

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Date: 5 November 2010.

Time: 10am – 2:30pm.

File: FIL10/7631-02

Meeting Location: Singleton.

Meeting 2 of the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN) – Advisory Committee

In attendance: Cathy Cole (Chairperson), Martin Addinall, Wayne Bedggood, David Casson, Chris Gidney, Rory Gordon, Kenneth McDonald, Tony Merritt, Patrice Newell, Carol Russel, Wendy Wales, John Watson.

DECCW: Gary Davey, Alan Betts, Mitchell Bennett, Chris Eiser, Jason Potts, Cassandra Anderson.

Apologies: Craig Dalton (Tony Merritt replacing), Nicholas Hall, Lyn McBain, John Neely (Martin Addinall replacing).

Agenda Item:

- 1. Acknowledgement of Country.**
- 2. Apologies (see above).**
- 3. Minutes of Previous Meeting.**

The Advisory Committee minutes from meeting 1 held on 29 September 2010, were adopted with one amendment (to remove the duplicate listing of Maison Dieu in Section 5). The Committee requested DECCW to place the meeting minutes on the DECCW website for public access.

4. Actions Arising from Previous Meeting.

The Chairperson ran through the actions from the previous meeting (1). The Chairperson advised that Action 4 (in part) relating to a 'further explanation of the rationale for the location of the Muswellbrook North-West & East' would be held over.

All other actions were addressed on the Meeting 2 Agenda.

5. Community Consultation and Feedback.

DECCW distributed copies of media clippings and a summary of correspondence relating to the activities of the Advisory Committee received by DECCW between 29 September 2010 and 5 November 2010. The Chairperson briefly summarised the correspondence and noted that she (the Chair) had been invited to attend the annual meeting of the Singleton Healthy Shires Environment Group (SSHEG). The Chair noted that she was not able to attend however DECCW would be sending a representative to the meeting.

6. Site Assessment Report.

DECCW report and presentation (see Meeting 2 / Paper 1.)

Discussion Points:

6.1. Singleton North:

6.1.1. DECCW outlined the proposed monitoring location and advised that it was considered a good site.

6.1.2. The Committee discussed the proximity of the proposed Singleton North monitoring site to a local dirt road. DECCW advised that the road serviced only one residence and the site would be 50metres from the road. Taking this into consideration the site, complied with the Australian Standard.

6.1.3. The Committee discussed what action would be taken if it was shown that a monitoring site was being unduly influenced by a local emission source such as a dirt road or a mine within close proximity.

6.1.4. DECCW advised that continuous monitors, which will be used in the network, would show a certain signature for influences such as dirt roads which can be easily detected. DECCW advised that a fixed period of time, for example 3 years, was required to establish quality data analysis. DECCW advised that a monitoring site could be moved however it is not a simple undertaking.

6.1.5. DECCW advised that it was selecting network monitoring sites to represent 'regional' air quality and which would be far enough from fall out zones. The Singleton Nth site fits this criterion.

6.1.6. The Committee endorsed the proposed Singleton North Monitoring site.

6.2. Bulga:

6.2.1. The Committee discussed the possibility of mine site expansions impacting on the proposed Bulga site. In particular the potential for an underground mine to be commissioned in the area and the potential effect of subsidence on a

monitoring site. It was noted that any mine expansion plan is more likely to be more than 3 years into the future.

6.2.2. Committee noted that site visits would assist in the site assessment process. The Chair requested DECCW to consider including site visits with the assessment process from this meeting onwards.

6.2.3. DECCW advised that it would further investigate the mine expansion and subsidence issues and assess the likely impact on the proposed Monitoring site. It was noted that if a proposal / plan had not been submitted then it would be difficult to ascertain the extent of any future mining.

6.2.4. The Committee endorsed the proposed Bulga Monitoring site providing that consideration is given to the likely impact of mine expansion and potential subsidence resulting from any underground works.

ACTION 1: DECCW to investigate the likely impact of ground subsidence on monitoring equipment.

ACTION 2: DECCW to consider including site visits with the assessment process.

6.3. Maison Dieu:

6.3.1. DECCW advised the Committee that the availability of sites at the Holmes recommended location at Maison Dieu was limited by extensive flood plains, private land access and electricity supply. The preferred Maison Dieu site, which currently housed an industry monitor, also had limitations on electricity availability. DECCW proposed a retrofit of the current industry monitor to bring it into the network. This would require the DECCW equipment to be co-located with industry equipment.

6.3.2. The Committee discussed the issue of co-locating equipment and retrofitting existing equipment. Points raised included:

6.3.2.1. The potential for tampering with Network equipment;

6.3.2.2. The community perception of the network as a separate independent network from industry's monitoring network; and

6.3.2.3. The possibility of transferring (additional) industry equipment into the network to allow for more than 14 monitors.

6.3.3. DECCW advised that equipment transferred to the network would be owned by DECCW.

6.3.4. DECCW advised that it will ensure the integrity and independence of the DECCW monitoring network.

6.3.5. The Committee noted the importance of communicating that the construction and operation of the network is independent from industry.

6.3.6. The Committee endorsed the proposed Maison Dieu monitoring site.

ACTION 3: DECCW to consider communication with the broader community about the steps it will take to ensure equipment co-located with industry equipment is independently operated.

6.4. Camberwell:

6.4.1. DECCW advised that the identified location (refer Meeting 2/ Paper 1) addresses regional air quality and is not within the immediate 'fall-out' zone from a dust source.

6.4.2. DECCW advised that the Expert Panel on Health had recommended that a location like Camberwell be considered for the third PM_{2.5} monitor.

6.4.3. Committee discussed the number of PM_{2.5} monitors in the network. NSW Health representative advised that the Expert Panel on Health endorsed DECCW's proposal for the inclusion of three PM_{2.5} monitors in the network. The Expert Panel on Health advised the inclusion of 3 PM_{2.5} monitors would provide a good indication of regional air quality.

6.4.4. The Committee endorsed the location of the proposed Camberwell monitoring site as well as it being the site for the third PM_{2.5} monitor.

7. Web Development Project.

DECCW report and presentation (see Meeting 2 / Paper 2.)

Discussion Points:

7.1. The Committee discussed the rolling averaged data used on the DECCW Air Quality Index (AQI) website.

7.2. Committee discussed what the end user would expect from a regional air quality monitoring network.

7.3. The overall objective of the network was discussed including whether the network represented a diagnostic tool or was a representation of regional air quality.

7.4. The Committee requested DECCW investigate the feasibility of displaying a 'trend line of hourly averages', similar to the Hunter River Salinity Trading Scheme. DECCW explained that rolling 24-hour averages had been suggested for PM₁₀ because the NEPM standards are based on 24-hour averages.

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- 7.5. The Committee requested DECCW provide advice on whether averaging times can be reduced.
- 7.6. DECCW advised an independent consultant would facilitate focus group(s) sourced from the Upper Hunter community to consider the website interface for the UHAQMN.
- 7.7. The Committee advised that it would like to be involved in the focus group testing for the site and requested the secretariat to forward the Committee's contact details to the consultant.

ACTION 4: DECCW to investigate the feasibility of displaying a 'trend line of hourly averages', similar to the Hunter River Salinity Trading Scheme.

ACTION 5: DECCW to provide advice on whether averaging periods can be reduced.

ACTION 6: DECCW to forward the contact details for the Committee to the web-site consultant.

8. Community Consultation Plan.

DECCW report (see Meeting 2 / Paper3.)

- 8.1. The Committee provided advice to DECCW on the content of the draft Community Communication and Consultation Plan and identified areas for further consideration.
- 8.2. The Committee noted that the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee had been invited to a meeting of a local environment group to be held on 11 November 2010. DECCW advised that it did not consider it appropriate for the Chairperson to attend community meetings on the behalf of the Committee as the Chair's primary role is to operate as an independent chair to assist the Committee to reach consensus in its role of providing advice to DECCW. DECCW advised that an Officer from DECCW would attend the meeting if the Committee thought that this was appropriate.
- 8.3. The Committee advised that attending community forums would provide an important opportunity to consult with the broader community about the network.
- 8.4. DECCW advised that the Community Communication and Consultation Plan would remain a 'working document' which could be amended as the need arose.
- 8.5. DECCW to update the Community Communication and Consultation Plan and prepare a timeline of actions.
- 8.6. The Chair will summarise the key points at the end of each meeting which can be released as key communication messages and form the basis of media releases.

8.7. A media release will be facilitated by DECCW for release following the Committee meeting.

ACTION 7: DECCW to update the Community Consultation plan including a timeline of actions.

ACTION 8: DECCW to accept invitation to attend Community meeting.

ACTION 9: Committee Chairperson to summarise the key points at the end of each meeting.

ACTION 10: DECCW to facilitate a media release following Advisory Committee meetings.

9. Data Analysis: Denman, Broke and Warkworth.

DECCW report and presentation (see Meeting 2 / Paper 4.)

Discussion Points:

- 9.1. DECCW presented data it had gathered on air quality, complaints, wind strength and direction and population. DECCW reminded the Committee that removal of any of the network monitors proposed in the original design report would require consideration of the effect on the network as a whole.
- 9.2. The Committee discussed the potential expansion of mining towards the townships of Denman and Broke and the underlying reason for the proposed monitor at Warkworth.
- 9.3. The Committee noted the likely socioeconomic impact of air pollution in townships which rely on tourism, such as Broke.
- 9.4. The Committee requested the report (Meeting 2 / Paper 4) be expanded to include additional information on network sites including those around Muswellbrook, Warkworth, Denman and Broke. Factors for consideration include:
 - 9.4.1. The value of the identified monitors to the network as a whole;
 - 9.4.2. Any plan or proposals for the expansion of mining into new areas;
 - 9.4.3. Any information available on complaints (ie from industry);
- 9.5. DECCW consider the inclusion of visits to the proposed monitoring sites at the next meetings.
- 9.6. DECCW advised that it had adequate work to do to keep the project on schedule if these sites (9.4) were to be held over until the next meeting.

ACTION 11: DECCW to expand the report (Meeting 2 / Paper 4) to include additional information on network sites including those around Muswellbrook, Warkworth, Denman and Broke. Factors for consideration include:

- **The value of the identified monitors to the network as a whole.**
- **Any plan or proposals for the expansion of mining into new areas.**
- **Any information available on complaints (ie from industry).**

10. Deed of Agreement.

10.1. The Committee noted the Deed of Agreement.

11. General Business

Nil.

Next meeting date:

To be advised. (*Friday 4 February 2011 has subsequently been set as the next meeting date*).

Prepared by: Cassandra Anderson (DECCW).

Reviewed by: Cathy Cole (Chair)

Minutes adopted: date: 4 February 2011