



Environment Protection Authority – UHAQAC Minutes

Today's Meeting Date:	Thursday 9 August 2018 (No 29)	Next meeting Date:	Thursday 22 November 2018 (No 30)
Meeting Location:	Singleton Library	Last Meeting Date:	Thursday 24 May 2018 (No 28)
Meeting opened at:	1000 hrs	Meeting closed at:	1315hrs
Convenor:	Mitchell Bennett	Minute Secretary:	Emily Ingram
Present	<p>John Tate – Chair</p> <p>Dr Craig Dalton – Department of Health (DOH) Representative</p> <p>Cr Danny Thompson – Singleton Shire Council</p> <p>Dr Catherine Chicken – Commerce/Industry Representative</p> <p>Diane Gee – Community Representative</p> <p>Thomas Green – Community Representative</p> <p>Geoff Sharrock – Community Representative</p> <p>Sharon Pope for Muswellbrook Shire Council Representative</p> <p>Leah Cook – DPE Representative</p> <p>Matthew Parking – Power Generation Industry Representative</p> <p>John Watson – Coal Mining Industry Representative</p> <p>Loredana Warren – Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)</p> <p>Anthony Savage – Environment Protection Authority (EPA)</p> <p>Mitchell Bennett – EPA</p> <p>Emily Ingram – EPA</p> <p>Dr Leanne Graham - OEH</p>		
Apologies:	<p>Mayor Wayne Bedggood – Upper Hunter Shire Representative</p> <p>Mark Scandrett – Muswellbrook Shire Council</p> <p>John Krey – Community Representative</p>		

1 Review Minutes from last meeting				
No	Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible	Completion Date
1.1	Adoption of previous minutes	The word “national” to be inserted on page nine for paragraph to read “John Watson advised that the mining industry supports the staged introduction of new national standards”. The Committee endorsed the minutes with this change.	Emily Ingram	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.2	Action 4: (from Meeting No 27): Request that the dust stop program continue.	The improvements from the Dust Stop Program will continue, as the control of dust on haul roads is the biggest source of particulate matter. EPA will continue haul roads inspections and ensuring that mine areas are kept within approved areas and are stabilized as required.	Mitchell Bennett	Ongoing
1.3	Action 5: (from Meeting No 27): Community engagement people to come and talk at the next meeting.	See agenda item 2.	Emily Ingram	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.4	Action 1: Update on forecasting high dust risk for mines	See agenda item 5.	Michael Howat	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.5	Action 2: Request for copy of power point presentation on Liddell Power Station review.	Presentation sent to all committee members.	Emily Ingram	14 June 2018 (complete)
1.6	Action 3: Declaration of exceptional weather events discussion between relevant parties	EPA has organised a discussion between DPE, OEH and Mr Watson following the Advisory Committee meeting on 9 August 2018.	Mitchell Bennett	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.7	Action 4: Add Rainfall data to the Newsletter again	Rainfall data added to Autumn report presented at agenda item 4.1.	Loredana Warren	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.8	Action 5: Review of online videos can be made to assist with the interpretation of results.	Investigate whether interpretation of the air quality reports can be improved for end users.	EPA	22 November 2018
1.9	Action 6: Dr Dalton to show Loredana Warren how to use social media sites to promote these seasonal reports.	Dr Dalton to show Ms Warren how to use social media sites to promote these seasonal reports for future reporting.	Craig Dalton	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.10	Action 7: Send EPA presentation on wood smoke and non-road diesel emissions	Presentation sent to committee members.	Emily Ingram	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.11	Action 8: EPA to continue to advocate for National Standards for non-road diesel emissions		EPA	Ongoing
1.12	Action 9: Dr Dalton to present to the committee on diesel emissions and carcinogenic health effects	See agenda item 3	Craig Dalton	9 August 2018 (complete)
1.13	Action 10: Send presentation update on the Upper Hunter Dust Risk Forecasting Trial.	Presentation sent to committee members.	Emily Ingram	14 June 2018 (complete)

2 Draft Communications Strategy for Air Quality for Newcastle, Hunter and Upper Hunter				
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
2.1	EPA Communication Strategy for Air Quality for Newcastle, Hunter and Upper Hunter	<p>Ms Ingram noted that the EPA recognises that air quality in the Hunter region is an important issue, as poor air quality can have implications for health and liveability. The EPA is seeking committee feedback to ensure community concerns are included in the strategy. Three key areas were discussed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • what we think we can achieve, • what we can deliver now, and • what we can deliver together. <p>The following feedback was provided:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparison of local air quality with other regions could be used to present a balanced view of the Upper Hunter's air quality so that the area is seen as an attractive place to live. • The EPA needs to focus on action to reduce mine dust emissions. • Mine operators should be invited to address the committee on the actions they are taking to reduce dust. • Mine complaint lines provide the best and quickest way for any potential issues to be managed. • Some mines respond well, but others do not. • The haze in the valley undermines messages about good air quality monitoring results. • Face to face contact with the community is important. • General Practitioners could educate people to manage their own condition in relation to air quality alerts. • Forecasts of air quality would be more useful than the current retrospective alerts. 	Action 1: EPA to incorporate committee feedback into Communication Strategy for Air Quality for the Upper Hunter Region.	By 22 November 2018

		<p>In response Ms Ingram advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA is developing a system to enhance the exchange of information when people call the EPA's Enviro Line. This may include providing general messages when the EPA is aware of a particular issue and is already working on it. • The EPA investigating better ways of managing community expectations in relation to mine dust emissions. • A balance is needed between detail and clarity when presenting air quality data. • The EPA is and will continue to partner with other organisations to enhance communications. <p>Ms Warren noted that the OEH is working towards air quality forecasting for the Hunter region.</p>		
3	Diesel emissions and carcinogenic health effects			
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
3.1	DOH to present a briefing on diesel emissions and carcinogenic health effects.	<p>Dr Dalton explained that his presentation would include the health effects of particulate matter in general, not just diesel particles. He advised that the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) website provides useful cancer information.</p> <p>The presentation covered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is in diesel emissions? • What are diesel particulates? • Health impacts of diesel emissions • Exposure to diesel emissions <p>90% of particles from diesel exhaust are small particles less than 1µm. These smaller particles go into the lungs and may enter the bloodstream potentially causing issues with the heart.</p> <p>The World Health Organisation (WHO) is the primary agency for identifying Group 1 substances that cause human cancer. Outdoor air pollution from diesel exhaust has been a Group 1 since 2012. Diesel emission technology has improved. Wood smoke is a significant source of PM_{2.5} which is relevant to human health.</p> <p>58% of premature deaths related to ambient air pollution are due to heart disease and stroke whereas lung cancer only accounts for 6%.</p> <p>Communication about wood smoke and the particles formed from pollutants in the atmosphere is important because of their connection with health impacts.</p>	Action 2: Send a copy of the presentation titled <i>Diesel Emissions and Health Impacts Dr Craig Dalton Hunter New England Population Health</i> to all committee members.	By 22 November 2018

4 Air Quality Report Seasonal Analysis Autumn 2018				
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
4.1	OEH presentation on Autumn Air Quality Report 2018	<p>Ms Warren presented the 2018 Autumn Air Quality Report. The presentation included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Upper Hunter region had below average rainfall and very much above average temperatures. Autumn 2018 was drier than two of the previous Autumns (2015 and 17); PM_{2.5}, NO₂ and SO₂: remained below daily benchmarks on all days; PM₁₀ was over the benchmark on 17 days at one or more sites; A large portion of the state is drought affected, with a high number of widespread dust storms impacting the Hunter region. The most extensive events were 19 March, with 35 sites over the benchmark across NSW, and 15 April when 23 Hunter and North-west slopes sites over the benchmark. April and May were amongst the highest months for dust activity since OEH's DustWatch commenced in 2005. Five year rolling averages showed that PM₁₀ levels have increased due to extended dry weather. PM_{2.5} remains similar to previous years. NSW rainfall was below average with both maximum and minimum temperatures above average. During autumn 2018, winds were typically variable, with wind speeds similar to those in 2015-16. They were higher in other autumns. Monitoring data was disrupted due to logger faults, instrument calibration, a modem fault, a heater fault, an instrument alarm and bird damage. <p>As per advice from Dr Dalton, OEH has reviewed analytical data on website use.</p>	Action 3: OEH to increase the size of the annual air quality trend information in the seasonal reports.	To be incorporated into the next report
4.2	Discussion for Upper Hunter Air Quality Overview – info graphic fact sheet	<p>Dr Graham reminded the committee that OEH had committed to preparing a one-page info-graphic on air quality in the Upper Hunter. The Committee provided the following feedback:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The info-graphic should explain that pollution levels are high at night because of wood smoke contributions and temperature inversions that trap pollutants. Information on wood smoke should be different to the existing wood smoke campaign. Scientific information needs to be presented in a way that people can understand. Social science experts be engaged to advise on how best to present data. The monitoring network needs to adapt to the expansion of mines that is taking place. 	Action 4: OEH to consider the committee's feedback on the info-graphic	Revised draft to be provided to next committee meeting.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various audiences, including people who have not been previously exposed to air quality information, should be asked for their views on the info-graphic • the graphs used in the info-graphic should be stylised or presented in a pie chart. • Rather than more data, the info-graphic needs clear simple messages including a “call-to-action”. • The info-graphic needs to provide readers with options. 		
5	EPA Update on Upper Hunter Air Quality Management			
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
5.1	Update on the Upper Hunter Dust Risk Forecasting Trial results and input for next steps for process	<p>Mr Bennett explained that the EPA would conduct a targeted inspection campaign called Operation Dust Patrol during spring 2018. The inspections will focus on hot, windy and dry days when there is a high risk of dust being generated.</p> <p>At 3pm each day, OEH models will predict the following day’s risk. Mines will receive alerts so that they can take extra precautions to reduce dust generation the following day. The EPA will have a presence on the ground during these times to ensure that all licensees are taking all necessary actions to minimise dust emissions.</p> <p>Mr Watson noted that water availability may limit a mine’s capacity to reduce dust during drought, if on site water capacity is substantially drawn down.</p>	<p>Action 5: Send the link to the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue video to all Committee Members.</p> <p>Action 6: EPA to update Mr Krey on Operation Dust Patrol.</p>	By 1 September 2018
6	General Business			
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
6.1	Administrative procedures	Forms were given to all Committee members. Media release forms were given to all Committee members so that their photographs could be published.	Action 7: Committee members to complete forms	By 22 November 2018
6.2	Social media	Presentations to the committee and photos will be used in social media.		
6.3	Environment Line Calls	The committee was provided with a summary of calls to the EPA’s Environment Line.		
6.4	Resignation of Andrew Speechly	Andrew Speechly has resigned from the Committee following a corporate restructure.	Action 8: EPA to write to Mr Speechly thanking him for his contributions and invite nominations for a replacement.	By 22 November 2018
7	New Business			
No	Agenda Item	Notes	Person Responsible	Completion Date
1	2.1	EPA to incorporate committee feedback into Communication Strategy for Air Quality for the Upper Hunter Region.	Emily Ingram	22 November 2018

2	3.1	Send a copy of the presentation titled <i>Diesel Emissions and Health Impacts Dr Craig Dalton Hunter New England Population Health</i> to all committee members.	Emily Ingram	22 November 2018
3	4.1	OEH to increase the size of the annual air quality trend information in the seasonal reports.	Loredana Warren	To be incorporated into the next report
4	4.2	OEH to consider the committee's feedback on the info-graphic. Revised draft to be provided to next committee meeting	Loredana Warren	Revised draft to be provided to next committee meeting.
5	5.1	Send the link to the Upper Hunter Mining Dialogue video to all Committee Members.	Emily Ingram	22 November 2018
6	5.1	EPA to update Mr Krey on Operation Dust Patrol.	Mitchell Bennett	22 November 2018
7	6.1	Committee members to complete forms	Committee members	22 November 2018
8	6.4	EPA to write to Mr Speechly thanking him for his contributions and invite nominations for a replacement.	Emily Ingram	22 November 2018