

Endorsed Minutes

11 May 2017

Meeting:	Williamtown Contamination Investigation Community Reference Group (CRG)		
Date:	11 May 2017		
Location:	Newcastle Airport Boardroom	Time: 3:30pm – 5:40pm	
Number:	1705		
Chairperson:	Jodie Calvert Principal Coordinator Department of Premier and Cabinet		
Secretariat:	Kristen McPherson CRG Secretariat Coordination Support Officer Department of Premier and Cabinet		
Attendees:	<p>Vicki Pearce PFAS Environmental Management & Remediation Department of Defence Department of Defence</p> <p>Michelle Butler Senior Liaison Officer Williamtown Department of Defence</p> <p>Kurt Rezek Defence Contractor</p> <p>Sarah Davis Project Officer Department of Defence</p> <p>Karen Marler Manager Hunter Region EPA</p> <p>Glenda Briggs Regional Manager Department of Primary Industries</p> <p>Dr Kat Taylor Hunter New England Local Health District</p> <p>Kathy Kent Department of Human Services</p> <p>Wayne Wallis General Manager Port Stephens Council</p> <p>Rob Gauta Manager, Commercial Fishermen’s Coop</p> <p>Nick Marshall Salt Ash Community First</p> <p>Kim Smith Salt Ash Community First</p> <p>Lindsay Clout Fullerton Cove Action Group & Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group</p>		
Apologies	<p>Air Commodore Craig Heap Department of Defence</p> <p>Adam Gilligan Regional Director North Environment Protection Authority (EPA)</p> <p>Sam Waskett Acting/ Williamtown PFAS Community Engagement Officer EPA</p> <p>Prof David Durrheim Hunter New England Local Health District</p> <p>Justin Hamilton Fullerton Cove Action Group & Williamtown Salt Ash Flood Group</p> <p>Cornelius Disselkoen Maria’s Vegetable Farm Community Member</p> <p>Andrew Smith CEO Worimi Local Aboriginal Land Council Community Member</p> <p>Don Burgoyne NSW Farmer’s Association Community Member & Oyster Farmer</p> <p>Mark Salm NSW Farmer’s Association Community Member & Oyster Farmer</p> <p>Cain Gorfine President, Williamtown and Surrounds Residents Action Group</p> <p>Phil Blanch Community Member and Fisher’s Representative</p>		

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Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
1705-1	Kim Smith & Nick Marshall to provide Secretariat with wording they want included in the minutes of meeting held 7 April 2017.	Kim Smith & Nick Marshall	26/5/17
1705-2	Secretariat to circulated amended minutes to CRG for endorsement	DPC	when amendments received
1705-3	EPA to make enquiries of Hunter Water regarding soil piles on the side of the road near the Hunter Water Treatment Plant on Masonite & Tomago Road	EPA	15/6/17
1705-4	DPI to increase distribution of 2 page flyer to include local shops such as Paul's Corner and local recreational fishing shops.	DPI	9/6/17
1705-5	Defence to provide information around Scope for the regional drain assessment	Defence	15/6/17
1705-6	Moors Drain Update to be listed as a standing agenda item	DPC	15/6/17
1705-7	Defence to provide a copy of Will Minchin's presentation to the CRG and EPA to upload onto EPA website	Defence/EPA	30/5/17
1705-8	EPA to explore opportunities for videoing presentations provided to the CRG for wider community viewing.	EPA	15/6/17
1705-9	EPA to clarify bore use in the area	EPA	15/6/17
1705-10	Health to distribute any methodology around the Epi Study.	Health	15/6/17
1705-11	Defence to distribute information on federal budget announcement	Defence	15/6/17
1705-12	Chair to prepare a formal request to go to Defence asking for Federal Health and ANU attend the next meeting of the CRG in person to advise what is happening with the Epi Study and community consultation	Chair/Defence	30/5/17

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Number	Action Item	Responsible	Due Date
1705-13	Defence to provide clarification on the demonstration Water Treatment Plant operations.	Defence	15/6/17
1705-14	Sarah Davis to follow up with AECOM about any outstanding results for sampling completed in January 2017	Defence	19/5/17
1705-15	Kim Smith to contact residents who have experienced issues with the Hotline and ask them to contact Sarah Davis. This is related to outstanding action item 1704-6.	Kim Smith	15/6/17
1705-16	EPA to find out further information about the Mark Taylor report.	EPA	19/5/17
1705-17	Vicki Pearce to seek clarification from Defence Legal about residents being advised they cannot make a claim for compensation now the guidance values are lower.	Defence	15/6/17
1705-18	Defence to clarify how many residents in Fullerton Cove have been connected to town water	Defence	15/6/17

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Meeting minutes

1. Welcome and Introductions

Chair welcomed all attendees, read apologies received and gave an Acknowledgement of Country.

2. Minutes of Meeting

2.1 Endorsement of Minutes – 7 April 2017

Kim Smith and Nick Marshall requested the minutes contain more of the wording they contributed to the meeting.

Minutes will be circulated out of session for CRG endorsement.

Action Item 1: Kim Smith & Nick Marshall to provide Secretariat with wording they want included in the minutes of meeting held 7 April 2017.

Action Item 2: Secretariat to circulate amended minutes to CRG for endorsement

2.2 Action Items update

1703-4 – Glenda Briggs advised the Dusky Flathead Closure was formally lifted on 18/4/2017

1704-1 - Lindsay Clout had call today from some bush walkers advising there was a mountain of soil dumped on the side of the road near the Hunter Water Treatment Plant on Masonite & Tomago Road.

Action Item 3: EPA to make enquiries of Hunter Water regarding soil on side of road near the Hunter Water Treatment Plant on Masonite & Tomago Road.

1704-3 – Glenda Briggs advised DPI has been working with EPA and the Commercial Fishermen's Cooperative to develop flyers outlining key information for recreational fishers and those buying local fish. The flyers will be distributed by DPI via fishing inspectors, local bait and tackle outlets. The flyers will also be uploaded onto the EPA website.

Nick Marshall requested the 2 page flyer be distributed to local shops such as Paul's Corner and recreational fishing shops.

Action Item 4: DPI increase distribution of 2 page flyer to include local shops such as Paul's Corner and local recreational fishing shops

1704-4 – Vicki Pearce spoke with the National Measurement Institute (NMI) on the information provided to a resident regarding testing levels. It was difficult for NMI to follow up on the information without specific details about the resident.

Vicki advised Defence is testing to the limit of reporting. 0.01 is the standard level, Ultra trace can be used to go lower but this method has a higher level of uncertainty.

1704-6 – Ongoing – Defence still to determine what hotline number people are calling – there are two difference numbers one for PFAS health hotline and the Defence hotline.

1704-12 - Defence are currently developing the Scope to undertake a regional

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drainage assessment.

Nick Marshall had a question regarding the drain works covered in outstanding item 1702-5 – EPA advised the new Community Engagement Officer Bianca Evan will contact Phil before drain cleaning works commence.

Lindsay Clout had a question regarding the Flood Plain study work undertaken by Michael Osborne. Defence advised this was the first they had heard of this study.

Defence advised they had met with the Port Stephens Council on 27 April 2017.

Defence is currently scoping for a regional drain assessment that will include the drain network on RAAF Williamtown and surrounding areas. Defence is unsure of the timeframe for the Scope. It is a big task and Defence wants to take a holistic approach. Defence will look at any work that has previously been done and feed it into the scoping process

Action Item 5 - Defence to provide information around Scope for a the regional drain assessment

Action Item 6 - Moors Drain Update to be listed as a standing agenda item

3. Presentation – Will Minchin – Consultant with AECOM

Will Minchin, a Hydrogeologist contracted to AECOM had considerable input into the 2016 reports prepared by AECOM.

Will gave a very informative presentation on 'upwelling' and the general hydrology of the Williamtown area.

Some questions were asked from the community representatives.

Lindsay Clout – how did you get around the bores quick enough to get accurate results?

Answer: they perform a 5 day dipping round, Hunter Water conducts manual dips and Defence use automatic loggers, the regional picture is very consistent.

Lindsay Clout – spoke about the different presentations received over the past 2 years and this presentation was very good.

Nick Marshall – advised the original request for this presentation came from Don Burgoyne regarding upwelling in Tilligerry Creek.

Agreed Don Burgoyne can contact Will Minchin to discuss specifics of upwelling in the Tilligerry Creek.

Nick Marshall – Raised a question regarding the contamination leaving the base for 50 years, the Salt Ash area comes from the drains, significant area of bores used by Hunter Water over the years that are now not used, has this change affected the contamination spread.

Will advised there is a small local effect around the pumping station and he will look at different before and after data comparison.

Kat Taylor commended Will on the clarity of the presentation and felt the community would benefit from this type of presentation.

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EPA advised as a better way to communicate with the community they will look digital delivery of presentations given to the CRG.

Defence advised the 2017 Environment Site Assessment report being prepared by AECOM will be finalised in August for publishing

Glenda Briggs asked if locals have stopped using their bores, will that have an impact on flows?

Nick Marshall asked have we been told not to use bores?

Lindsay Clout – clearly remembers being given a presentation by Adam Gilligan and told not to use bores

Kim Smith advised some residents received a letter mid to late last year advising them not to use bores. Kim advised a lot of people are still using their bores because they have not been told to stop.

Wayne Wallis informed members there is a problem with licenced and non licenced bores. Only residents with licenced bores would have received a letter.

Action Item 7 – Defence to provide a copy of Will Minchin's presentation to the CRG and EPA to upload onto EPA website

Request made by Nick Marshall & Kim Smith that copies of future presentations are given to the CRG before the actual presentation is given.

Action Item 8 – EPA to explore opportunities for videoing presentations provided to the CRG for wider community viewing.

Action Item 9 – EPA to clarify bore use in the area

4. Briefing – Dr Peter Cock, CEO Newcastle Airport Pty Limited (NAPL)

Dr Peter Cock gave a briefing on a project to update airport's approved 2007 Master Plan. The purpose of the planning is to ensure that NAPL are able to provide adequate infrastructure to accommodate the near term needs of the region for civilian air transport services and safeguard future requirements.

The normal planning horizon for airport master plans is 20 years; Newcastle Airport has conformed to this standard as well as looking to determine the ultimate capacity by using a 60 year horizon. The purpose of the "over the horizon" 60 year view is to ensure safeguarding of opportunities, rather than provide specific predictions.

The Master Plan assesses both a reasonable case and high passenger growth scenarios, though as is normal all planning is undertaken on the reasonable case passenger growth. Notwithstanding the plan is not yet finalised the working forecast for planning purposes is that by 2036 throughput could reach 2.65 million passengers per year, up from the current 1.2 million. In addition the current planning indicates that within a 60 year horizon a single runway system will have sufficient capacity to both accommodate RAAF's required capability and predicted civilian air traffic. This is based on a number of assumptions including the construction of a taxiway on the civilian side of the airfield and continuing to enhance cooperation between military and civilian activities, though does not anticipate any reduction in RAAF capability.

Kim Smith requested a copy of the Lendlease Masterplan. She advised a community representative attended a function where Defence and Council spoke about upgrades to the airport to include a second runway. Peter Cock indicated that he was not aware of any contract between NAPL and Lendlease, particular that there were none associated with major construction or planning activities.

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Peter Cock confirmed the presentation provided by Group Captain Pat Cooper was about the New Air Combat Capability (NACC) project and not about a second runway. Lendlease is the contractor who is undertaking the work on behalf Defence.

Peter Cock provided clarity around ownership of the airport. He informed the group the land is owned by the Department of Defence. NAPL owns and operates the terminal, aprons, carparks, runway, BAE and Jetstar hangers and leases the land from Defence.

As part of the 28 year lease, NAPL requires Defence consent for any land use changes prior to seeking Council approval.

Kim Smith enquired whether NAPL has conducted had any water testing on the airport land and did it contain PFAS. Peter Cock advised water testing had been undertaken and PFAS was detected but results are not available.

Nick Marshall asked if NAPL was connected to the Hunter Water network, Peter Cock confirmed it was.

Nick Marshall asked if NAPL had any plans for the land near the sewerage treatment plant, Peter Cock advised that was not NAPL land but privately owned and was part of the Williamstown Defence and Airport Related Employment Zone (DAREZ) development area which may ultimately be needed to support airport growth.

Peter Cock extended an open invitation to provide regular updates to the CRG if they wish.

5. Agency Update

5.1 Fishers update (Coxswain training) – Glenda Briggs

Glenda advised training to fishers to undertake Coxswain training will occur at the end of the month. DPI had initial funding for six places but received such a positive response they increased funding to cover ten places for the 5 day training course.

5.2 Dusky Flathead – Glenda Briggs

Ban lifted 18/4/2017

Health – Dr Kat Taylor

Health undertook sessions with GP's but had limited uptake.

Nick Marshall asked if doctors can recommend PFAS testing for patients due to the increase exposure and why can't Dr's recommend more blood tests?

Kim Smith asked was there more money in the federal budget for health research study

Vicki Pearce advised the Federal Budget announcement is for \$12.5 million over the next four years to establish a national research program into the health effects of prolonged exposure to PFAS contamination.

Dr Taylor advised there are legitimate reasons to look at re-testing but given the current uncertainties around interpretation and the need for improved scientific understanding of the chemicals, it shouldn't be in the hands of GP's but as part of a research study.

Kim Smith and Nick Marshall advised that the community do not trust Defence or State government agencies.

A discussion ensued around the Epidemiological Study (Epi Study) and the

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methodology used.

There was a concern raised by residents that Epi Study results contain private information and only Defence knows the results. The group were advised this is not the case.

The Chair advised the group needs a better understanding of the methodology around the Epi Study and will need to start consulting with the community.

Action Item 10 – Health to distribute any methodology around the Epi Study.

Action Item 11 – Defence to distribute information on federal budget announcement

Action Item 12 – Chair to prepare a formal request to go to Defence asking for Federal Health and ANU attend the next meeting of the CRG in person to advise what is happening with the Epi Study and community consultation

EPA – Karen Marler

Waste Management Plan due in mid-June will be go before CRG when released for comment with a view to commencing work in September/October.

Sam Waskett (EPA) met with reps from CSIRO on site at RAAF Base and undertook some base sampling of the Base and drains.

Nick Marshall asked if they will share the sampling results with the CRG. Karen advised she didn't see why this couldn't occur.

Defence – Vicki Pearce

Defence expects the new demonstration water treatment plant (WTP) unit to arrive on 29 May 2017. It is anticipated the WTP will be operational 3-4 weeks after its arrival.

Vicki Pearce advised there are three outlets to the Moors Drain. The demonstration WTP will be located at the exit point of Moors Drain which is located on Defence land and will treat the general outflow. The WPT will not be operational due periods of high rainfall.

Nick Marshall queried the decision about the placement of the unit and asked why isn't being placed where the three drains meet. Vicki Pearce advised there were several factors that needed to be considered as there are logistical issues with locating the unit off base. The unit is only a demonstration unit and its size would not cope with treating three drain exit points.

Kim Smith asked how much the unit costs, Vicki Pearce advised she doesn't know that answer but can find out. Kim Smith also raised a concern that it appears to be a lot of time, effort and money for nothing. Kim Smith queried why Defence doesn't use the larger model on all three drains like the one used at Lake Cochran.

Vicki Pearce advised the WTP is a demonstration model and is an entirely different WTP to the one at Lake Cochran.

Action Item 13 – Defence to provide clarification on the demonstration Water Treatment Plant operations.

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6. General Business

Kim Smith advised she has been contacted by a community member advising they have not been provided with the test results from bore water sampling that occurred in January.

Sarah Davis advised AECOM are preparing letters. Vicki Pearce advised that she was not aware of any sampling from January where the results have not being provided.

Action Item 14 – Sarah Davis to follow up with AECOM about any outstanding results for sampling completed in January 2017.

Kim Smith advised community members are still having problems with hotline – refer to Outstanding Action item 1704-6. Sarah Davis advised Defence still needs to understand which hotline the residents have contacted in order to improve hotline responses.

Kim Smith also queried why Defence was taking charge of the Senator McGrath visit next Wednesday 17 May 2017 and if the visit was being held on the Base.

Vicki Pearce advised Defence was made aware of the visit last night, 10 May 2017. Senator McGrath's office is finalising details of the visit which could involve a tour of the base but at this stage Defence has no further details.

Kim Smith asked about the Mark Taylor report into the EPA, Kim has been advised it is on the EPA website.

Action Item 15 – Kim Smith to contact residents who have experienced issues with the Hotline and ask them to contact Sarah Davis.

Action Item 16 - EPA to find out further information about the Mark Taylor report.

Nick Marshall queried whether agencies were able to provide details about the works occurring across from the base. He advised there is a concrete barrier and water pumping out of an underground bore near the service station.

Vicki Pearce advised Defence is not conducting any work in that location.

CRG members were not sure of the purpose of the works and it was suggested it could be the installation of the National Broadband Network (NBN).

Nick Marshall sort clarification around the impact of the April release of the final health base guidance values on residents ability to claim for compensation. He advised that 55 residents were told by Defence Legal they were unable to claim as their levels were not affected.

Vicki Pearce advised she was not aware of people not being able to lodge a claim and would seek clarification from Defence Legal.

Action Item 17 – Vicki Pearce to seek clarification from Defence Legal about residents being advised they cannot make a claim for compensation now the guidance values are lower.

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Lindsay Clout raised a concern regarding water connections. Lindsay Clout advised residents were assured two meetings ago that work would start in Fullerton Cove at the beginning of April. He stated nothing has happened and he has residents who have advised they have made numerous phone calls with no results.

Sarah Davis advised work has commenced in Fullerton Cove and to date, eight properties have been connected.

Action Item 18 – Defence to clarify how many residents in Fullerton Cove have been connected to town water..

7. Next meeting 22 June 2017 – 3:30pm

Meeting closed: 5:40pm
