

Endorsed Minutes

02 February 2017

Meeting: Williamtown Contamination Investigation Community Reference Group (CRG)

Date: 02 February 2017

Location: RAAF Base, Williamtown Time: 3.30pm to 6.15pm

Number: 1702

Chairperson: Jodie Calvert | Principal Coordinator | Department of Premier and Cabinet

Secretariat: Aaron Spadaro | Senior Coordination Officer | Department of Premier and Cabinet

Attendees: Marcus Jeffery | Estate and Infrastructure | Department of Defence
 Sarah Davis | Project Officer | Department of Defence
 Kurt Rezek | Project Officer | PFAS Branch, Canberra
 Vicki Pearce | PFAS Strategic Environmental Management & Integration
 Evelina Hendry | Senior Stakeholder & Communications Officer | EPA
 Glenda Briggs | Regional Manager | Department of Primary Industries
 Dr Kat Taylor | Hunter New England Local Health District
 Lyndsay Clout | Fullerton Cove Resident
 Nick Marshall | Salt Ash Community First
 Kim Smith | Salt Ash Community First
 Don Burgoyne | NSW Farmer's Association | Community Member & Oyster Farmer
 Phil Blanch | Community Member and Fisher's Representative

Apologies Air Commodore Craig Heap | Department of Defence
 Adam Gilligan Regional Director North | Environment Protection Authority (EPA)
 Karen Marler | A/Manager Hunter Region | EPA
 Prof David Durrheim | Hunter New England Local Health District
 Wayne Wallis | General Manager | Port Stephens Council
 Robert Gauta | Manager, Commercial Fishermen's Coop
 Justin Hamilton | Fullerton Cove Action Group & Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group
 Cornelius Disselkoen | Maria's Vegetable Farm | Community Member
 Andrew Smith | CEO Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council | Community Member
 Mark Salm | NSW Farmer's Association | Community Member & Oyster Farmer
 Rhianna Gorfine | President, Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group
 Cain Gorfine | Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group

Endorsed Minutes

Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
1702-1	Defence to invite Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) attend next CRG meeting.	Defence	9/2/17
1702-2	CRG members to contribute the examples of financial hardships (including individuals willing to be contacted). with contributions from CRG, to contribute into the PM&C Taskforce consideration.	CRG members	Completed Legal advice advised of inability to provide.
1702-3	Defence to invite Department of Health to attend next CRG meeting to discuss Epidemiological Study.	Defence	9/2/17
1702-4	Moors Drain water treatment - when in a position to do so, Defence to advise outcome of negotiations and confirm installation timeframe	Defence	
1702-5	EPA to contact Phil Blanch regarding a group meeting to brief fishers on clearing of drains and the impacts this would have on the fishing industry.	EPA	9/2/17
1702-6	Defence to advise CRG when data related to sampling of water moving through the treatment plant, both pre and post filtration is available on website and provide the direct links to DPC for distribution.	Defence/DPC	9/3/17
1702-7	Defence to include information regarding the sampling and filtration processes into the Treatment Plant FAQ.	Defence	
	Once completed, FAQ to be provided to DPC for distribution.	DPC	
1702-8	Defence to seek greater clarification from the Contractors as to why bunding was not seen to be required.	Defence	3/2/2017
1702-9	DPC to arrange a meeting between the new Parliamentary Secretary, Catherine Cusack and the CRG community members.	DPC	Completed Held 10/02/17
1702-10	Dr Kat Taylor to provide copy of the reference study on serum levels to DPC for distribution.	HNEH DPC	Completed
1702-11	Defence (and EPA) to investigate what the green boxes (as captured in provided photographs) are and advise DPC for advice to the CRG	Defence/EPA DPC	2/3/2017
1702-12	Draft Communications Strategy to be brought to the CRG for comment/input	Defence/EPA/NSW Government	2/3/2017

Endorsed Minutes

Meeting minutes

1. Endorsement of Minutes – n/a

2. Actions List

Actions outstanding from previous CRG meeting – to be held over until 2/3/2017 meeting.

Future Fund – Discussions with PMO PFAS taskforce regarding use of funds for loans, no resolution as yet. With commencement of Taskforce, opportunity to now properly escalate.

The following are updates from the action list discussed.

Defence to invite Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C) attend next CRG meeting. Provides opportunity to convey full extent of financial hardship being experienced.

CRG members to contribute the examples of financial hardships (including individuals willing to be contacted) by next Thursday, with contributions from CRG, to contribute into the PM&C Taskforce consideration.

Commonwealth Department of Health briefing

Defence to invite Department of Health to attend next CRG meeting to discuss Epidemiological Study.

3. Feedback re: RAAF Base Tour and Open Questions

See attached Site Tour Discussion paper – follow up actions will be included in the actions list.

Next meeting: The next meeting will be held on 2 March 2017 from 3.30pm to 6.00pm.

Williamtown Community Reference Group

RAAF Base Williamtown Site Tour – Community questions and responses

Site tour discussion & questions

Question	Response	Follow Up Action
Nick Marshall (NM) asked Defence what needs to be done to put treatment of water leaving base on the agenda for Moors Drain? This related to planning and timeframes.	<p>Vicki Pearce (VP) advised that contract negotiations are currently underway with a US contractor to initially install a size plant as a trial in Moors Drain. If the contract proceeds, it is anticipated that this smaller plant will be installed by late March 2017, with a bigger plant to be established by late July 2017.</p> <p>Defence asked that the Community acknowledge that this timeframe is subject to current negotiations and that all external messaging reflect this terminology. However, VP also advised that if these negotiations were not successful, then Defence will negotiate with another contractor. Action is assured and off-base flows remain VP's highest priority.</p>	<p>When in a position to do so, Defence to advise outcome of negotiations and confirm installation timeframe.</p> <p>To Note: All external messaging about the Moors Drain small plant to specify that “timeframes on establishing the plant is subject to the outcomes of Defence’s current negotiations”</p>
P Blanch (PB) raised concerns about the clearing of drains and the impacts this would have on the fishing industry.	PB advised that a presentation regarding this issue was provided at the previous meeting and that EPA to discuss (and possibly other fishers) so they are informed of the work to be undertaken, including removal of soil sediment.	EPA to contact PB regarding a group meeting to brief fishers.
Will documentation related to sampling of water moving through the treatment plant, both pre and post filtration be available?	Defence are working towards providing all data on their website within the next 4 weeks. Once this has commented, it is intended to post these on a weekly basis.	Defence to advise CRG when data is available on website and provide the direct links to DPC for distribution.
Concerns raised about the possibility of the tanks holding the contaminated water being breached due to severe weather event or other event.	<p>VP advised that while nothing is impossible however, every risk factor had been taken into account when building the plant and as advised on the tour, it is highly over-engineered.</p> <p>Defence advised they could incorporate information about the fail safes in place as part of their FAQ on the plant.</p>	<p>Defence to include information regarding the sampling and filtration processes into the Treatment Plant FAQ.</p> <p>Once completed, FAQ to be provided to DPC for distribution.</p>

Endorsed Minutes

Was bunding of the filtration plant considered?	VP advised that the plant has been lifted well above the normal land level and that it is positioned on what is considered one of the highest points on the Base. However, Defence will ask the Contractors for more information as to this decision. .	VP to seek greater clarification from the Contractors as to why bunding was not seen to be required – by 3/2/2017
Official request from GRG members to meet with new Parliamentary Secretary		DPC to arrange a meeting between the new Parliamentary Secretary, Catherine Cusack and the CRG community members. – completed held 10/02/2017
Request that a copy of the reference study on serum levels quoted in the Department of Health fact sheets be provided to the CRG community members.		Dr Kat Taylor to provide the article to DPC for distribution – completed 3/2/2017
The community wished to know what are the big green boxes located at entrance to Moors Drain, Richardson Road and Cabbage Tree Road for?	Photographs of the boxes were provided to Defence and the EPA. Defence and EPA believed that could be the water level loggers however, they would confirm.	Defence (and EPA) to investigate what the green boxes (as captured in provided photographs) are and advise DPC for advice to the CRG – by 2/3/2017
What is being done to improve communications and information dissemination?	<p>Defence fact sheets covering the new base filtration plant capability is in draft, expect to get out in next couple of weeks. A monthly information update being considered. Hard copy versions work best for the community. Communications options were discussed in relation to providing leaflets in shops, service stations, etc.</p> <p>However, the Chair also advised that a draft Defence/EPA/NSW Government communications strategy being drafted on behalf of the CRG. All these options could be captured within this strategy and was agreed that testing of the strategy with community members will take place before it is finalised.</p> <p>Evelina Hendry is now responsible for the EPA Williamstown webpage.</p>	<p>Draft Communications Strategy to be brought to the CRG for comment/input – by 2/3/2017.</p> <p>Agenda item.</p>
	In closing, Lindsay Clout thanked the meeting for everyone participating in such a cooperative meeting. This was welcomed by all participants.	