



MEETING MINUTES

Date: 29 September 2010.

Time: 10am – 3:30pm.

File: FIL10/7631-02

Meeting Location: Singleton.

Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN) – Advisory Committee

In attendance: Cathy Cole (Chairperson), Wayne Bedggood, David Casson, Chris Gidney, Cindy Gliddon, Rory Gordon, Nicholas Hall, Lyn MacBain, Kenneth McDonald, Elizabeth Moore, Patrice Newell, Carol Russel, John Neely, John Watson.

DECCW: Grahame Clarke, Mitchell Bennett, Chris Eiser, Jason Potts, Cassandra Anderson.

Apologies: Craig Dalton (Cindy Gliddon replacing), Wendy Wales (Elizabeth Moore replacing).

Agenda Item:

1. Welcome DECCW

The Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW) welcomed members to the meeting and acknowledged the traditional owners of the land. DECCW outlined that it was not a member of the Committee but would be available to provide technical support and information to help and guide the process. DECCW would attend meetings to receive advice from the Committee and would supply secretariat services to the Committee.

DECCW informed the Committee that the Minister for Environment and Climate Change has a strong interest in Upper Hunter air quality issues and the work of this Advisory Committee.

DECCW introduced the Chair of the Committee, Cathy Cole.

2. Chairpersons report:

- **Open meeting:** The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed the Committee members.

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- **Meeting procedures:** The Chair outlined the meeting procedures and key points in the Advisory Committee Terms of Reference and Constitution. (<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/aqms/upperhunter.htm>)

The Chair proposed that:

- The Committee would aim for a consensus on advice and recommendations to DECCW. If a consensus could not be achieved decisions would be carried by 'majority' voting.
 - The work and discussions of the Committee would be guided by the Terms of Reference.
 - Meeting minutes would record the outcome of key points of discussion and the actions/outcomes of the meeting. At the request of a Committee member, the minutes would also record a specific request, comment or dissenting view on an agenda item or recommendation.
 - DECCW will post the meeting minutes on its website once the minutes are endorsed by a majority of the members, either out of session or at the next meeting.
 - The Committee agreed that the Chair could issue communiqué or speak on behalf of the Committee. Members could express a personal opinion outside of the Committee, however they could not speak on behalf of the Committee.
 - The Chair indicated that the Committee would have a considerable workload and would need to meet on a number of occasions over the coming months.
- **Committee Functions:** The Chair outlined the matters for consideration by the Committee as identified in Section B of the Terms of Reference. The Chair suggested a priority level for discussion on each matter for consideration.

1. Monitoring site locations (high priority). The Chair noted that the most pressing issue for the Committee is to review and advise DECCW on the monitoring site

selection process. Monitoring site selection would be guided by the report prepared by Nigel Holmes and investigations undertaken by DECCW.

2. Quality Assurance for monitoring sites and data collection (medium priority). The Chair informed the Committee that its role is to advise DECCW on whether the network meets the needs and standards of the end users in terms of data quality. The Committee and the end users (community) need to be satisfied of DECCW's capacity to provide quality data.

3. Ongoing operation of the network including data access and display (high priority). The Chair informed the Committee of its role to advise DECCW on data display and community access issues.

4. Community consultation about the network (medium priority – meeting 2). The Chair outlined that the function of the Committee is to advise DECCW on possible avenues of communication with the community including options such as: community notice, a short newsletter prepared in consultation with the Committee, web updates, public release of meeting minutes, media releases and photo diary of network builds (for the website).

5. Establishment of a regulatory framework for the network (low priority). The Chair noted that the Financial Deed between industry and the NSW Government has a limited life (2 years) and at the end of this period the government would require a mechanism to oblige industry to be a part of the network and to provide a mechanism for new industries to support the network.

- **Terms of Reference:** The Chair requested advice from the Committee on whether members endorsed the Terms of Reference. A number of points were raised:
 - Committee members should have an opportunity to raise agenda items. The Chair advised that items will need to be forwarded to the secretariat for the Chair's consideration. The Chair will only allow matters to be brought to the Committee if they are within the scope of the Terms of Reference. If the matter is not considered to be within the Terms of Reference, the matter can be referred to DECCW for consideration.

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- The Committee discussed if meetings are open to the public. The Committee agreed that meetings would not be open to the public, unless invited. There would be an avenue to hold a public forum as part of the community consultation.
 - The Committee noted that the Terms of Reference did not reflect the current membership (previously 13 members, now 14 members).

Action 1: that the Terms of Reference be updated to 14 members.

- The Committee noted that the deputy form did not require the Member to supply background / qualification details on the nominated deputy. DECCW advised that it was the responsibility of the Member to ensure the nominated deputy was an appropriate person for the position. However, DECCW would reserve the right to refuse a nomination considered to be inappropriate. Refer. A (3) of the Terms of Reference.

At the conclusion of these discussions the Committee endorsed the terms of reference and constitution.

- **Time-line for decisions and actions:** The Chair noted the possibility for one to two meetings to be held before the end of the year.

3. Committee members Background Briefing

Each Member gave a briefing on their background and reason for nominating for the Committee.

4. Network design considerations - DECCW presentation and discussion of Holmes' report.

See attached presentation.

Discussion Points:

- The Committee requested advice on whether the Deed of Agreement between industry and government is binding. DECCW advised that the Deed of Agreement is legally binding on both the Industry and DECCW.

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- The Committee requested advice on how long it would take to build a monitoring site. DECCW advised that the construction time is influenced by a number of factors including the development approval process, weather conditions and availability of building contractors. Typically each site would take 6 months to build from beginning to end.
 - The Committee requested advice on the availability and use of relocatable monitors. DECCW advised that the DECCW network monitors must meet a high standard of performance and quality assurance. Generally, relocatable monitors were not able to provide the necessary level of quality assurance for DECCW's network. Permanent sites provide the best quality data.
 - The Committee noted that some Community Members had received representations for a monitoring site at Broke and/or Denman. The Committee discussed whether Broke and Denman areas are more appropriate areas for monitors than the Warkworth area. DECCW advised that the Broke and Denman areas were not included in the network design because the prevailing wind patterns, relative to dust sources and communities, were less likely to impact Broke and Denman compared to other areas identified as a preferred monitor area. A Local Government Member advised that at times these areas are impacted. An Industry Member advised that some monitoring data is available for Broke. DECCW agreed to review this information and report back to the Committee.

Action 2: DECCW to obtain available air quality data for Broke and Denman and report on the data to the next meeting.

- The Committee discussed whether there was scope to establish more than 14 sites if savings could be made through the use of existing equipment.
- The Committee discussed the selection of sites and the importance of selecting high quality sites to ensure the reliability of data for the long term.
- The Committee requested advice from DECCW on whether potential monitoring sites had already been considered. DECCW advised that a number of potential

sites had been visited over the course of the project however no decisions had been made other than the first Singleton and Muswellbrook sites.

5. Field tour – Maison Dieu, North West Singleton (Rix Creek land) & Civic Avenue Singleton.

The Committee undertook a field tour of an existing industry monitoring station at Maison Dieu, a potential monitoring site at Rix Creek and the Singleton monitor construction site. A DECCW representative explained the issues that need to be considered in selecting a monitoring site to meet the Australian Standard and other requirements.

The Committee reconvened at the meeting venue to discuss how the Committee's endorsement of the network design could be progressed.

A Community Member commented that in-kind contributions of industry equipment to the network would not meet the expectations of the community. Other Members commented that in-kind contributions would be acceptable provided DECCW was responsible for managing the monitoring station and data quality assurance.

The Committee discussed if there was a possibility of expanding the number of sites of the network (above 14). It was noted however that the Minister's commitment is for DECCW to build and operate, and the industry to fund, **up to 14** sites.

The Committee discussed the network design considerations and the areas identified in Holmes' report as areas to establish a monitoring site. The Committee reached agreement on the following areas for a detailed assessment of potential monitoring sites:

- Camberwell
- Maison Dieu
- Singleton North West
- Singleton South East
- Jerry's Plains
- Bulga
- Merriwa
- Aberdeen.

Action 3: DECCW to undertake detailed site assessments for potential monitoring sites in the areas identified above and to present the findings at the next Committee meeting.

Action 4: DECCW to provide further explanation of the rationale for the location of the following monitoring sites to the next Committee meeting:

- Muswellbrook North-west
- Muswellbrook East
- Warkworth.

Communiqué from the Committee

The Chair reiterated the protocol for contact with the media as follows: Only the Chair will speak on behalf of the Committee and any comments will be based on the contents of the minutes of Committee meetings. Committee members have the right to voice opinions to media however they should make it clear they are not speaking on behalf of the Committee.

Action 5: The Chair to work with DECCW to draft a media release.

6. General Business

Set times for next meetings for 2010

Next Meeting - Friday 5th November 2010.

ACTIONS LIST

Action 1: DECCW to amend the Terms of Reference to reflect that the current membership is now 14 members.

Action 2: DECCW to obtain available air quality data for Broke and Denman and report the information to the next meeting.

Action 3: DECCW to undertake detailed site assessments for potential monitoring sites in the areas identified below and to present the findings at the next Committee meeting.

- Camberwell
- Maison Dieu
- Singleton North West
- Singleton South East
- Jerry's Plains
- Bulga
- Merriwa
- Aberdeen

Action 4: DECCW to provide further explanation of the rationale for the location of the following monitoring sites:

- Muswellbrook North-west
- Muswellbrook East
- Warkworth.

Action 5: Chair to work with DECCW to draft a media release.

Prepared by: Cassandra Anderson (DECCW).

Reviewed by: Cathy Cole (Chair)

Minutes adopted: 5 November 2010