

**F. No. 22-13/2019-IA.III**  
Government of India  
Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change  
(Impact Assessment Division)

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Aliganj, Jorbagh Road  
New Delhi-110 003

Dated: 28<sup>th</sup> August, 2019

**Office Memorandum**

**Sub: Change in conditions stipulated in the Environmental Clearances of Thermal Power Plants and Coal Mines in line with the Fly Ash Notification and subsequent amendments - reg.**

The Environment Impact Assessment (EIA) Notification, 2006 under the Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 mandates the requirement of prior environmental clearance to the projects/activities listed in the schedule to the said Notification. These projects/activities have been categorized under category A or B and require appraisal/and approval by the respective regulatory authorities (MoEF&CC/SEIAAs) at the Central/State level.

2. As per the provisions of the EIA Notification, 2006, read with subsequent amendments, mining of minerals is covered under Category A/B of the Schedule to the EIA Notification, 2006 based on their areal extent, and thus requiring prior environmental clearance from the concerned regulatory authority.

3. Based on the proposals submitted by the project proponent and recommendations of the sectoral Expert Appraisal Committee, mining projects and thermal power plants were granted Environmental Clearance by the Ministry/State Environment Impact Assessment Authorities (SEIAAs) from time to time, subject to compliance of certain terms and conditions as environmental safeguards necessitated at that stage, which also included the condition for backfilling of mines voids, use/disposal of fly ash in low lying areas, etc.

4. In order to address the environmental concerns of fly ash and to improve its utilization, MoEF&CC has issued a Notification on 14<sup>th</sup> September, 1999 and subsequent amendments issued vide Notifications dated 27<sup>th</sup> August, 2003, 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2009 and 25<sup>th</sup> January, 2016 from time to time.

The Fly Ash Notification issued vide S.O.2804 (E) dated 3<sup>rd</sup> November, 2009 provides for mandatory use of fly ash in the external overburden dump, backfilling or stowing of mines. The main concern is poor fly ash utilization by the pithead power plants mainly because of limited potential in cement industries/road projects and non-utilization of fly ash in stowing and overburden in coal mines.

5. An Expert Committee was constituted for developing a focussed strategy for best utilization of flyash to manufacture end products. The Committee has made recommendations for enhanced utilization of flyash in various sectors viz. mines, roads, bricks manufacturing, cement manufacturing, etc. During an Inter-ministerial consultation held on 21<sup>st</sup> January, 2019 under the Chairmanship of Secretary (EF&CC), recommendations of the Expert Committee were accepted, which *inter-alia* included the following:-


- a) MoEF&CC should revisit the conditions stipulated in the existing environmental clearances of Thermal Power Plants for flyash utilization and modify them in consonance with the flyash notification.
- b) Appropriate conditions need to be incorporated in the environmental clearances for utilization of flyash in mines backfilling/stowing.

6. The matter has been examined in the Ministry. Further, the matter has been also been referred to the EAC (Thermal Power Projects) in its meeting held on 28.5.2019 and 12.7.2019. The EAC mentioned that though the Flyash Notification, 1999 and subsequent amendments allow the unrestricted use of flyash in abandoned mines, low lying areas, soil conditioner in agriculture, there are no specific guidelines/methodology available for safe disposal of flyash so as to minimize the damage to the environment. In absence of methodology, EAC has been examining the proposals on case to case basis and recommending for disposal of flyash in abandoned mines. Further, the EAC has also expressed the concerns over the long term impacts of flyash disposal on groundwater, soil quality and impact on associated flora and fauna. Now, the guidelines for disposal of fly ash utilisation in low lying areas and mine voids have been prepared by the Central Pollution Control Board and placed before the EAC (Thermal Power and Coal Mining) in its meeting held on 12.7.2019.

7. In view of the recommendations of the EAC (Thermal Power) in its meeting held on 12.7.2019, after careful examination of the matter and to meet the objectives of the Fly Ash Notification, 1999 & its amendments, the Ministry hereby stipulates the following conditions in the existing Environmental Clearances of Thermal Power Plants and Coal mines which have valid Environmental Clearance accorded by the Ministry/SEIAA, that will replace the existing conditions (Specific & General) which prohibited the use of fly ash in abandoned mines/low lying areas/soil conditioner in agriculture:

- i. The guidelines prepared by CPCB for disposal of flyash for reclamation of low lying areas and in stowing/backfilling of abandoned mines/quarries shall be followed during disposal of ash in abandoned or working mines, as annexed.
- ii. There should at least be clearance of 500 m of safe distance be maintained from River and water body in case of ash disposal in abandoned mines to prevent embankment failures and flyash flowing into the nearby water body.
- iii. The top layer of the flyash disposal area in the abandoned mines shall be kept moist during disposal.
- iv. Top layer of the disposed area should have 70 cm overburden or gravels/stones and then 30 cm sweet soil cover. Subsequently, the vegetation shall be raised on the soil cover.
- v. Bioaccumulation and bio-magnification tests shall be conducted on surrounding flora and fauna (tree leaves, vegetation, crop yields and cattle population) during pre-monsoon and post monsoon to find out any trace metals escaped through groundwater or runoff.
- vi. Surface runoff and supernatant water, in any case shall not be let into the surrounding areas. It shall be collected by providing adequate drains around the mine. The supernatant water along with surface runoff shall be treated and re-used for mixing ash and plant operations.
- vii. To the extent possible, only decanted water from mine, make up water from treated effluents such as cooling tower blow down and treated sewage water shall be used for making ash slurry.

- viii. Flyash to be used as soil conditioner in agriculture needs and to be applied in controlled manner to limit excessive application so as to prevent soil degradation. The optimize proportion of ash to be applied which is to be certified by the State Agricultural Universities/Colleges based on the soil testing.
- ix. Approval from DGMS shall be obtained before disposing the ash in the mine voids.
- x. Technology for conversion of fly ash into coarse granules for stowing in the underground mines to be explored.
- xi. All the power plants should install different silos for dry collection of flyash.
- xii. Records pertaining to details of month-wise quantity of flyash disposed and water consumption along with nature/source of water shall be maintained and submitted to Ministry/Regional Office annually.
- xiii. Before starting the disposal of ash into mine voids, the NOC/Permission from the mine owner is to be obtained incase the mine closure activities are not completed or State Government incase the mine has been handed over to the State Govt. after its closure. A copy of such NOC/Permission is to be submitted to the Ministry and its Regional Offices.
8. This issues with the approval of the Competent Authority.

  
(Dr. S. Kerketta)  
Director, IA Division

To

1. The Chairman, Central Pollution Control Board (CPCB)
2. The Chairman/Member Secretaries all the Expert Appraisal Committees
3. The Chairman /Member Secretaries of all the SEIAAs/SEACs
4. The Chairman/Member Secretaries of all SPCBs/UTPCCs
5. All the Power Plant Operators/ Coal Mining Operators who were accorded Environmental Clearance.
6. All the ROs of MoEF&CC.
7. All the Officers of I.A. Division

**Copy for information to:**

1. PS to Hon'ble Minister for Environment, Forest and Climate Change
2. PS to Hon'ble MoS (EF&CC)
3. PPS to Secretary(EF&CC)
4. PPS to SS(AKJ) / AS (RSP)
5. Sr.PPS to JS (GM)/ JS(NK)
6. Website of MoEF&CC.
7. Guard file.

# **Guidelines for disposal/utilisation of Fly Ash for reclamation of Low Lying Areas and in stowing of Abandoned mines/Quarries**



**Central Pollution Control Board  
March, 2019**

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- 2.Guidelines for Low Lying area development using Ash, ash Policy 2015, NTPC Ltd.
- 3.Permission of DGMS to M/s JSPL & JPL for disposing ash in coal mines

# **Guidelines for disposal/utilisation of flyash for reclamation of Low Lying Areas and in stowing of Abandoned mines/Quarries**

## **1.0 Introduction:**

Management of huge quantity of ash (fly ash, bottom ash and pond ash) generated from coal fired Thermal Power Plants (TPPs) is a serious environmental challenge. Ash generation from coal or lignite based thermal power plants, has increased from 40 Million tonne per year in 1993-94, to more than 200 Million tonne per year in 2017-18 and is projected to increase to 275 Million Tons / year by 2032.

The ash generation in coal and lignite based thermal power plants in various forms such as dry ash, bottom ash, pond ash and mound ash that are required to be managed in such a manner that it does not affect the environment. Utilisation of ash for reclamation of low lying areas and abandoned quarries is recognised as an alternate option and therefore, MoEF&CC has issued a notification to address utilisation of ash for various purposes including these two options

The Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) issued the Fly Ash notification on 14th September, 1999, which has subsequently been amended in 2003, 2009 and 2016. The Fly Ash notification (1999) mandates the use of fly ash for the purpose of manufacturing ash-based products such as cement, concrete blocks, bricks, panels or any other material and for construction of roads, embankments, dams or for any other construction activity within a radius of 300 km from thermal power stations (TPPs). Besides, it also mandates use of fly ash in mines backfilling or stowing of mines within a distance of 50 km.

## **2.0 Status of fly ash utilisation:**

Since 1999 when flyash utilisation was made mandatory, the utilization of fly ash has increased from 6.64 million-ton in 1996-97 to 147.7 million-ton in 2017-18. Fly ash generation and utilization in 2017-18 from 182 coal/lignite based TPPs of various power utilities in the country was 220.7 and 147.7 million-ton, respectively. The percentage of fly ash utilization during 2017-18 has been 66.9%. During 2017-18, out of total fly ash generation, 35.6 % of total fly ash was used in the cement sector, followed by 14.28 % in making bricks & tiles, 11.57 % stored in ash dyke raising,

7.99% in mine filling, 16.85 % in reclamation of low lying area, 5.43 % in roads & embankments, 1.34% in concrete making, 0.21 % in agriculture, 6.73 % in others and 33.1% remained as unutilized fly ash.

Mine reclamation represents a potential beneficial use of flyash that has been receiving increased attention in recent years. Coal mining operations have produced both open pits and deep underground mine voids that can be filled by flyash. Placement of flyash into deep mines can provide structural support to abate subsidence, and placement of flyash in surface mines or other open pits can aid in restoring mined land to beneficial use. The use of flyash as mine backfill may provide the additional benefit of limiting impacts of acid mine drainage (AMD). Mostly flyashe is alkaline material that can neutralize acidic water and/or inhibit production of acid. Placement of fly ash may also reduce the permeability of mine strata and divert water away from acid-generating materials. Although flyash possess these beneficial physical and chemical properties, there are concerns regarding potential for release of toxic chemicals in the leachates from the fly ash. Therefore, scientifically sound fly ash management is needed so that environmental concerns can be adequately and reliably identified and addressed.

### **3.0 Need of Guidelines:**

Ministry of Environment and Forests and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) vide Notification No. S.O. 763 (E) dated 14th September 1999, last amended on 25th January, 2016 issued following directions for reclamation low lying area and stowing of mines;

- i. No agency, person or organization shall within a radius of three hundred Kilometres of a coal or lignite based thermal power plant undertake or approve or allow reclamation and compaction of low-lying areas with soil; only ash shall be used for compaction and reclamation.
- ii. Soil required for top or side covers of embankments of roads or flyovers shall be excavated from the embankment site and if it is not possible to do so, only the minimum quantity of soil required for the purpose shall be excavated from soil borrow area. In either case, the topsoil should be kept or stored separately. Voids created at soil borrow area shall be filled up with fly ash with proper compaction and covered with topsoil kept separately as above and this would be done as an integral part of embankment project.

- iii. No person or agency shall within fifty kilometers (by road) from coal or lignite based Thermal Power Plants, undertake or approve stowing of mine without using at least 25 % of fly ash on weight to weight basis, of the total stowing materials used and this shall be done under the guidance of the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS).
- iv. No person or agency shall within fifty kilometers (by road) from coal or lignite based Thermal Power Plants, undertake or approve external dump of mining Over Burden (OB) without using at least 25 % of ash on volume to volume basis of the total materials used for external dump of overburden and same percentage in upper benches of back filling of opencast mines and this shall be done under the guidance of the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS);
- v. All agencies undertaking construction of roads of flyover bridges and reclamation and compaction of low lying areas, including Department of Road Transport and Highways (DORTH), National Highways Authority of India (NHAI), Central Public Works Department (CPWD), State Public Works Department and other State Government Agencies, shall within a period of four months from the publication of this Notification “ make provisions in their tender documents, schedules of approved materials and rates as well as technical documents for implementation of this Notification, including those relating to soil borrow area or pit”.
- vi. The pond ash should be made available free of any charge as is as where basis to manufacturers of bricks, blocks, tiles including clay flyash bricks production manufacturer’s units, farmers, central and the state road construction agencies, Public Works Department and to agencies engaged in backfilling or stowing of mines.

Though, flyash utilisation has gained momentum progressively over the years, further efforts are required to explore new areas of ash utilisation. With suitable safeguards, mine backfilling including disposal of flyash in abandoned quarries and road construction specially in the construction of National Highways and Expressways could be the major mode of flyash utilisation in the near future as these areas have vast potential. It would perhaps be desirable that the concerned Ministries should take steps in sorting out the bottlenecks such as declaring a list of abandoned mines, making adequate provisions in respective schedules for flyash utilisation by the Indian Road Congress & construction agencies etc.

MoEF & CC vide letter dated 01.03.2019 asked CPCB to come out with guidelines based on Odisha Pollution Control Board experience for reclamation of low lying areas and abandoned quarries with ash as recommended by the Expert Committee that was constituted by Niti Aayog vide O.M. No. 25 (11)/2014-Minerals dated 12.06.2018 for developing a focus strategy for best utilisation of fly ash to manufacture end products recommended.

The scope of guidelines covers transportation and disposal of flyash in low lying areas and abandoned quarries in an environmentally friendly manner.

#### **4.0 Loading/unloading and transportation of flyash**

##### **4.1 Current Practice for Handling & Disposal of Flyash & Bottom ash (within the power plant)**

Flyash is collected in dry form from ESP hopper and disposed either in dry form or through wet slurry form. While, bottom ash collected at the bottom of boiler and is disposed in wet slurry form into the ash ponds.

Following technologies are conventionally used for handling & disposal of flyash and bottom ash collected from ESPs hoppers and boiler bottom respectively within the plant or upto the ash pond area:

- I. Dry Pneumatic conveying
- II. Dry (moist) Conveying system through belt conveyor/tube belt conveyor
- III. High concentration slurry disposal system
- IV. Medium concentration slurry disposal system
- V. Lean concentration slurry disposal system

Amongst the above technologies, Dry Pneumatic conveying, Medium concentration slurry disposal system, High concentration slurry disposal system, and Dry (moist) Conveying system through belt conveyor/tube belt conveyor are preferable as compared to Lean concentration slurry disposal system.

The dry ash is typically conveyed pneumatically from the ESP or filter fabric hoppers to storage silos where it is kept dry, pending utilization or further processing, or to a system where the dry ash is mixed with water and conveyed (sluiced) to an on-site storage pond. Fly ash is stored in silos, domes and other bulk storage facilities. Fly ash can be transferred using air

slides, bucket conveyors and screw conveyors, or it can be pneumatically conveyed through pipelines under positive or negative pressure conditions.

Dry fly ash collected is also be suitably moistened with water and wetting agents, as applicable, using specialized equipment (conditioned) and hauled in covered dump trucks for special applications such as structural fills. Water conditioned fly ash can also be suitably stockpiled at jobsites. Exposed stockpiled material must be kept moist or suitably covered to prevent fugitive emission.

The dry bottom ash removal and its transportation is certainly more environment friendly, compared to that of wet ash removal and transport system.

## **4.2 Guidelines for loading, unloading, storage, transportation of flyash**

The power plants need to maximise dry collection of fly ash & bottom ash and also adopt adequate measures to prevent fugitive dust emission during loading, unloading, storage, transportation and various uses of dry as well as ash bottom ash and pond ash. Following guidelines are, therefore, suggested for prevention of pollution and augmentation of flyash utilisation

### **4.2.1 Maximise dry collection of fly ash and bottom ash**

- a. Coarse fly ash from first field of ESP hoppers need to be collected and stored separately.
- b. Fine fly ash from second field onwards of ESP Hoppers should be collected separately. For some specific usage, fine fly ash may be passed through Classifier for further separation of fine fly ash and stored in separate silo.
- c. Bottom ash which is not utilised presently could also be collected in dry form and converted into a valuable resource if processed to match the end use specification. Wet collection & disposal of bottom ash should be minimised as far as possible

### **4.2.2 Loading, Unloading and Storage**

Installation of Bag Filters with dry flyash collection and storage in Silos at loading and unloading points are standard practices at both locations i.e loading at power plant site as well as at the unloading point at user's site. Suggestions for further improvement in existing practices are as under:

- a. Current practice of loading of fly ash in Bulklers/Tankers requires improvement at the stage of loading of fly ash in Tankers. The opening of telescopic chutes at the loading end should be air tight and confined to avoid fugitive dust emission.
- b. The Pollution Control Equipment / Cascade Filters, attached with fly ash loading chute should be periodically cleaned along with regular scheduled maintenance of bag filter to avoid choking and malfunctioning of Bag Filter. It would mitigate the dust emission during loading of fly ash.
- c. Malfunctioning of level sensors can be avoided, with regular maintenance, to prevent over filling of fly ash in Tankers .
- d. The Weigh Bridge to be installed under fly ash loading chute to fill just the required quantity of fly ash in tankers so that overflow/spillage of fly ash in open areas is avoided which otherwise results in heavy fugitive emission all around.
- e. Opening of tankers need to be properly locked during transportation of fly ash. Automatic opening / closing system need to be installed without fail.
- f. Current practice of unloading of fly ash from tanker to storage hopper through pneumatic system is fairly good. Otherwise, the leakage of fly ash will occur at bends and joints of transportation pipe line. The fly ash being abrasive in nature causes damage at bends and joint locations. Fly ash should, therefore be transported through PVC coated pipes to avoid abrasion otherwise it may lead to leakage of flyash. The mechanical unloading system should be envisaged to avoid high pressure and dust leakage from unloading pipe lines. As far as possible, number of bends should be minimised.
- g. The fly ash storage silo should be of or coated with anti-abrasive or anti-corrosive material. It is better to provide concrete silo/hopper to avoid leakages.

- h. Proper functioning of all the level sensor of Storage Hopper to be ensured to avoid any possible spillage from Hopper opening.
- i. The Bag Filter made of anti-abrasive material/cloth be provided with telescopic chute.
- j. Dumping of ash in Ash pond should be done mechanically in moist condition so that ash does not get air borne and pose fugitive dust problem.
- k. The bottom ash discharged from boiler bed, may be transported pneumatically in dry form / in slurry form to the ash pond

#### **4.2.3 Transportation**

Fly ash transportation has many challenges like distance to be transported, form of ash i.e. dry or wet ash, user's requirement, economic feasibility, requirement of surrounding vicinity and many other site specific issues. In any case, control of dust emission during transportation is prime concern and more challenging being a non-point source of pollution and larger area coverage due to movement from one place to other passing through various receptors. As flyash is used by different users for different purposes such as cement manufacturing, brick manufacturing, mine back filling, road construction and filling of low lying area, the handling and transportation have to accordingly decided. Following modes of transportation and precautions are suggested for mine back filling and development of low lying areas by disposal of flyash or bottom ash to avoid fugitive dust emission:

##### **a. Transportation for abandoned mine back filling**

- I. Pipe conveyors, wherever feasible, based on the topography of the area should be used.
- II. Tankers/ railway wagons/ bulkers or mechanically designed covered trucks need to be used
- III. Thermal Power Plants using wet ash disposal, if permitted can transport ash slurry directly to abandoned mine through ash slurry pipe line.

##### **b. Transportation for filling of low lying area**

- I. Tankers/ bulkers or mechanically designed covered Trucks need to be used.

In no case, flyash or bottom ash shall be transported by open trucks / trollies irrespective of distance or end use. Thermal power plants and fly ash user agency shall collectively ensure that fly ash or bottom ash is transported in environmentally sound manner by following the guidelines mentioned in para 4.2.3 & 4.2.4.

#### **4.2.4 General Code of Practices for Maintenance of roads, vehicles and conditioning of flyash**

- a. Roads inside power plant and that of flyash user agency should be paved and plantation of adequate width should be done at both sides. Mechanised road sweepers should be deployed. In addition, adequate arrangements for water sprinkling should be made to suppress fugitive dust emission, if any.
- b. Thermal power plants and user agencies should make arrangements (two stages) for washing of wheels of the vehicles (bulkiers/trucks) before deployed for fly ash transportation.
- c. Pond ash to be transported should be conditioned with water to maintain minimum of 15% moisture at the disposal point so that ash does not get air borne and cause fugitive emission.
- d. Adequate free board in trucks should be kept to avoid overflow/spillage during transportation.
- e. In case of any spillage enroute during transportation of fly ash, the agency shall ensure that spilled ash is collected and transported to the disposal/usage site immediately.
- f. All the bulkiers and trucks responsible for carrying fly ash should be with valid Pollution Under Control certificates.
- g. Provision should be preferably made for weighing of fly ash loaded into tankers/ railway wagons/bulkiers etc under the silo.
- h. The speed limit of vehicles carrying flyash should be strictly enforced and it should not exceed 40 km per hour.

- i. State Pollution Control Boards shall clearly indicate mode of transportation and method of loading and unloading while granting the consent.
- j. Transportation of flyash through thickly populated areas should be avoided as far as possible.
- k. General awareness/ training programmes be organised regularly for tanker operating staff like drivers and cleaners on the impact of hazards of fly ash.

## **5.0 Reclamation of Low Lying area using Ash**

Filling of Low lying areas inside the plant premises and outside within 300 km. of power plant may be taken up using ash. Low lying area reclamation with ash should be taken up adopting standard practices as per 2015 technical specification mentioned in NTPC Policy. Following steps should be taken up prior to initiate low lying area developmental activities.

### **5.1 Preconditions:**

- 5.1.1 **Consent from land owner:** Consent/ permission should be obtained in writing from the land owner before start of work.
- 5.1.2 **Permission from Regulatory authority:** Power plant/ land owner/ agency shall obtain statutory permission from regulatory authorities such as SPCB as per the requirement.
- 5.1.3 **Prevention of pollution:** Suitable methods should be adopted and necessary arrangement should be made to prevent pollution during excavation of pond ash at ash pond, filling area and during transportation of ash.
- 5.1.4 **Soil Cover on the top of ash fill:** As per the MOEF&CC gazette notification of ash utilization dated 14-09-1999 and as amendment on dated 27-08-2003 and 03-11-2009, the soil required for soil cover shall be excavated from land fill site itself and kept separately before taking for ash filling. If it is not possible to do so, only the minimum quantity of soil required for the purpose of cover shall be excavated from the soil borrow area. The voids so created due to removal of soil shall be filled up with ash with proper compaction and covered at top with soil cover. About 300-500 mm thick soil layer shall be placed over the ash fill area. This should be done as an integral part of low lying area development work.

### 5.1.6 Restrictions :

Reclamation of area by ash shall not be permitted in the following areas :

- i. Flood plain area/Ecologically Sensitive Areas.
- ii. Agriculture land / area.
- iii. Reclamation of Forest land / area is permissible only if clearance from MoEF&CC as per Forest Conservation Act, 1980 is available.
- iv. Gochar Kisan Land.

## 5.2 Preparation of filling area

5.2.1 The entire area meant to receive the ash and earth filling shall be stripped by minimum 150 mm. The exact depth of stripping shall be decided by the Engineer-in-Charge depending upon nature of top soil and the vegetation present. All organic matter, vegetation, roots, stumps, bushes, rubbish, swamp materials, etc. shall be removed from the site. The stripping material and other unsuitable materials as referred above shall be kept away from the area to be filled up so that these do not get mixed up with filling material and disposed off to a place as decided by the Engineer-in-Charge.

### 5.2.2 Levelling

All existing undulations, holes, cavities and excavations made for plate load rests and other soil investigations, etc. shall be filled with pond ash having requisite moisture content. The ash thus filled shall be compacted with the help of vibratory rollers so as to achieve dry density of not less 95% as per I.S-2720 (Part-VII). This would result in a levelled surface upon which layer wise filling of compacted ash can be done.

5.2.3 Protection of pond or water body adjoining or within the working site: If any pond or water body exists within or adjoining the low lying area /quarry then an earthen embankment of the cross-section as given in the Figure below be constructed around the pond or water body to protect it from spilling of ash or ingress of surface runoff into it.



**Cross- section of water body protection embankment**

The soil used for the embankment should neither be granular nor black cotton soil. It should be of good quality for geo-technical application. Soil should be compacted to 95% proctor by Vibratory Roller of 15 T minimum capacity, in the layers of 25-30 cm and the optimum moisture content determined before execution of work. After attaining the desired height, the disposal area should be thoroughly compacted, graded followed by soil cover at least 15 cm thickness for proper reclamation of the land by grass turving or appropriate plantation.

### **5.3 Excavation of pond ash from borrow area**

#### **5.3.1 Borrow Area-location**

The location and permissible depth of excavation of the Borrow areas for pond ash shall be got specifically approved from concerned Thermal Power Station. The boundaries and permissible depth of excavation so approved shall be strictly followed and no deviation shall be allowed. Similarly, routes for movement of all ash transportation vehicles, water tankers, equipment, etc. shall be got approved from Thermal Power Station. These shall be strictly followed and no deviation shall be allowed.

The excavation surfaces and surface of waste materials shall be left in a reasonably smooth and even condition. All the excavations within the ash pond shall be at a minimum slope of 4 (Horizontal): 1(Vertical)

#### **5.3.2 Site Clearance**

All areas required for borrowing shall be cleared of all trees and stumps, roots, bushes, rubbish and other objectionable material. Particular care shall be taken to exclude all organic matter from the ash to be placed in the fill. The cleared areas shall be maintained free of vegetation growth during the progress of the work.

#### **5.3.3 Stripping**

Borrow area shall be stripped of top layer by a depth of minimum 150 mm. The exact depth of stripping shall be decided by the Engineer-in-charge depending upon nature of top layer and the vegetation present.

#### **5.3.4 Borrow area watering & dewatering**

The natural moisture content of material in the borrow areas as well as the optimum moisture corresponding to the Proctor's maximum dry density for the material in the particular borrow area shall be obtained from laboratory tests. Additional moisture, if required, shall be introduced into the borrow area by watering well in advance of excavation to ensure uniformity of moisture content. If in any borrow area before or during excavation there is excess moisture, steps shall be taken to reduce the moisture by the selective excavation to secure the materials of required moisture content by excavating drainage ditches, by allowing adequate time for drying or by other means. To avoid formation of pools in the borrow areas during excavation operations, drainage ditches from borrow areas to the nearest outlets shall be excavated so as to obtain homogeneous mix. In general, all materials from a particular borrow area shall be mixture of materials obtained for the full depth of cut.

#### 5.3.5 Earth cover in Borrow Area

It shall be the responsibility of Thermal Power plant to arrange sweet soil from approved external borrows areas. The earth cover material shall consist of sandy loam free of admixture of stiff clay, refuse, stumps, roots, rock, bushes, weeds or any other material which would be detrimental to the proper development of vegetation growth. It shall not contain stone of size 25 mm and over. The loamy top soil shall be of healthy crops, grass or other plant growth, that is of good quality and reasonably free draining. Other specifications for Borrow area e.g. site clearance, stripping, Borrow area watering/De-watering etc. shall be as per relevant clauses of Borrow area for ash as outlined above i.e clause nos. 5.3.1 to 5.3.4.

### **5.4 Filling with pond ash**

#### 5.4.1 Placement

After the area has been prepared and levelled, pond ash excavated from Borrow areas having required moisture content shall be placed in layers not exceeding 300 mm in compacts thickness. The placing operations shall be such that in strips of 10-15 m of the material when compacted in the fill will be blended sufficiently to produce specified degree of compaction and stability. No stones, cobbles or rock fragments, having maximum dimensions more than 100 mm shall be placed in the fill. Stones and

cobbles shall be removed either at the borrow pit site before it is used as soil cover.

#### 5.4.2 Procedure

The material shall be placed in the fill in continuous horizontal layers, stretching right across the whole section, not more than 300 mm in compacted thickness and rolled as herein specified. The length of one layer shall not exceed 150 meters at one stretch. The layers shall be compacted in strips overlapping not less than 600 mm, if the rolled surface of any fill is found to be too wet for proper compaction, it shall be raked up, allowed to dry, or shall be worked with a harrow or any other approved equipment to reduce the moisture content to the required amount and then it shall be re-compacted before the next layer of ash is placed. Ash surfaces are likely to become dry in short intervals especially during hot and dry weather and hence enough moisture shall be added between difference passes to ensure proper compaction

#### 5.4.3 Compaction

The compaction of each layer shall be carried out so as to achieve maximum in-situ dry density 95% of maximum dry density (MDD) of the material found out as per I.S 2720 (Part VII). To achieve maximum compaction level use of vibratory rollers shall be made. Required number of passes shall be made so as to achieve desired compaction. Number of passes required shall be verified through trials tests before actual execution of work. The broad specifications of vibratory rollers required for the purpose is as follows:

- a) Static Weight = 6 to 10 t
- b) Static Linear Load = 20 – 35 kg/cm
- c) Frequency = 18 – 30 Hz (1100 to 1800 vibrations/ minute)
- d) Amplitude of vibrations = 0.5 mm to 1.5 mm

#### 5.4.4 Moisture control

So far as practicable, the materials shall be brought to the proper moisture content in the borrow area before excavation. If additional moisture is required, it shall be added at the fill site by sprinkling water before rolling the layer. Thermal Power Plant shall make arrangements for supply of water to the borrow areas as well as to the fill area. If the moisture content is more than requirement, the material shall be spread and allowed to dry

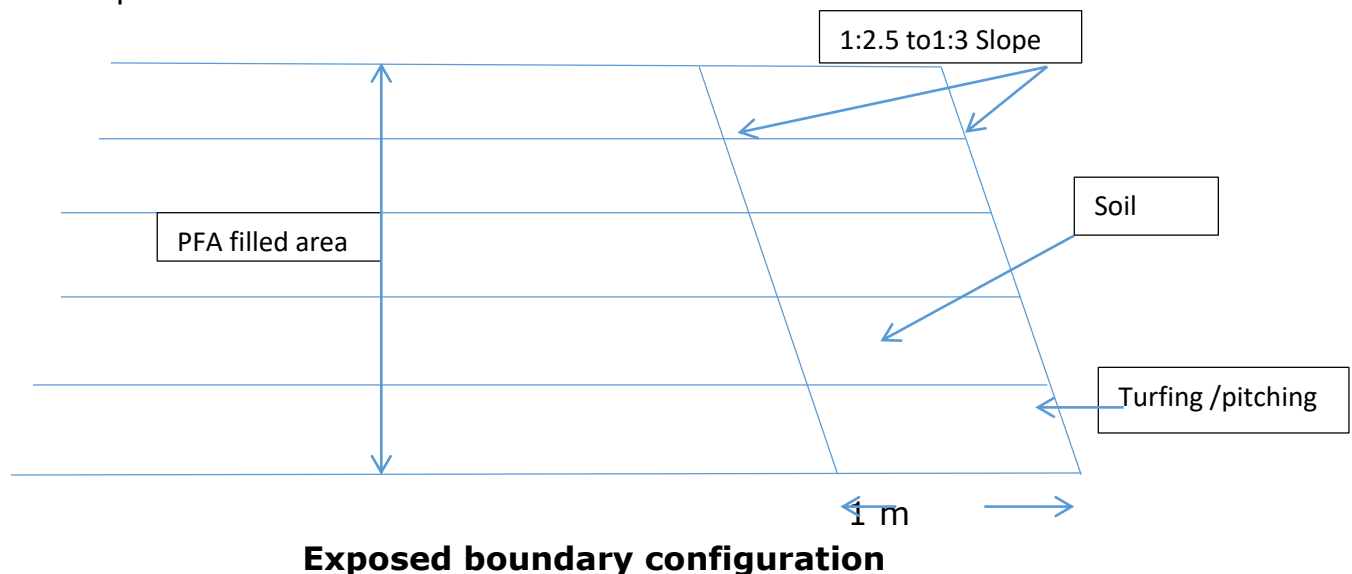
before rolling. The moisture content shall be at most uniform throughout the layer of material and ploughing or other methods of mixing to obtain uniform distribution. If the moisture content is more or less than the range of the required moisture content, or if it is not uniformly distributed throughout the layer, rolling shall be stopped, and shall be started again only when the above conditions are met with.

Fill materials shall be placed only when the weather conditions are satisfactory to permit accurate control of the moisture content in the materials.

#### 5.4.5 Placement of earth cover in filing area

Earth cover shall be laid simultaneously with the laying of compacted ash layers and on side slopes. As in the case of ash layers, compacted thickness of earth layers shall not be exceeding 300 mm. As far as top cover of earth is concerned, after the area has been covered with compacted ash up to 500 mm below the required finished level of the area, a compacted layer of 500 mm thickness of suitable earth shall be placed over ash surface. This cover shall be placed in layers, each layer shall be of 250 mm in compacted thickness.

The combined excavation and placing operations shall be such that the materials when compacted in the fill will be blended sufficiently to produce specified degree of compaction on stability. No stones, cobbles or rock fragments, having maximum dimensions more than 25 mm shall be placed in the earth cover. Such stones or cobbles shall be removed either at the borrow pit or before it is used as Soil Cover.



Other requirements of earth cover laying shall be similar to those of ash laying i.e. as outlined in 5.4.1 to 5.4.4 above.

## 5.5 Prevention of Pollution

It shall be responsibility of thermal power plant or his contractor that no air borne and water borne pollution shall occur during all stages of operations such as in Borrow areas, during transportation of ash/ earth, during placement of fill material etc. All measures such as water sprinkling covering moist ash/ earth with tarpaulins in open trucks, etc., shall be taken to done care of above.

## 6.0 Disposal of flyash in voids of abandoned mines

As per notifications 1999 and 2009, power plant shall undertake or approve stowing of mines without using at least 25% of fly ash on weight to weight basis, of the total stowing materials used. Mine void filling on pilot basis is being carried out at the power plants of NTPC Ltd., Bhushan Steel and NALCO in Odisha with prior permission from MoEF & CC and OSPCB. Based on their experience and study conducted by CMPDIL, Ranchi for NTPC Talcher, following methodology is suggested for filling of mine voids with flyash.

6.1 The power plant authority shall carry out following study prior to taking up ash disposal activities in mine void to ensure no change/damage/deterioration in water quality and hydrology in and around the proposed area:

- Ash Characterisation and Leachate Study (Table 1.1)
- Techno-Economic Feasibility Study for disposal of ash into the Quarry
- Topographical Survey of Pipeline Corridor & Mine Void area
- Feasibility of transportation of ash to mine void
- Geotechnical study of the Pipeline Corridor & Mine Void area
- Pre and post filling mine water quality including leachability of metals (Table 1.1)

## 6.2 Mode of ash transportation to mine void area

One of flowing mode of transport actions of flyash shall be used depending upon the topography of the area:

1. Pipeline using pneumatic conveying system

2. Dumpers/ Trucks
3. Merry Go Round (MGR) System
4. Belt Conveyors in case of dry ash disposal
5. Wet ash (lean slurry or high concentration slurry) through pipeline

### 6.3 Monitoring:

6.3.1 Regular environmental monitoring to be undertaken during the period of disposal of ash into mine void as well as after the reclamation of mine void. The detailed monitoring programme is given in Tables below:

**Table 1.1 : Proposed Monitoring Programme during Disposal of Ash**

Samples	Parameters to be Analysed	Frequency
Ash Samples	Chemical Parameters (%): SiO <sub>2</sub> , Al <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> , Fe <sub>2</sub> O <sub>3</sub> , K <sub>2</sub> O, TiO <sub>2</sub> , CaO, MgO, Na <sub>2</sub> O, P <sub>2</sub> O <sub>5</sub> , SO <sub>3</sub> Trace Elements (mg/kg, using TCLP Test): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn Radio-activity (Bq/kg): <sup>238</sup> U, <sup>236</sup> Ra, <sup>232</sup> Th, <sup>228</sup> Ra, <sup>230</sup> Pb, <sup>40</sup> K, <sup>137</sup> Cs	Once before initiation of filling
Ash Leachate Analysis	Trace Elements (mg/kg, using TCLP Test): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn	Once a year
Piezometer Water Samples	Chemical Parameters (mg/l, except, pH and EC): pH, EC, TDS, Total Alkalinity, Ca, Mg, Na, K, Cl, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , PO <sub>4</sub> , Trace Elements (mg/l): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn	Monthly
Mine Water Sample	Same as above	Monthly
Ground Water	Same as above	Twice a year - Pre-monsoon and Post-monsoon
Surface Water Samples	Same as above	Twice a year - Pre-monsoon and Post-monsoon
Soil Samples	Texture, type, pH & cation exchange capacity. Trace Elements (mg/l): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn	Once a year

Survey of Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing of Flora (herbs, shrubs and trees) and Fauna (soil invertebrates and other animals) based on field observations and review of information available</li> <li>• Analysis of trace elements in plants (herbs, shrubs and trees), the invertebrates</li> <li>• Analysis of trace elements in aquatic fauna from the mine void filled with fly ash</li> <li>• Bio-accumulation and Bio-magnification tests</li> </ul>	Once in two years
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**Table 1.2: Proposed Monitoring Programme After Reclamation of Mine void**

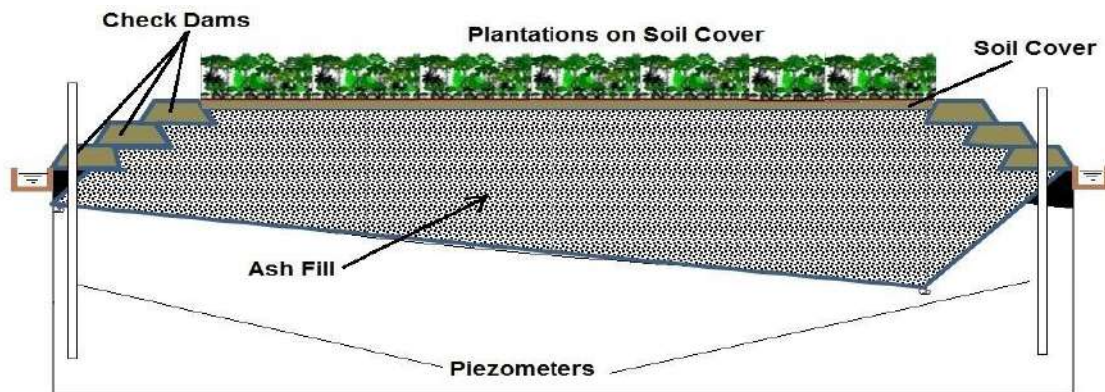
Samples	Parameters to be Analysed	Frequency
Piezometer Water Samples	Chemical Parameters (mg/l, except, pH and EC): pH, EC, TDS, Total Alkalinity, Ca, Mg, Na, K, Cl, SO <sub>4</sub> , NO <sub>3</sub> , PO <sub>4</sub> ,  Trace Elements (mg/l): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn	Twice a year - Pre-monsoon and Post-monsoon
Ground Water Samples	Same as above	Once a year - Pre-monsoon
Surface Water Samples	Same as above	Once a year - Pre-monsoon
Survey of Flora and Fauna	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Listing of Flora (herbs, shrubs and trees) and Fauna (soil invertebrates and other animals) based on field observations and review of information available</li> <li>• Analysis of trace elements in plants (herbs, shrubs and trees), the invertebrates</li> <li>• Analysis of trace elements in aquatic fauna from the mine void filled with fly ash</li> <li>• Bio-accumulation and Bio-magnification tests</li> </ul>	Once in five years

In the event of deterioration of environmental quality, the same will be reported to concerned SPCB immediately and suitable preventive/corrective action will be undertaken.

#### **6.4 Reclamation of Land filled site**

After the quarry is filled to the permitted height as per DGMS, the same shall be provided with a soil cover and plantation shall be done with local fast growing species (preferably trees), to make it a part of the overall

post-mining land use pattern envisaged in the mine closure plan. The design of surface contours and land profile will be in consonance with the surrounding features. A three tier plantation approach (consisting of large trees, smaller trees and shrubs) will be followed for overall eco-restoration of the area. This will also help in checking the surface run-off, preventing the water from percolation and maintaining the aesthetics beauty of the surrounding in general. A conceptual diagram of the reclaimed mine void is presented below.



**Conceptual Plan for Reclamation of Mine Void  
(Drawing not to Scale)**

During the mine void reclamation, the following measures are to be undertaken:

- i. Storm water drains shall be constructed for channelizing the run-off water away from the disposal site.
- ii. A 30 cm thick soil cover shall be provided to promote vegetation growth.
- iii. For plantation purpose, preference shall be given to both native species and mixed culture. The species will be selected carefully from the following groups for quick reclamation under the guidance of a taxonomist:
  - Tree species for fuel wood and timber
  - Forestry type tree species.
  - Tree species with dense foliage for shade.
  - Native species.
- iv. However, fruit bearing species shall be avoided.

## **7.0 Precaution**

The following precautionary measures are required for safe working during the reclamation activity:

- (i) Appropriate measures should be taken to prevent entry of cattle/livestock inside the disposal area during execution period.
- (ii) Care shall be taken to avoid any kind of nuisance / inconvenience to the public due to such dumping / filling activities.
- (iii) Water sprinkling for dust suppression during handling of Ash shall be ensured from being air borne.
- (iv) After complete reclamation of the site, sign board shall be kept indicating the low lying land / abandoned quarry has been reclaimed with ash. This will help to propagate the message of mine void using ash.

## **8.0 Regulatory Procedure for Processing the Application for consideration of grant of permission for Reclamation of Low Lying Areas / Abandoned Quarries :**

- 8.1 The activity of reclamation of Low Lying Areas / Abandoned Quarries will be regulated under the provisions of Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. The stipulations specified in this guideline is consistent with the provisions of Fly Ash Notification, 1999 and amended thereafter which should be a special condition mentioned in consent order issued under the Water (Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and the Air Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981. Thereafter any deviations from the guidelines shall be treated as violation of both Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 and Air (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1981 and action as deemed proper shall be taken under Consent Administration by the Board.
- 8.2 Necessary clearances shall be obtained from the concerned agencies such as DGMS, SPCB, IBM, MoC, etc .
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### **Guidelines for disposal of flyash in open cast mines along with Over Burden (OB)**

As per notifications 1999 and 2009, "No person or agency shall within fifty kilometres (by road) from coal or lignite based Thermal Power Plants, undertake or approve without using at least 25 % of ash on volume to volume basis of the total materials used for external dump of overburden (OB) and same percentage in upper benches of back filling of opencast mines and this ***shall be done under the guidance of the Director General of Mines Safety (DGMS).***

The methodology as approved by Directorate General of Mine Safety (DGMS) in case of M/s JSPL & JPL (RGR/JPL/P-98(1) &(3)/Flyash/18/2014/1518 dated 31.07.2014) may be referred for filling ash in coal mines. **However, for each case separate approval of methodology from DGMS shall be sought.** Following methodology for disposal of flyash in open cast mines along with Over Burden in case of JSPL was approved by DGMS.

- 1.1 Distance of the internal/overburden dump area from the working faces of mine shall not be less than 100 m.
- 1.2 The area of filling ash shall be specifically earmarked and the same shall be marked on the plan and dumping fly ash shall be carried out accordingly.
- 1.3 Height of each deck shall not be more than 30 m and the total height of the dump shall not exceed 90 m.
- 1.4 The road leading to the dump site for transportation of fly ash shall be independent from the main haul road for transporting OB to the dump site from the mine.

#### **1.5 Method of dumping fly ash**

- 1.5.1 The fly ash shall be dumped in alternate layers/stages, of height not exceeding 5.0 m in each layer/stage.

1.5.2 Initially a row of OB dumps not less than 15.0 m width shall be dumped having height of 5.0 m all around the area proposed for ash dump over a deck (of 30.0 m height) of only overburden dump adequately compacted. A number of such areas shall be formed in a layer/stage wherein the fly ash shall be dumped so that one dump of fly ash is separated by another with 15 m wide over burden dump.

1.5.3 Thereafter, fly ash (25%) and overburden shall be dumped within the area surrounded by such OB dumps. In this manner, the dumping shall be laid in the section/layer of 5.0 m height containing both over burden as well as fly ash so as to form a deck of height not more than 30.0 m , distance between two consecutive decks shall not be less than 30.0 m.

1.5.4 In the next section i.e. immediately above bottom section/stage, only OB dumping shall be made to ensure that the Ash is totally covered and protected from the OB dumps all around.

1.5.5 In the same manner as explained above the alternate layer/section of the over burden and over burden with fly ash shall be dumped. Each layer/stage shall be adequately compacted by dozing.

1.5.6 At the top of the dump i.e. at the final stage, the dump shall be covered with 2.0 m thick soil and adequately compacted by dozing. Adequate precaution against rain fall shall be taken by way of plantation, geo-synthetic, or jute/coir reinforcement and formation of gully drains along the slope of the dump and formation of toe walls and peripheral drains as suggested by the scientific agency conducting geo-technical study. The precaution measures shall periodically be checked for its efficacy.

1.5.7 Plan and section in suitable scale (1:2000) shall be maintained showing the details of the dump both external and interval, height of each deck and dump, distance between the dumps containing fly ash and also the distance from the active working faces, plantation done, gully drains, peripheral drains, toe walls, etc. Such plan shall be signed by the Surveyor and countersigned by the Manager as prescribed in the statute.

1.5.8 Code of practices for transportation, dumping compaction of fly ash as mentioned in para 5(4.2.3 & 5.4.3 of main guidelines), shall be implemented.

#### **1.5.9 1.6 Dump slope management**

1.6.1 The sides of the OB dumps shall be kept benched and height thereof shall not exceed 30.0 m at an angle of slope not exceeding the angle of repose of the dumped material or 28° whichever is less.

1.6.2 Width of the OB dump shall not be less than 40.0 m which shall also be compacted. The benches shall be laid in such a manner that the overall slope of the dump shall not exceed 21° from horizontal.

1.6.3 The toe of the OB dumps shall be protected or armored in such a manner that the sludge does not flow down into the working faces.

1.6.4 A geotechnical study shall be conducted to assess the stability of the dump and the monitoring of various parameters during the course of dumping and also thereafter till the mine is closed permanently.

**1.7Dust control measures:** The fly ash dumping including the OB dumps shall be kept moist all the time to prevent ash getting airborne. The quality of the Ash shall be chemically and physically tested at least once in every quarter.

## **1.8 Surface and ground water quality monitoring**

1.8.1The surface and ground water measurement (Chemical Parameters (mg/l): pH, EC, TDS, Total Alkalinity, Ca, Mg, Na, K, Cl, SO<sub>4</sub>, NO<sub>3</sub>, PO<sub>4</sub>, Trace Elements (mg/l): As, Ba, Cd, Co, Cr, Cu, F, Fe, Hg, Mn, Ni, Pb, Zn) shall be carried out once in a year ( post monsoon) in consultation with the State Pollution Control Board in order to ensure that no harmful heavy metals or any other chemicals pollute the surface or ground water sources or any other water sources present in the area.

**1.9 Provision of check drains** Proper Check Drains/garland drains having width of adequate size and section shall be made around the OB dumps to ensure that the sludge or waste materials along with the ash does not go into any river, nullah, water streams or any other surface water bodies.

1.10 Impact assessment of flora, fauna, aquatic lives and habitat, water & air quality:

1.10.1 A scientific study shall be carried out by an independent scientific organization to study the impact of Ash filling on Flora, Fauna, Aquatic Life and Habitation (once during the filling and at the end of filling).

1.10.2 The Monitoring of all the aforementioned parameters shall be carried out through any accredited institute/organization/Labs and monitoring report shall be submitted to SPCB and DGMS.

1.10.3 A dedicated team of qualified persons headed by senior officer at the level of General Manager shall be established in the mine level, who shall be responsible for the entire ash filling operation, conducting different studies and shall maintain all records as prescribed.

1.10.4 Record of every analysis and study shall be maintained in a bound page register kept for the purpose and the same shall be signed by the person in-charge of the operation and countersigned by the manager of the mine. Records shall also be maintained showing the details about the slope of each dump, quantity of ash filled, quantity of overburden removed, etc.

1.10.5 Risk Analysis about the risk arising out of ash filling operation shall specifically be conducted at regular intervals and Safety Management Plan including the control mechanism shall be prepared as per the guideline contained in DGMS(Tech)(S&T) Circular No.13 of 2002 dated 31.12.2002 and implemented and the same shall be reviewed time to time

1.10.6 In case, any adverse impact is observed, it should be brought to the notice of the DGMS and also to the State Pollution Control Board including the Environment and Forest Ministries of the State and Central Government. No further use of fly ash shall be done in the mine till permitted in writing afresh from DGMS.

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