, 1667:32, 1667:33 station [2] - 1644:18, 1644:22 steeply [1] - 1677:32 step [16] - 1680:36, 1680:39, 1680:43, 1680:45, 1681:10, 1681:11, 1681:12, 1681:16, 1684:23, 1684:37, 1690:28, 1691:15, 1691:40, 1692:23 step-heat [2] - 1690:28, 1691:15 still [4] - 1660:38, 1667:31, 1681:38, 1699:23 stint [1] - 1644:33 stipulated [1] - 1660:46 stopping [1] - 1675:34 story [1] - 1658:23 strategies [1] - 1675:47 stream [9] - 1664:22, 1664:24, 1664:29, 1664:33, 1666:36, 1666:39, 1689:43, 1690:4, 1719:25 Street [1] - 1643:37 strengths [1] - 1705:8 structure [1] - 1699:46 studies [2] - 1673:20 stuff [1] - 1707:13 subconclusions [2] -1709:40, 1710:33 subsidence [1] - 1708:32 substantial [2] - 1664:17, 1674:23 substantially [1] - 1698:9 sudden [5] - 1674:28, 1674:34, 1683:7, 1684:9, 1692:10 sufficient [2] - 1656:3, 1656:32 suggest [2] - 1663:33, 1716:17 suggested [2] - 1663:45, 1711:10 suggesting [4] - 1664:12, 1671:26, 1691:4, 1692:26 suggestions [1] - 1717:39 suggests [3] - 1693:12, 1697:22 suite [2] - 1682:41, 1705:6 supplied [3] - 1645:34, 1656:13, 1691:30 supplies [2] - 1654:47, 1655.5 supports [1] - 1703:23 supposed [1] - 1707:38

surface [13] - 1646:19, 1646:21, 1646:31, 1647:15, 1649:33, 1649:34, 1655:3, 1676:19, 1679:23, 1700:5, 1700:6, 1704:38. 1705:24 susceptible [1] - 1700:29 sustaining [1] - 1696:21 switches [1] - 1646:22 sworn [1] - 1644:5 system [28] - 1645:42, 1645:43, 1646:12, 1647:3, 1647:8, 1647:15, 1648:6, 1648:19, 1648:21, 1648:22, 1648:24, 1648:45, 1649:16, 1649:46, 1658:16, 1661:26, 1669:9, 1676:33, 1682:36, 1685:37, 1699:41, 1700:14, 1704:26, 1704:31, 1705:41, 1706:37, 1710:39 systems [6] - 1646:18, 1648:8, 1668:28, 1675:6, 1696:25, 1708:10

Т

tailgate [14] - 1650:25, 1650:46, 1664:28, 1668:32. 1668:39. 1669:14, 1669:15, 1672:33, 1690:14, 1690:16, 1691:46, 1692:7, 1692:14, 1692:16 take-off [1] - 1695:20 talks [3] - 1659:4, 1660:31, 1707:19 TARP [50] - 1663:12, 1663:20, 1665:23, 1665:34, 1665:41, 1666:17, 1666:24, 1666:30, 1666:36. 1666:39, 1667:2, 1667:36, 1667:39, 1669:26, 1669:30, 1669:31, 1669:36, 1669:38, 1670:35, 1670:42, 1672:39, 1678:35, 1680:37, 1681:41, 1685:18, 1685:20, 1697:16, 1697:17, 1697:21, 1697:27, 1698:29, 1699:7. 1699:9. 1699:13, 1699:22, 1699:28, 1699:31, 1699:39, 1699:40, 1699:44, 1699:47, 1700:12, 1703:2, 1703:12, 1712:36, 1713:40, 1716:40,

.17/03/2021 (18)

Transcript produced by Epiq

two [20] - 1646:21,

1717:18, 1718:25 TARPs [16] - 1658:11, 1663:12, 1663:16, 1665:46, 1667:30, 1696:26, 1697:15, 1698:31, 1698:38, 1698:44, 1699:24, 1713:41, 1714:41, 1716:45, 1718:15, 1718:33 technical [4] - 1644:28, 1645:13, 1665:42, 1667:16 technicians [1] - 1685:43 technique [2] - 1660:5, 1705:27 techniques [3] - 1665:11, 1696:43, 1698:5 technology [1] - 1701:24 temperature [18] -1657:39, 1660:31, 1661:46, 1663:34, 1693:18, 1693:21, 1693:29, 1694:11, 1694:32, 1695:22, 1695:33, 1695:39, 1696:7. 1696:43. 1697:8, 1706:2, 1713:8 temperatures [9] - 1658:3, 1661:36, 1693:38, 1693:40, 1693:45, 1693:47, 1695:28, 1712:9 tend [3] - 1647:12, 1649:10, 1716:8 tepid [1] - 1693:38 term [9] - 1646:2, 1646:8, 1685:12, 1688:44, 1689:6, 1697:42, 1713:20, 1713:21, 1713:29 terminating [1] - 1672:4 termination [2] - 1646:44, 1654.17 terminologies [1] - 1695:5 terminology [2] - 1691:39, 1695:10 terms [33] - 1652:37, 1653:47, 1655:18, 1656:6, 1657:37, 1660:41, 1660:42, 1661:23, 1661:42, 1666:21, 1666:22, 1666:30, 1668:1. 1668:23, 1675:25, 1679:17, 1680:33, 1682:46, 1684:7, 1687:20, 1688:46, 1691:21, 1692:32, 1698:2. 1698:15. 1698:38, 1701:13, 1703:34, 1703:41, 1710:20, 1710:46, 1711:44, 1714:1 Terry [1] - 1643:26 test [18] - 1647:25, 1647:26, 1657:38,

1676:8, 1676:11, 1676:22, 1676:28, 1693:41, 1693:46, 1700:36, 1700:42, 1700:45, 1701:6, 1701:9. 1701:14. 1701:29. 1701:30 tested [1] - 1676:14 testing [16] - 1644:18, 1644:21, 1657:43, 1660:10, 1662:5, 1671:14, 1671:23, 1690:19, 1690:20, 1690:27, 1693:35, 1697:37, 1700:11, 1701:24, 1701:26, 1703:7 testing's [1] - 1671:24 tests [7] - 1657:29, 1657:47, 1698:18, 1700:32, 1701:22, 1701:24, 1701:34 textbook [10] - 1660:13, 1662:2, 1662:4, 1662:11, 1663:32, 1663:42, 1703:6, 1703:7, 1703:10, 1703:30 **THE** [20] - 1644:1, 1654:7, 1673:3, 1679:44, 1680:3, 1680:7, 1692:38, 1702:32, 1714:7, 1714:11, 1714:15, 1714:19, 1714:23, 1714:47, 1716:36, 1719:31, 1719:37, 1719:41, 1720:1, 1720:4 themselves [3] - 1668:24, 1673:24, 1708:5 theory [1] - 1713:3 there'd [1] - 1681:4 thereabouts [9] - 1650:28, 1656:8, 1670:18, 1674:25, 1678:18, 1682:4, 1687:36, 1713:5, 1715:42 thermal [2] - 1656:32, 1717:24 they've [1] - 1653:9 thinking [1] - 1682:24 thorough [1] - 1697:12 three [6] - 1650:34, 1650:35. 1651:10. 1699:13, 1699:28, 1719:16 throughout [2] - 1646:28, 1672:28 throughs [2] - 1652:14, 1653:46 thumb [1] - 1702:15 THURSDAY [1] - 1720:5 timber [1] - 1704:4 timings [1] - 1707:27 **TO** [1] - 1720:5 today [1] - 1656:21 together [1] - 1664:34

tolerance [1] - 1661:8 tomorrow [3] - 1719:44, 1719:46, 1720:2 took [1] - 1649:21 tool [2] - 1660:33, 1668:14 tools [1] - 1705:36 top [5] - 1658:40, 1662:33, 1668:25, 1672:43, 1710:32 topic [1] - 1690:18 total [4] - 1666:4, 1668:19, 1687:22, 1718:36 totally [1] - 1649:46 touch [1] - 1669:23 towards [2] - 1674:24, 1681:11 tracks [1] - 1679:2 traditional [1] - 1658:46 traffic [1] - 1648:6 training [4] - 1664:34, 1707:3, 1707:30, 1707:39 travelled [1] - 1719:10 travelling [1] - 1652:38 trend [27] - 1666:14, 1666:17, 1666:23, 1666:26, 1670:39, 1678:5, 1680:32, 1680:34, 1681:2, 1681:39, 1682:21, 1682:23, 1682:27, 1682:46, 1683:1, 1683:4, 1684:7, 1685:29, 1689:4, 1689:5, 1689:14, 1689:27, 1689:31, 1705:37, 1712:43, 1713:47 trending [7] - 1646:2, 1646:7, 1646:8, 1683:20, 1689:6, 1690:2, 1697:43 trends [22] - 1670:38, 1679:40, 1679:45, 1685:12, 1685:33, 1688:44, 1688:46, 1704:34, 1705:8, 1712:31, 1712:32, 1712:34, 1713:14, 1713:18, 1713:20, 1713:29, 1716:39, 1716:47, 1717:2, 1717:11, 1717:23, 1718:27 trigger [27] - 1658:7, 1663:12. 1663:20. 1663:38, 1663:39, 1665:6, 1665:8, 1665:11, 1665:14, 1665:18, 1666:17, 1666:24, 1667:39, 1669:26, 1669:36, 1670:15, 1670:42, 1673:1, 1673:8, 1680:37, 1685:18, 1685:19, 1712:36,

1717:45, 1718:3 triggered [3] - 1669:45, 1690:24, 1718:33 triggers [10] - 1648:12, 1664:3, 1664:44, 1665:36, 1665:40, 1667:20. 1667:34. 1670:35, 1681:40, 1716:41 Trost [1] - 1714:15 TROST [1] - 1714:17 true [1] - 1660:23 try [7] - 1660:30, 1661:26, 1671:5, 1680:13, 1685:12, 1685:13, 1695:5 trying [10] - 1654:26, 1658:47, 1660:20, 1660:24, 1676:18, 1686:12, 1696:24, 1696:44, 1700:41, 1711:22 tube [75] - 1645:27, 1645:31. 1645:35. 1646:11, 1646:12, 1646:20, 1646:35, 1646:36. 1646:39. 1646:44, 1647:3, 1647:35, 1648:8, 1648:15, 1649:15, 1649:33, 1650:15, 1650:20, 1650:24, 1650:34, 1650:38, 1650:42, 1650:46, 1651:18, 1651:29, 1652:47, 1653:33, 1653:36, 1653:39, 1653:42, 1653:47, 1654:1, 1654:5, 1654:9, 1654:12, 1654:17, 1654:22, 1658:16, 1659:13, 1659:17, 1659:19, 1659:22, 1660:6, 1661:25, 1661:26, 1662:24, 1668:41. 1669:17. 1669:42, 1669:43, 1669:46, 1669:47, 1670:1, 1670:10, 1670:12, 1670:14, 1671:42, 1672:3, 1672:15, 1675:6, 1676:10, 1676:16, 1677:2, 1678:12, 1678:23. 1688:35. 1688:47, 1691:35, 1704:12, 1705:22, 1710:38 tubes [9] - 1646:13, 1646:27, 1650:17, 1654:5, 1654:9, 1669:26, 1670:26, 1674:4, 1676:14 tunnel [1] - 1657:13 twenty [1] - 1694:7 twice [3] - 1690:9, 1704:37, 1704:38 twice-daily [1] - 1704:37

1646:46, 1647:20, 1651:38, 1654:4, 1654:36, 1658:39, 1659:39, 1665:6, 1665:10, 1667:34, 1669:19. 1669:26. 1670:26, 1671:44, 1679:31, 1695:2, 1715:12, 1716:23, 1719:16 two-minute [1] - 1646:21 twofold [1] - 1705:27 type [1] - 1699:42 types [2] - 1660:42, 1696:36 typically [3] - 1646:14, 1656:16, 1694:31 U **UK** [2] - 1645:4, 1658:26 ultimately [2] - 1677:11, 1700:30 unassisted [1] - 1693:2 under [3] - 1669:23, 1705:24, 1717:14 underestimate [1] -1660:22 underestimated [1] -1676:30 underestimation [1] -1714:32 underground [19] -1644:43, 1646:14, 1646:16. 1646:17. 1649:16. 1649:37. 1657:22, 1676:16, 1693:18, 1694:15, 1696:26, 1703:46, 1704:5, 1704:12, 1704:24, 1705:2, 1705.12 1712.17 underpins [2] - 1699:22, 1701:24 understood [2] - 1679:22, 1685:35 undertaken [2] - 1671:14, 1690:20 undertook [1] - 1688:34 undoubtedly [1] - 1666:22 unexpected [1] - 1710:2 United [1] - 1644:29 unknown [1] - 1675:36 unless [2] - 1657:22, 1692:3 unlikely [4] - 1668:16, 1672:1, 1675:42, 1677:19 unreactive [2] - 1700:24, 1701.5 unreliable [1] - 1711:16 unusual [2] - 1683:43, 1696:6 **up** [34] - 1644:20, 1645:11, 1652:31, 1652:32,

_.17/03/2021 (18)_____

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1712:37, 1713:40,

| 1654:8, 1656:36, | variation [2] - 1660:2, | weaknesses [1] - 1705:7 | 1647:31 |
|------------------------------|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1656:40, 1661:2, | 1692:9 | Wednesday [1] - 1643:41 | zoom [3] - 1707:38, |
| 1664:20, 1666:8, | variety [1] - 1715:35 | weekly [2] - 1677:4 | 1707:44, 1713:25 |
| 1670:40, 1677:28, | various [10] - 1646:28, | weird [1] - 1699:8 | |
| 1678:42, 1680:12, | 1646:32, 1650:15, | wells [45] - 1645:40, | |
| 1682:37, 1683:23, | 1652:14, 1652:45, | 1648:19, 1648:23, | |
| 1684:8, 1686:24, | 1678:26, 1679:21, | 1649:43, 1649:44, | |
| 1689:4, 1689:38, | 1701:22, 1704:9, | 1649:45, 1650:1, | |
| 1689:42, 1695:16, | 1704:11 | 1652:47, 1653:3, | |
| 1696:7, 1698:11, | vary [1] - 1709:7 | 1653:8, 1653:10, | |
| 1699:18, 1699:24, | vast [1] - 1710:14 | 1653:19, 1667:2, | |
| 1701:13, 1702:32, | velocity [3] - 1651:21, | 1667:45, 1668:2, | |
| 1708:17, 1717:43, | 1651:24, 1662:47 | 1668:20, 1668:23, | |
| 1718:26, 1718:36, | ventilation [9] - 1645:16, | 1668:26, 1679:10, | |
| 1719:24 | 1651:42, 1652:5, | 1679:15, 1679:22, | |
| upward [5] - 1680:34, | 1652:9, 1652:18, | 1681:23, 1682:27, | |
| 1682:27, 1689:5, | 1654:46, 1660:37, | 1688:35, 1689:10, | |
| 1689:14 | 1665:42, 1717:13 | 1689:25, 1689:26, | |
| upwards [3] - 1680:45, | ventilation-related [1] - | 1689:43, 1704:45, | |
| 1682:23, 1695:23 | 1645:16 | 1705:41, 1711:32, | |
| useful [5] - 1651:26, | verbatim [1] - 1708:20 | 1712:8, 1713:42, | |
| 1660:33, 1668:14, | version [1] - 1670:4 | 1713:44, 1715:12, | |
| 1678:41, 1712:44 | vertical [2] - 1653:8, | 1715:33, 1716:23, | |
| usefulness [1] - 1663:4 | 1653:10 | 1718:38, 1719:7, | |
| utilised [2] - 1645:42, | | 1719:8, 1719:15, | |
| 1646:7 | vertically [1] - 1677:42 | 1719:16, 1719:21, | |
| 10-0.7 | via [2] - 1645:34, 1647:14 | 1719:27 | |
| V | - vicinity [5] - 1674:25, | whereas [1] - 1660:31 | |
| v | 1684:13, 1684:29, | whereby [3] - 1655:45, | |
| | 1712:5, 1716:18 | 1657:38, 1715:26 | |
| vacuum [1] - 1719:26 | Victorian [1] - 1701:17 | whilst [1] - 1658:6 | |
| vagaries [2] - 1659:13, | view [5] - 1654:3, 1664:12, | whole [1] - 1688:32 | |
| 1661:27 | 1664:13, 1666:39, | | |
| valid [6] - 1678:19, | 1667:14 | Wi [1] - 1647:15 | |
| 1678:20, 1678:22, | virgin [1] - 1693:21 | Wi-Fi [1] - 1647:15 | |
| 1699:38, 1702:18, | visual [1] - 1647:40 | wide [1] - 1708:35 | |
| 1710:47 | voice [4] - 1644:20, | Williams [1] - 1667:11 | |
| validated [1] - 1662:5 | 1654:8, 1656:40, | wine [3] - 1706:8, 1706:9, | |
| validating [1] - 1699:30 | 1680:12 | 1706:11 | |
| validity [2] - 1697:6, | volume [1] - 1668:22 | WITHDREW [1] - 1719:41 | |
| 1710:46 | volunteered [1] - 1698:39 | WITNESS [1] - 1719:41 | |
| validly [1] - 1697:2 | VRT [1] - 1703:22 | witness [1] - 1719:43 | |
| value [17] - 1662:7, | | wizard [1] - 1707:9 | |
| 1662:45, 1663:38, | W | WMA.001.002.0009 [1] - | |
| 1663:46, 1667:39, | | - 1710:30 | |
| 1669:31, 1670:15, | | wondering [1] - 1715:25 | |
| 1681:6, 1703:2, 1703:6, | wait [2] - 1666:16, 1691:16 | word [1] - 1655:42 | |
| 1703:7, 1703:10, | waiting [2] - 1673:15, | workers [1] - 1708:14 | |
| 1709:13, 1711:1, | 1673:39 | works [1] - 1649:1 | |
| 1712:37, 1714:32, | Wales [2] - 1656:15, | | _ |
| 1714:37 | 1663:9 | Y | |
| | warm [2] - 1655:39, | - | - |
| values [24] - 1652:42, | 1658:13 | | |
| 1658:17, 1658:23, | warning [1] - 1665:44 | year [1] - 1645:21 | |
| 1660:11, 1660:13, | WAS ^[1] - 1720:4 | years [9] - 1644:34, | |
| 1660:22, 1662:2, | water [4] - 1654:38, | 1644:37, 1657:40, | |
| 1662:4, 1662:11, | 1654:39, 1695:34, | 1657:41, 1658:25, | |
| 1663:32, 1663:42, | 1716:9 | 1693:36, 1694:7, | |
| 1670:7, 1670:8, | Watkinson [10] - 1644:3, | 1700:36, 1701:32 | |
| 1684:10, 1685:18, | 1644:9, 1644:10, | yellow [3] - 1648:2, | |
| 1685:19, 1690:1, | 1654:7, 1680:11, | 1648:6, 1689:23 | |
| 1698:2, 1712:28, | 1692:42, 1702:32, | | 4 |
| 1712:35, 1713:31, | 1716:38, 1719:33, | Z | |
| 1714:38, 1716:45 | 1719:37 | | - |
| valves [1] - 1646:19 | WATKINSON [1] - 1644:5 | | |
| vapours [1] - 1692:13 | wave [1] - 1719:17 | Zealand [1] - 1661:3 | |
| variability [5] - 1670:16, | ways [2] - 1697:13, | zero [2] - 1678:11, | |
| 1684:38, 1685:12, | 1697:35 | 1718:19 | |
| 1685:25, 1702:14 | | zones [2] - 1647:30, | |
| | | ,, | |
| 17/03/3 | 2021 (18) | 17 | |
| . 17/03/2 | 2021 (18) | | - |

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