

# Endorsed Minutes

## 3 March 2016

<b>Meeting:</b>	<b>Williamtown Contamination Investigation Community Reference Group (CRG)</b>	<b>Date:</b> 3 March 2016
<b>Location:</b>	<b>Newcastle Airport Board Room</b>	<b>Time:</b> 4.10 to 6:30pm
<b>Number:</b>	<b>1604</b>	
<b>Chairperson:</b>	Jodie Calvert   Asst Regional Coordinator   Department of Premier and Cabinet (DPC)	
<b>Secretariat:</b>	Cheryl Clarke   Regional Liaison Officer   DPC	
<b>Attendees:</b>	Scot MacDonald   Parliamentary Secretary for Hunter & Central Coast	
	Adam Gilligan   Manager Hunter Region   Environment Protection Authority (EPA)	
	Jeremy Hillman   Senior Stakeholder & Communications Officer   EPA	
	Prof David Durrheim   Director Health Protection   Hunter New England Local Health District	
	Glenda Briggs   Regional Manager   Department of Primary Industries	
	Air Commodore Craig Heap   Department of Defence	
	James McLachlan   Department of Defence	
	Vicki Pearce   Department of Defence	
	Bruce Dawson   Department of Defence (contractor)	
	Helen Horn   Department of Defence	
	Wayne Wallis   General Manager   Port Stephens Council	
	Robert Gauta   Manager, Commercial Fisherman's Coop	
	Don Burgoyne   NSW Farmer's Association   Community Member & Oyster Farmer	
	Phil Blanch   Community Member and Fisher's Representative	
	Cornelius Disselkoen   Maria's Vegetable Farm   Community Member	
	Lyndsay Clout   President, Fullerton Cove Action Group & Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group	
	Cain Gorfine   President, Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group	
	Rhianna Gorfine   Co-convenor, Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group	

**Apologies** Air Vice Marshal Greg Evans | Department of Defence

Andrew Smith | CEO Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council | Community Member

Mark Salm | NSW Farmer's Association | Community Member & Oyster Farmer

Justin Hamilton | Fullerton Cove Action Group & Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group

Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
1604-1	DPC to explore Defence's advice regarding a formal request for Commonwealth contribution to residents' plumbing costs.	DPC	ASAP
1604-2	Circulate revised Flyer and personal message from Chantel Walker.	DPC	completed
1604-3	Circulate link to webpage on Cabbage Tree Road Sand Quarry.	EPA/DPC	completed
1604-4	Review the Human Health Risk Assessment Survey Form and provide feedback to Defence	All	ASAP
1604-5	Prepare a covering document for the Human Health Risk Assessment Survey that shows endorsement from the Expert Panel, NSW Health and the CRG, for review by CRG members.	EPA/Health/Defence	ASAP
1604-6	Circulate Defence presentation to CRG members	Defence/DPC	completed
1604-7	Circulate link to the Defence website to access the Fact Sheets on Stage 2B Investigation and the Residential Bore and Tank Sampling Methodology.	Defence/DPC	ASAP
1604-8	Prepare brochure to inform the community on the progress of all activities on the base for distribution to CRG and letter box drop.	Defence	ASAP
1604-9	Defence to provide advice in writing on the reasons why remediation technology supplied by CRC Care is not being used for Williamtown	Defence	ASAP

Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
<b>1604-10</b>	Advise the Salt Ash Community First Group of the CRG nomination results and forward governance documents	DPC	completed
<b>1604-11</b>	Coordinate CRG response to questions from the Salt Ash Community First Group	DPC	17.3.16
<b>1604-12</b>	Circulate the email from CRG Chair to Salt Ash Community First Group to CRG members	DPC	completed
<b>1604-13</b>	Phil Blanch to provide advice in writing to Chair on his understanding of fishing arrangements below the Hexham Bridge for clarification with Doug Ferrell.	Phil/DPC/DPI	completed

## Meeting minutes

Item / Issue	Response	Decision
<b>2. Endorsement of Minutes</b>	Endorsed	Minutes to be circulated
<b>3. Actions List</b>	<p><b>1503-3, 1503-4, 1504-6, 1505-1, 1506-3</b> - Plan and Factsheets for communicating Defence's Sampling and Quality Program (Stage 2B) – see agenda item 4 presentation by Vicki Pearce.</p> <p><b>1602-8</b> Defence Project Plan of key activities and timelines is in development.</p> <p><b>1602-1</b> Defence has commenced releasing the actual test result of residential sampling to the community and will also release results relating to previous communications.</p> <p><b>1603-2</b> FAQs/information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- bottled water delivery to be uploaded to Defence PFC Environmental Management Program website.</li> <li>- 19.1.16 RAAF Base Williamtown Drinking Water Incident is being revised to ensure accuracy.</li> <li>- Powerpoint presentation on capital facilities projects and NACC stormwater management to be uploaded to Defence PFC Environmental Management Program website.</li> </ul> <p>Defence is preparing a FAQ sheet on how to access tankered water.</p> <p>EPA Website – EPA advised that the website is experiencing technical difficulties which are preventing access to the endorsed minutes. The issue is now resolved.</p> <p><b>1602 -6</b> - Defence will consider a formal submission from the NSW Government for a contribution towards the Water Reticulation costs of residents/businesses.</p>	DPC to explore Defence's advice regarding a formal request

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		for Commonwealth contribution to residents' plumbing costs.
	<p><b>1603-3</b> – Contacts Flyer has been updated with PSC Hardship policy details and a message from Chantel Walker.</p> <p>The CRG extends its appreciation to Chantel Walker for her contribution towards encouraging others to access available services.</p>	Circulate Flyer and personal message to CRG
	<p><b>1603-5</b> Phil and Rob noted that voluntary closures were made by the fishers following a test in December 2015. Prawners made this decision on the basis that there would be more testing and this has not occurred. Further testing is required given the transient nature of prawns and fish and to inform decision making around closures. Clarification is needed on whether fishing is allowed below Hexham Bridge.</p>	Phil Blanch to provide advice in writing to Chair on his understanding of fishing arrangements below the Hexham Bridge for clarification with Doug Ferrell
	<p><b>1603-6</b> – The meeting between Defence Legal and Fishers is expected to be held towards the end of March. Don advised that Defence Legal wanted to speak to two representatives per group and include farmers.</p>	
	<p><b>1603-8</b> - see agenda item 7</p>	
	<p><b>1603-10</b> - 1603-14 Adam advised that all submissions relating to the Cabbage Tree Road Sand Quarry are contained on the website.</p>	Circulate link to webpage on Cabbage Tree Road Sand Quarry.
	<p><b>1603-12</b> Defence will prepare a Fact Sheet on their position regarding blocking of drains from RAAF Base. EPA to review. A presentation by PSC on ownership, responsibilities and management of drains will be given at the CRG meeting on 17 March 2016. Advice on the interagency meeting on 14 March 2016 will also be provided.</p>	
<b>4. Presentation</b>	<b>Defence – Stage 2B Investigation Plan</b>	
	Vicki Pearce provided a powerpoint presentation of current and completed activities under Defence's Stage 2B Investigation.	
	Key points noted include:	
	<p>(i) <b>Objectives</b> Key objectives are to ensure community has safe drinking water; understand nature/extent of impact; hydrogeological assessment; human health and environment risk assessment; and inform remediation/management options.</p>	
	<p>(ii) <b>Challenges</b> There are many challenges arising in Williamstown that are</p>	

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	<p>not necessarily present in other contamination areas and there is limited regulatory guidance and limited remediation technologies.</p> <p>(iii) <b>Stage 2B Activities</b>                      Key activities include HHRA, nature and extent assessment and management options assessment which are being conducted concurrently.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There have been 400+ groundwater wells (Stage 2 and residential) and 1300+ other PFC samples collected as part of the Environmental Investigation Sampling.</li> <li>- Groundwater testing is occurring to assist in understanding migratory pathways and understand risk. In addition, a Groundwater Flow model is under development with the Hunter Water model being used as a starting point.</li> <li>- Monitoring wells have been installed onsite and offsite with the outcome of the investigation to determine how long they need to remain in place.</li> <li>- Residential Bore Sampling Program figures as at 26 February 2016 are:                         <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Number of properties accessed 194</li> <li>- Number of bores sampled: 205 with 30 detects, 13 exceed adopted drinking water criteria</li> <li>- Rain water tanks sampled: 150 with 2 detects, nil exceeding criteria</li> <li>- Swimming pools samples: 20 with 2 detects (corresponding bore water had nil detects)</li> <li>- Surface Water samples: 4 with 1 detect.</li> </ul> </li> <li>- Additional sampling includes 362 groundwater, 66 surface water and 83 sediment samples.</li> </ul> <p>Cain noted that the ratio of 4 to 1 for surface water is high and the residents would like to see sampling of surface water increased.</p> <p>(iv) <b>Community Engagement</b>                      Defence noted a range of community engagement strategies implemented including community information session on 16 September 2015, 999 enquiries from 425 people, Defence Project Website, drinking water assistance to 51 properties and CRG engagement.</p> <p>(v) <b>Water Survey</b>                      Defence is proposing a walk-in session in early April to complete water use surveys and seek feedback from the CRG as to whether this would be the most appropriate strategy to engage with the community. Community members noted that participation would likely increase if the survey was issued by an agency other than Defence. There was discussion around the need to ensure that the community understands the importance of the survey, the need for accurate data, where the information is going and how it is being used.</p>	<p>Review the Survey Form and provide feedback to Defence</p>

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	<p>Health advised that the human health risk assessment will enable accurate health advice to the community and it depends on two sets of data:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Detailed measures of PFCs in the various potential exposure routes e.g. drinking water, food, recreational water by direct measurement</li> <li>2. Amount of exposure by each exposure route amongst community members</li> </ol> <p>This will allow the Chief Scientist's expert panel to provide specific guidance on which exposures e.g. foods are safe and how much of other foods can be consumed every week without exceeding the tolerable limits.</p> <p>The collection of samples throughout the investigation zone with laboratory testing currently underway will address 1.</p> <p>The completion of the exposure survey, will address 2. The more surveys that are completed by community members, the more accurate will be the advice the Expert Panel can provide.</p> <p>The CRG agreed that a covering letter with simple explanatory language and endorsement from the CRG, Expert Panel and NSW Agencies would be beneficial.</p>	
	<p><b>(vi) Remediation</b></p> <p>Defence advised that there are no known remediation options. Defence will shortly be ready to undertake a feasibility assessment of a pilot trial in the former fire training area. They are currently determining the most effective location for a water treatment plant and undertaking a functionality assessment of surface drains to determine appropriate management action.</p> <p>Rhianna noted that the community continues to seek information about the wells and seeks a proactive approach from Defence to sharing information. Defence noted that a brochure is currently in development to inform the community on activities occurring on the base and will letter-box drop when finalised.</p> <p>The community also seeks clarification on the reasons that technology used by CRC Care is not being used at Williamtown.</p>	<p>Prepare a covering document for the Human Health Risk Assessment Survey that shows endorsement from the Expert Panel, NSW Health and the CRG, for review by CRG members.</p> <p>Prepare brochure to inform the community on the progress of all activities on the base for distribution to CRG and letter box drop.</p> <p>Defence to provide advice in writing on the reasons why remediation technology</p>

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	<p><b>(vii) Project Delivery Schedule</b></p> <p>Defence advised that their project delivery schedule is</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(viii) Stage 2B Environmental site assessment – 30 June 2016</li> <li>(ix) Human health risk assessment – 30 July 2016 with data provided beforehand</li> <li>(x) Qualitative Ecological Risk Assessment – 30 August 2016</li> <li>(xi) Long Term Management Planning – to be advised.</li> </ul> <p>Defence confirmed that raw data will be provided to the Expert Panel.</p> <p>The CRG requested a copy of the presentation.</p> <p>Defence tabled two Fact Sheets which will uploaded to the Defence website:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(xii) RAAF Base Williamtown Environmental: Investigation: Residential Bore &amp; Tank Sampling Methodology</li> <li>(xiii) RAAF Base Williamtown Stage 2B Environmental Investigation.</li> </ul>	<p>supplied by CRC Care is not being used for Williamtown</p> <p>Circulate Defence presentation to CRG for uploading to websites and social media pages</p> <p>Circulate link to website for Fact Sheets</p>
<b>5. Community feedback and issues (by exception)</b>	<p><b>Community Feedback and Issues</b></p> <p><b>Salt Ash Public School P&amp;C Association</b></p> <p>The Chair noted the resignation of the Salt Ash PS P&amp;C representative which was accepted.</p> <p><b>Salt Ash Community First</b></p> <p>Nominations have been received from Salt Ash Community First (SACF) for two representatives to become members of the CRG. The CRG agreed to accept one nomination with a proxy who can attend when Mr Smith is not available.</p> <p>The Chair was also approached by SACF around making the meetings more visible to the community. Options discussed included webcasts, audio recordings or having observers within the meeting. During discussion, the community members noted that they were volunteers and felt uncomfortable participating in a meeting in which they would be filmed or recorded. There is also a need to ensure individual privacy and confidentiality for those people within the community that have referred their personal situational concerns to the CRG for response.</p> <p>Under these circumstances, the CRG members considered that</p>	<p>Advise the Salt Ash Community First Group of the CRG nomination results and forward governance documents</p>



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	<p>transparency is being met through the current arrangements of providing meeting minutes and actions on agency websites, community social media accounts and open discussion with CRG representatives.</p> <p><b>Letter from Salt Ash Community First</b></p> <p>The Chair circulated a letter from Salt Ash Community First which contained questions addressed to agencies. The CRG noted that most of the questions have already been addressed and answers available in the public domain. DPC will coordinate a response to the letter and seek feedback from the CRG prior to responding. The Chair will also circulate a copy of emails previously forwarded to SACF.</p>	<p>Coordinate CRG response to questions from the Salt Ash Community First Group; seeking feedback from the CRG prior to response</p> <p>Circulate the email from CRG Chair to Salt Ash Community First Group to CRG members</p>
	<p><b>Maitland Public Pool</b></p> <p>The Parliamentary Secretary received a question from the community regarding whether the pool sources its water from a bore beneath the pool grounds which is only a short distance from Fisheries Creek. EPA advised that Maitland Public Pool is drawing its water from the main network so there is no contamination issue regarding the pool.</p>	
	<p><b>Trucks transporting fill from RAAF Base</b></p> <p>Jeremy raised a concern from the community around whether trucks leaving the RAAF Base contain PFOS/PFOA contamination. Defence confirmed that PFOS/PFOA contaminated fill remains on the base and securely covered. Other waste products are transported in accordance with guidelines. Defence clarified its approach to the management of fill excavated from construction sites at RAAF Base Williamtown after the meeting as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Soil is tested ahead of any construction/excavation activities.</li> <li>○ If PFOS / PFOA is detected in soil and the concentrations are below acceptable levels, excavated soil remains on base for re-use.</li> <li>○ If PFOS / PFOA is detected in soil and the concentrations are below acceptable levels, but the presence of other contaminants, such as asbestos, prevents the re-use of excavated soil on base, the soil is classified under NSW Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Guidelines, and if approved by the NSW EPA, is transported under strict control measures to a licensed waste management facility for treatment and disposal.</li> <li>○ If PFOS / PFOA is detected in soil and the concentrations are above acceptable levels, excavated soil is stockpiled on base, applying strict erosion and leaching controls. Arrangements for</li> </ul>	



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	<p>the subsequent removal and/or treatment of this soil off base to a licensed waste management facility is subject to NSW EPA Guidelines and approval. This process has yet to be finalised.</p> <p><b>Letter to Premier</b></p> <p>Lindsay advised that he has not received a response to his letter of 6 February 2016. Lindsay also advised that he has written to the Governor General detailing the problems faced by the community given Mr Cosgrove's ongoing standing as a member of the community.</p> <p><b>Other concerns</b> raised by the community include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The pressing need to stop the flow from the RAAF Base.</li> <li>- There has not been enough visibility of what Defence has been doing behind the scenes.</li> </ul>	
<b>6. Agency Reports (by exception)</b>	<p><b>Defence</b></p> <p>Defence advised that the Assistant Minister for Defence will tour the RAAF Base on 7 March 2016 followed by specially convened meetings with the ERG and CRG. This provides the community</p> <p><b>Environmental Protection Authority</b></p> <p>No report</p> <p><b>NSW Health</b></p> <p>No report</p> <p><b>Department of Primary Industries</b></p> <p>No report</p>	
<b>7. Financial Hardship Package</b>	<p>A meeting was held between Department of Defence, Department of Human Services (DHS), Department of Premier and Cabinet and Department of Primary Industries to raise concerns by fishers regarding the financial assistance package. It was ascertained that Defence Legal and Policy and Governance sections developed the original policy around the package with implementation by the DHS. Issues noted include: brand damage and exclusion of oyster farmers; \$20K business hardship payment exhausted; \$5K one-off payment not sufficient when expenses are ongoing; confusion around the package and entitlements; and expectations beyond 30 June. Phil noted an example of being refused an application for the business hardship payment.</p> <p>Key outcomes include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Department of Human Services will provide greater detail on the types of support/financial assistance that fishers may be able to access, noting that there are other options beyond income recovery that might be more appropriate to individual circumstances.</li> <li>- Fishers are encouraged to not self-exclude their eligibility but to apply for financial assistance as each application is considered on an individual basis.</li> <li>- Department of Human Services is currently developing a number of FAQs on how the assistance works. These will</li> </ul>	

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	be distributed upon receipt. DPC will continue to liaise with Department of Defence and DHS around the level of financial support in the package.	
8. Business Impact Survey Form	PSC advised that 28 replies had been received to date. A report will be provided to CRG at the April meeting.	
9. Other business	<b>Letter from Defence re Lake Cochrane</b> The Parliamentary Secretary advised that a letter has been received from Defence confirming that no water from Lake Cochrane was used in fire-fighting activities in December 2015.	
10. Future meetings	Thursday 17 March 2016, 4.00 – 6.00pm, Newcastle Airport Boardroom.	

Meeting closed 6.30pm

Next meeting 4.00-6.00pm Thursday 17 March at Newcastle Airport Boardroom.