



Environment Protection Authority – UHAQAC Meeting No 28. Minutes

Today's Meeting Date:	No 28. Thursday 24 May 2018	Next meeting date:	No 29. Thursday 9 August 2018
Meeting location:	Singleton Library	Last Meeting Date:	No 27. 29 March 2018
Meeting opened at:	10:00am	Meeting closed at:	12:33pm
Present:	John Tate Chair Dr Craig Dalton Department of Health Representative Geoff Sharrock Community Representative Carolyn O'Brien (representing Mark Scandrett, Muswellbrook Shire Council Representative) Leah Cook DPE Representative Matthew Parkinson Power Generation Industry Representative John Watson Coal Industry Representative Thomas Green Community Representative Sarah Roberts (representing Cr Danny Thompson, Singleton Shire Council Representative)		
2. Apologies:	Cr Wayne Bedggood, Cr Danny Thompson		
Guests:	Loredana Warren OEH Scott Thompson OEH Mitchell Bennett EPA Michael Howat EPA Emily Ingram EPA		

3. Matters arising from the previous Minutes: No 27. 29 March 2018

Review Minutes from last meeting				
No	Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible	Completion Date
3.1	Action 1: OEH to give overview at next meeting of mechanically created dust.	Carried over to next meeting.	OEH	29.3.18
3.2.	Action 2: OEH to distribute internet views to their air quality site. Noted other Aps also give this information.	These were provided in a presentation by Loredana Warren.	OEH	24.5.18
3.3	Recommendation 1: Future Reports to include rolling averages	The annual newsletters already include the rolling averages. Craig Dalton suggested that the annual averages (which include PM _{2.5} and is most relevant to community health concerns) could have been included in the summer newsletter since OEH now have the full year for 2017. The annual average particulate matter trend graph will be added to the Summer 17-18 prior to publishing.	OEH	24.5.18
3.4	Action 3: OEH to provide 2 versions at the next meeting, a one-page Fact Sheet of the Seasonal Analysis and an infographic.	Loredana Warren showed examples of one-page fact sheets on air quality developed for other areas. OEH intend to use the Illawarra fact sheet as a template for the Upper Hunter. It will incorporate findings of the Upper Hunter Particle Characterisation Study and trend graphs.	OEH	24.5.18

3.5	Action 4: Request that the dust stop program continue.	The improvements from the Dust Stop Program will continue. Control of dust on haul roads have achieve the biggest reduction of particulate matter.	EPA	Ongoing. EPA will continue haul roads inspections and ensuring that mine areas are kept within approved areas and are stabilized as required.
3.6	Action 5: Community engagement people to come and talk at the next meeting.	A draft community engagement strategy will be brought to the next meeting.	EPA	Thursday 9.8.18
3.7	Action 6: Next meeting can we get an update from the EPA on diesel emission and wood smoke and get a brief.	Dealt with under agenda item 7.	EPA	Complete

4. Community Feedback

4. Air Quality

No.	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
4.1	John Krey stated air quality in the Hunter is still not improving. Emission reporting is inconsistent with the frequency of air quality alerts.	Mitchell Bennett noted that the media overlooked that total PM ₁₀ emissions from mines in Hunter Valley had decreased. John Krey acknowledged this but noted that over the past 5 years emissions had increased by 34% Glencore had increased their PM ₁₀ output during this period.	Action 1: The EPA will continue to work on a system to forecast high dust risk so that mines can take preventative action.	Ongoing
No.	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
4.2	EPA to review its Environment Line for any community or industry calls received in relation to mine blast on 6 October 2017.	Michael Howat reported that there was no record of a complaint through the EPA environment line about a blast on or around 6 October 2017..	No further action needed.	Complete

5. Liddell Power Station

No.	Agenda item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
5.1	Matthew Parkinson from AGL presented on Liddell Power Station, in response to recent media attention the site had received in relation to NO _x emissions and proposed closure of the site by 2022.	<p>AGL plans to replace Liddell rather than extending its life. Several projects, using a range of technologies, are proposed by AGL to replace Liddell's generating capacity.</p> <p>Matthew Parkinson noted that the NSW Generation Model combines a variety of technologies to support power supply.</p> <p>Mitchell Bennett noted that none of the projects proposed by AGL would impact on Upper Hunter air quality, except a proposed gas-fired peaking plant if it were in the Hunter.</p> <p>In response to questions, Matthew Parkinson advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a turbine upgrade at Bayswater will mean less air emissions for the same amount of power, and • emissions estimates complied with National guidelines. • <p>Mitchell Bennett noted that the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network measures air quality at the monitoring locations, not where any pollutants may have come from. The National Pollutant Inventory estimates what is emitted from each source. The EPA uses both sources of information to develop strategies to improve air quality.</p>	Action 2: AGL's presentation to be sent to all UHAQAC members for information.	Complete 14.6.18
		Scott Thompson asked whether CO ₂ storage underground had been considered. Matthew Parkinson advised that a trial is being done interstate to look into this but he is not involved in it directly.		

6. Air Quality Report Seasonal Analysis Summer 2018

No.	Agenda item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
6.1	Summer Air Quality Report 2018	<p>Loredana Warren noted that summer 2018 was drier than previous years, and has been dry in large parts of NSW. She explained that while there were exceedances of assessment criteria, the exceedances at the major population centres were primarily due to exceptional events such as long-range dust transport or fires, rather than being generated from within the Hunter Valley.</p> <p>John Watson asked how long it takes OEH to declare exceptional events. He noted that the mines were required to unnecessarily report high particulate matter levels to the Department of Planning and Environment under such conditions.</p> <p>Loredana Warren responded that exceptional events can be done soon after the event, but that detailed analysis of Upper Hunter events is often done as part of the preparation of the Upper Hunter seasonal newsletter.</p> <p>John Krey noted that upwind downwind monitoring may be used to assess mine contributions.</p> <p>Rainfall data had previously been shown in the newsletter and then at the request of the Committee had been removed. The Committee requested that this data reappear in future newsletters.</p> <p>To help users understand the seasonal reports and newsletters, the committee suggested additional tools such as online videos and social media.</p> <p>Loredana Warren re-iterated that there was no conflict of interest with respect to Jacobs Group undertaking the independent audit as part of the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network review. There was a reference to this in the review report in Section 4.2.2. This included a footnote stating “Jacobs Group (Australia) Pty Ltd was selected to undertake the independent review due to their expertise in the field and as they have not been involved in the operation of the Network.”</p>	<p>Action 3: The EPA agreed to facilitate a discussion between the Department of Planning and Environment , OEH and the mines to discuss this issue and report back to the Committee.</p> <p>Action 4: Add Rainfall data to the Newsletter</p> <p>Action 5: EPA to review if online videos can be made to assist with the interpretation of results.</p> <p>Action 6: Dr Craig Dalton to show Loredana Warren how to extract more information through Google analytics to promote these seasonal reports.</p>	By 9.8.18

7. Off Road Diesel Emissions and Wood Smoke

No.	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
7.1	Initiatives to reduce fine particle emissions and improve air quality from, wood heaters, and non-road diesel plant and equipment (coal mines and locomotives)	Mitchell Bennett explained that wood smoke is a major air quality issue and health issue across NSW. The NSW government began improving efficiency standards for wood heaters in Nov 2016, and will tighten standards further until Nov 2019. A media campaign has been launched and will continue to raise awareness of the	<p>Action 7: EPA to provide the committee with this presentation.</p> <p>Action 8: The Committee recommended that the EPA continue to advocate for national standards for</p>	Presentation to committee on 9.8.18

		<p>issue and help change behaviours. The slogan “<i>If you can smell it, you’re already breathing it.</i>” is being used.</p> <p>Non-road diesel plant and equipment includes earthmoving vehicles, shipping and locomotives. There are no national non-road emission standards in Australia. Diesel fuel emissions are a potential source of harmful particles and a human carcinogen.</p> <p>Diesel emissions from open cut coal mining equipment is a major contributor of PM_{2.5} and NO_x in the Hunter Region. The EPA has benchmarked feasible best practise measures and is negotiating a Pollution Reduction Study and special licence conditions with the mining industry.</p> <p>Locomotive diesel emissions are a community concern in Hunter Region. Emissions are predicted to increase, but they are currently unregulated.</p> <p>The EPA is advocating for national standards while also improving NSW regulation. The EPA proposes to require locomotive operators to hold environment protection licences.</p> <p>John Tate expressed concern that the momentum for these changes had been lost. Mitchell Bennett noted that an economic analysis is currently being prepared.</p> <p>John Tate stated that a recent CSIRO conference stated that diesel emissions are extremely important in relation to human health.</p> <p>John Watson advised that the mining industry supports the staged introduction of any new national standards.</p> <p>In response to a question from Geoff Sharrock, Mitchell Bennett advised that not enough data was available yet to determine whether earlier wood smoke community engagement campaigns had resulted in a measurable improvement in the air quality.</p> <p>John Tate expressed his support for the catch phrase “if you can smell it, you are breathing it” and noted that this</p>	<p>non-road diesel emissions and use a transitional approach to introduce any new standards.</p> <p>Action 9: Dr Craig Dalton to present to the committee a briefing on diesel emissions and carcinogenic health effects the next meeting.</p>	
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		Scott Thompson noted that deteriorating the air monitoring station signs would be replaced at a cost of \$500 each.		

8. EPA Update on Upper Hunter Air Quality Management

No.	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
8.1		<p>Michael Howat presented an update on the Upper Hunter Dust Risk Forecasting Trial. The trial used two models. The most common cause of incorrect dust risk forecasts appears to be differences between predicted and actual weather.</p> <p>The EPA also investigated whether fire danger forecasts can be used to predict dust risk. The EPA and OEHL will meet to discuss these trial results and agree on the next steps.</p>	<p>Action 10: EPA to provide the committee with this presentation.</p> <p>Further steps to be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	<p>Presentation to committee on 9.8.18</p>