



Tasmania Department Of Resources and Energy

Division of Mines and Mineral Resources — Report 1991/08

Some Tasmanian coal statistics

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Abstract

The consumption of coal by Tasmanian industry has doubled during the last decade and local coal is now used by virtually all Tasmanian secondary industry as a boiler fuel. The largest users are the paper factories and the cement works, which together use around three-quarters of the Tasmanian coal produced.

Statistics relating to Tasmanian coal consumption and production are given in tabular form, along with an account of coal reserves within the State.

COAL CONSUMPTION ('000 t)

	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90
Cement Works	71	94	77	49	78	87	67	71	81	
Paper Mills	93	100	172	195	200	203	219	218	235	
General Industry	43	73	75	61	67	101	99	119	132	
TOTAL	207	267	324	305	345	391	385	408	448	*438
NSW coal used	10	4	13	12	26	46	26	47	60	*63
Local coal used#	197	263	311	293	319	345	359	361	388	375

1980/81 to 1988/89 from NSW Joint Coal Board statistics

* 1989 calendar year JCB statistics

calculated from total coal used less imported coal.

COAL PRODUCTION ('000 t)

	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90
Raw coal	302	390	557	453	491	502	617	600	632	+597
Saleable coal	208	249	329	280	321	310	294	380	381	+360

1980/81 to 1988/89 from NSW Joint Coal Board statistics

+ 1989/90 financial year, run of mine coal DMMR statistics

* 1989/90 financial year, DMMR statistics

EMPLOYMENT (persons)

	1980/81	1981/82	1982/83	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	1986/87	1987/88	1988/89	1989/90
	135	141	140	138	143	155	150	146	134	136

The patterns of coal consumption, production and employment are shown graphically in Figures 1 and 2.

Figure 1

TASMANIAN COAL PRODUCTION, 1980/81-1989/90

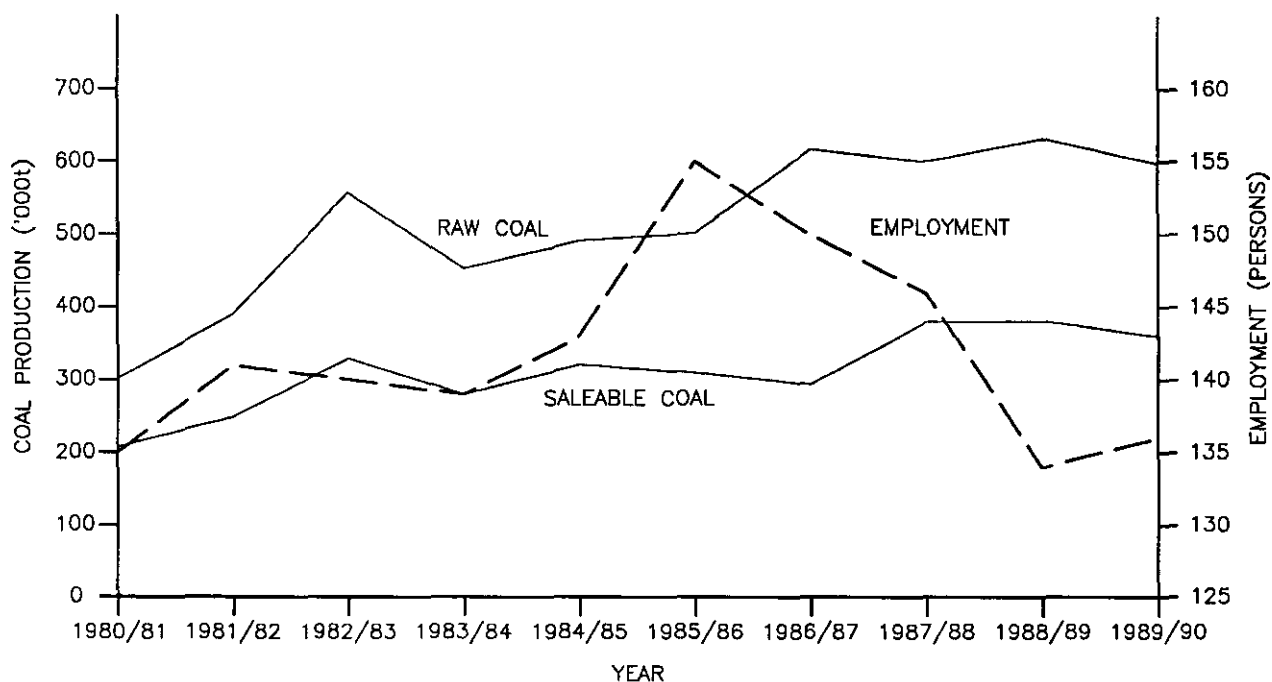
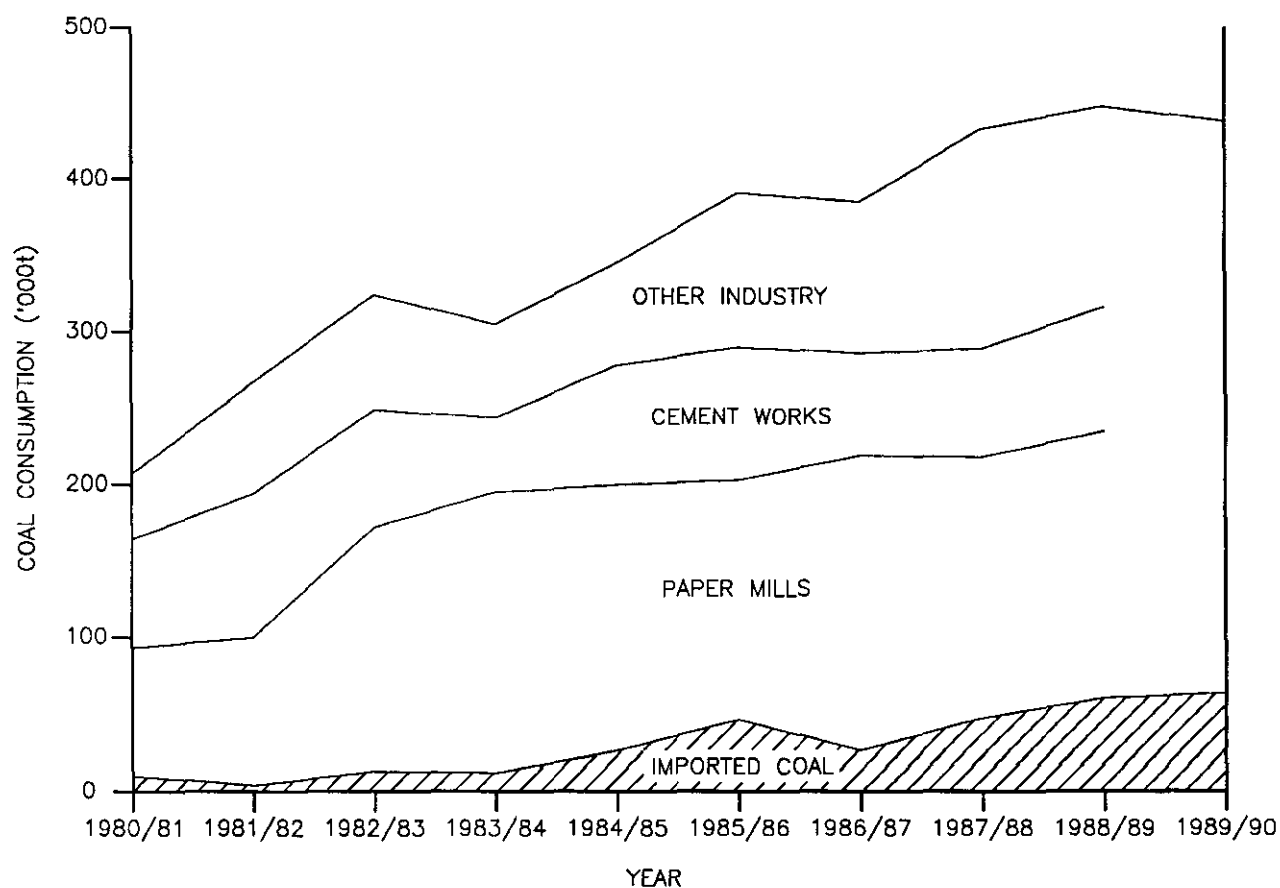


Figure 2

TASMANIAN COAL CONSUMPTION, 1980/81-1989/90



COAL RESERVES

In reporting or calculating coal reserves the Department recommends adherence to Australian Standard 2519-1982: Standing Committee on Coalfield Geology of NSW: Codes for calculating and reporting coal reserves (fourth edition).

A brief summary of the reserve categories of AS2519-1982 is as follows:-

MEASURED RESERVES are those for which the density of observation points is sufficient to give control on quality, quantity, thickness, depth and other relevant conditions, and to allow for both a reliable estimate of the reserves and the planning of their extraction. The standard suggests that the observation points should be spaced no further than one kilometre apart, and in many instances much closer spacing is needed.

INDICATED RESERVES are those for which the density of observation points is sufficient to allow for a realistic estimate of reserves and for which there is a reasonable expectation that the reserves could be raised to the measured category with further information. Observation points should be spaced no further than two kilometres apart.

INFERRED RESERVES are those for which there is a poor cover of information so that only an uncertain estimate of the reserves can be made. Further information will either raise these reserves to a higher category or show that part or all of them does not exist. Quantitative values are not assigned to inferred reserves, other than to indicate the relative size of the deposit within the following ranges:

very large	>10,000 million tonnes
large	100 to 10,000 million tonnes
small	20 to 100 million tonnes
very small	<20 million tonnes

In view of the fact that a large number of extremely small coal deposits occur in Tasmania the Department has adopted a modification of the inferred reserve category. Indications are made in the table where extremely small deposits contain less than 5 million tonnes or less than 1 million tonnes.

STATUS OF (IN SITU) RESERVES

Location	Measured + Indicated (million tonnes)	Inferred (million tonnes)
Mt Nicholas	50	small
Harefield	5	-
Fingal	250	large
Dalmaine	160	large
Douglas River	30	small
Langloh (Hamilton)	10	-
Woodbury	25	-
Merrywood		very small <1
Mt Christie		very small <1
Denison Rivulet		very small <2
Strathblane		very small <1
Moss Glen		very small <1
Catamaran		very small <5
Colebrook		very small <5
York Plains		very small <1
Preolenna		very small <5
Mersey		very small <5
Cygnat		very small <1
Mt Lloyd		very small <2
Kaoota		very small <1
Total	530	

The remainder of areas in which coal is known to occur in Tasmania contain extremely small reserves, or very thin seams which in the current economic climate are not workable.

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Coal figures reported in the 1983/84 JCB Year Book *Black Coal in Australia* (as supplied by the Tasmanian Department of Mines) are: (million tonnes)

Measured and indicated (<i>in situ</i>) (non-coking)	530
Recoverable*	
Open cut	22
Underground	224
TOTAL	246
Marketable# (non-coking)	147
Inferred resources (<i>in situ</i> coal)	large

* derived by taking 50% of the measured and indicated (*in situ*) reserves, minus those thought to be entirely without mining access.

derived by taking 60% of the recoverable reserves.

Reserve figures in the 1989 NSW JCB Year Book are given under new definitions. The source for the figures quoted is the Bureau of Mineral Resources.

The categories of both identified *in situ* resources and identified recoverable resources may be: economic, subeconomic, paramarginal or submarginal, depending on the data available.

The categories relating to Tasmania are:

	Tasmania	Australia (total)
Identified in situ resources (Mt)		
(Economic)	530	71 230
Identified recoverable resources (Mt)		
(Economic)	250	50 776

Firm statistics can only be obtained on individual blocks of coal after a proper feasibility study has been conducted, however, the above figures have been used to give "ball park" figures of the resources.

With the measured and indicated reserves estimated at 530 Mt, and present production (raw coal) at just over half a million tonnes per year, there is little incentive for explorers who hold ground to actively increase the status of other reserves, as there is, at present, no call for greater production. With further exploration no doubt part of the "inferred" category reserves could be firmed up, and taken into the "measured" category.

No attempt has been made to delineate what constitutes "economic recoverable coal" as this depends on such variable factors as the market price which could be obtained, proximity to infrastructure, freight charges or subsidies, as well as constant technological changes. There is the possibility that at some time in the future some coal may possibly be burnt *in situ*, with factories or power plants using the coal sited above the seam, drawing up hot gases and/or circulated (heated) water. This technique is referred to as "in situ gasification". This can enable coal which cannot be extracted by usual means, due to problems of mining access, to be profitably used.

[6 June 1991]