



MEETING No. 49

Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment (NCCCE)

Meeting Minutes

Date:	13 March 2018	Time:	5.30 pm
Location:	EPA Office, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle		
Attendees: Committee Members and Guests			
NCCCE:			
John Tate (Chair)			
Dr Craig Dalton (NSW Health)			
Trudie Larnach, (Industry)			
Keith Wilks (Industry)			
Sherree Woodroffe (Industry)			
Rick Banyard (Minister's Community)			
Keith Craig (Community)			
Christopher Tola (Community)			
Thomas Levick (Environment)			
Mark Manning (Newcastle City Council)			
Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH)			
Scott Thompson, Senior Air Quality Monitoring Officer			
EPA			
Adam Gilligan, Regional Director, North Branch			
Karen Marler, Director Hunter			
Holly Love, Unit Head, Stakeholder Engagement			
James Thomson, Community Engagement Officer			
Apologies:			
Absent:			

Item	Meeting Minutes
1	<p data-bbox="276 405 411 439">Welcome</p> <p data-bbox="276 501 1449 602">The Chair welcomed attendees and highlighted that it's a new beginning for the Committee. For the benefit of new Committee members, the Chair gave an overview of some administrative matters including advice that:</p> <ul data-bbox="325 613 1449 887" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="325 613 839 647">• Meetings will start and end on time. <li data-bbox="325 651 1449 714">• The Committee has a very important function in considering issues and providing information to the Minister through the EPA. <li data-bbox="325 719 1449 781">• The Committee has an advisory role and is a key means of the community ensuring that issues of concern are brought to the Minister's attention. <li data-bbox="325 786 1449 887">• Only the Chair or the EPA can speak on behalf of Committee in relation to media enquiries. Any Committee member asked to speak to the media must make it clear that they are responding with their personal view, not the views of the Committee.
2	<p data-bbox="276 947 1198 981">Introductory Comments from the Members of the New Committee</p> <p data-bbox="276 1043 1278 1115">John Tate - Has Chaired the Committee from its inception and reinforced the Committee's role in advising the EPA and the Minister.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1133 1294 1167">Dr Craig Dalton - NSW Health representative and former Committee member.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1184 1401 1256">Trudie Larnach - Manager Environment and Community Relations, Port Waratah Coal Services and former Committee Member.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1274 1377 1346">Keith Wilks - Executive Manager Operations and Infrastructure at Port of Newcastle, including responsibility for environmental compliance.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1364 1241 1397">Sherree Woodroffe - Orica representative and former committee member.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1415 1425 1487">Rick Banyard – Former Committee member - community representative since 2014 and an active member of various community groups.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1505 1445 1576">Keith Craig - Former Committee member and community representative since 2011. Also involved in many groups including the Stockton Community Action Group.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1594 1299 1666">Christopher Tola – new community representative, has been involved in many environmental groups and activities including Keep Australia Beautiful.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1684 1422 1832">Thomas Levick – new community environment representative. Thomas volunteers with various environmental groups including Landcare and The Wilderness Society and is involved with various environmental committees in his role with the University of Newcastle.</p> <p data-bbox="276 1850 1310 1883">Mark Manning – new Committee member representing Newcastle City Council.</p>

3 Opening Remarks from the EPA

Mrs Marler advised that the NCCCE is a very important Committee for the EPA. The Committee was formed following a significant pollution incident at Orica in 2011 as a means of ensuring the community was provided with the information it needed regarding the incident, and advising the EPA on improving incident management and response more generally. Since that time, the Committee has changed moved its focus to take a more proactive approach to environmental issues of concern to the community. The Committee plays an important role to ensure information exchange the EPA, industry and the community. This year, the review of the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network will be conducted by OEH. The Committee will have a key role in ensuring the community is properly consulted during the review. Mrs Marler also encouraged Committee members to engage with their networks and drive the Committee agenda. Mrs Marler welcomed the new Committee members and congratulated the returning members.

5 Committee terms of reference and standards of behaviour

Mr Tola asked if future could begin future meetings with an Acknowledgement of Country and to place it on the agenda. The Committee agreed and Ms Love provided the Acknowledgement of Country.

Ms Love provided her congratulations to the new Committee and expressed her excitement at what the next two years will bring.

Ms Love spoke of the Committee's role in enabling local communities in the Newcastle Local Government Area to engage with their industrial neighbours, the regulator (EPA) and the Minister for the Environment. Previous committees have had to tackle issues arising from incidents such as the Orica 2011 pollution incident, but have also played a pivotal role in many different studies on air quality and the implementation of the local air monitoring network. While there are some suggestions of issues to focus on from existing Committee members, the start of a Committee term is always exciting because it is an opportunity to refresh and regroup.

Ms Love noted that as an historically industrial town, the concept of the Committee being a driver for conversations with industry in Newcastle is critical because of the potential that exists for good outcomes, both in terms of the community and the environment.

Ms Love reminded Committee members that the Committee is established under the *Protection of the Environment Administration Act 1991*. It plays an important role in an advisory capacity. Specifically, the Committee advises the Minister and the EPA on the mechanisms by which the community wishes to be notified and kept informed in the event of an environmental incident, and in relation to other environmental issues of importance to the community.

Ms Love noted that the community engagement as part of response to environmental incidents is an essential part of the EPA's work and commitment to the public.

The Committee will have a two-year term. The EPA will resource the committee to achieve its functions. All correspondence from committee members, other agencies, third parties to be coordinated by Secretariat via hunter.region@epa.nsw.gov.au. A Quorum is a majority of members present for the duration of the meeting. As a minimum, there will be twice yearly meetings however, in the past, meetings have been held quarterly.

	<p>Minutes of the meetings will be available on the EPA website however, these will be circulated to you for comment before publishing. Success of the Committee is based on respect and genuine contributions by all members.</p> <p>Committee members and EPA staff will promote and comply with values of Integrity, Trust, Service, Accountability, Innovation and Transparency. There will be at times sensitive information that the Committee handles. The Committees attention was drawn to the Committee Terms of Reference document in relation to management of any pecuniary interests.</p>
6	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting (No. 48, 18 October 2017)</p> <p>The Committee adopted the previous minutes as a true and accurate record.</p>
7	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings summary</p> <p><u>Meeting No. 46 (17 May 2017) Action 7.</u> Ongoing. The Committee would like an update on the EPA funding for contaminated land management. The EPA will provide this information as it becomes available.</p> <p>Mrs Marler confirmed funding for the Taylor Review Reforms has been announced and includes a package of funding. The EPA will arrange for a briefing to the Committee at the next meeting.</p> <p><u>Meeting No. 47 (19 July 2017) Recommendation 2.</u> Ongoing. The Committee recommended the EPA prepares a communications strategy for the Committee's consideration, detailing key messages on air quality, audience groups and costs and benefits of communication channels.</p>
8	<p>Stockton beach Erosion Update</p> <p>Mr Gilligan provided an update on the Stockton Beach erosion issue. In the 1960's to early 1970's, Newcastle City Council used land in North Stockton for landfilling – this land was leased from the Hunter Water Corporation (HWC). The shoreline was a lot further away from the landfilled area in the 1960's. Some landfilling is located on Crown Land and some on Hunter Water land. The site has also been an ongoing illegal dumping area.</p> <p>Two months ago, heavy seas and resulting beach erosion exposed the landfill, with domestic waste washing onto the beach and into the sea. HWC have been working with Newcastle City Council on civil works to stop this, and over the past 3 weeks excavation</p>

works have moved waste 10-15 metres away from the high-water mark where it is being stored while it is tested and classified. HWC have approached the EPA to waive the waste levy. So, the immediate issue of waste entering the ocean has been remedied.

What to do in the Medium Term?

Mr Gilligan advised that HWC plans to place geo-textile revetment in the area. Basically, this is a giant sand bag 30 to 40 metres long. This site is also a known Aboriginal Heritage Site which adds complications to managing the works.

Longer Term Approach:

There are contaminated land issues being worked through with HWC concerning soil and ground water. HWC is working with the EPA to determine if the site will be managed under the *Contaminated Land Management Act 1997*. There is also broader Council action being undertaken to resolve coastal erosion in the area.

The Committee then discussed what had been done for coastal erosion in other areas. Mr Craig noted that Stockton beach has different issues to other coastal areas because of the port operations. Mr Banyard raised the prospect of an off-shore sand bank to mitigate wave action. Mr Tola suggested that a sand bypass may be a viable option like that used at Tweed Heads.

9 **Media Strategy - Air Quality Monitoring Data in the Upper and Lower Hunter**

Mr Thomson outlined that Dr Dalton had put together some thoughts around a media strategy for air quality monitoring data.

Dr Dalton explained that there are a lot of misunderstandings about the network data. The Committee could think about ways to both clarify and disseminate air quality data and information, and a way of putting it to the community in a way that will be better received and understood. Dr Dalton expressed his opinion that as industry is putting a lot of money into the network, resources should also be allocated to better interpreting what the data says. In putting this point forward, Dr Dalton wanted to open discussion on what a new communication strategy may look like. This is a very notional strategy to get the discussion happening.

The Chair thanked Dr Dalton and explained that air quality information generated via the networks is hard to get out to the community and in a way, that is understandable. How do we get people to engage and understand the data?

The Committee discussed this. Mr Craig stated that the OEH Quarterly Reports are easy to read. The Stockton Community Action Group recently discussed that a hard copy newsletter to the areas most affected by air quality is a good idea. It would also remind people of the work of the Committee. Ms Love stated that the idea of a newsletter was raised in the Upper Hunter Air Quality Advisory Committee, and that the EPA will consider this idea. Mr Banyard advised that the Committee could consider a small article

	<p>in the Newcastle Herald. The Chair suggested a page in the Newcastle Council Newsletter. Ms Larnach suggested she could organise for a feature on the Committee in the Port newsletter that goes to 10,000 homes</p> <p>The EPA will draft a communication strategy for discussion at a future meeting.</p>
10	<p>OEH Seasonal Newsletter Update (Spring 2017)</p> <p>Mr Thompson presented the Newcastle air quality newsletter for spring 2017. During the spring period, the Newcastle region experienced average rainfall, with a very dry September to mid-October, a wet late October and an average November. Daytime temperatures were very much above average, while temperatures overnight were above average.</p> <p>Levels of nitrogen dioxide, sulphur dioxide and ammonia were all below benchmarks.</p> <p>PM_{2.5} (particulate matter less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter) had 1 day over the benchmark.</p> <p>Stockton recorded 22 days above the benchmark for particulate matter PM₁₀ (particles less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter).</p> <p>The Lower Hunter region experienced a very dry September, a wet October due to rain later in the month and an average November. Maximum temperatures for Spring were also above average.</p> <p>Mr Thompson noted there were a few issues with Ammonia monitoring at Stockton. Due to a combination of salt and humidity the existing ammonia monitoring equipment is failing more regularly, and OEH are looking new technology. OEH will provide an update at the next meeting.</p>
11	<p>Committee procedures and Priorities for 2018</p> <p>Ms Marler thanked Mr Craig for sending to the EPA a list of issues from the Stockton Community Action Group (SCAG) for the Committee's attention. Ms Marler asked the Committee to think about what issues or priorities they and their community groups would like to include in a work program for the Committee for 2018.</p> <p>Ms Marler explained that the EPA is interested in trying to capture emerging issues. The EPA would like the Committee members to reflect what issues may come up in the future for their communities or industries, and for the Committee to advise the EPA on how best to take a proactive approach to community engagement on these issues.</p>
12	<p>2018 Key Issues, Community Engagement & Brain Storming Session</p>

Ms Love asked Mr Craig to go through the issues that the Stockton Community Action Group had provided. They are as follows:

- Living in an industrial city
- Erosion at Stockton Beach
- PM2.5 ammonium nitrate pollution from Orica's Prill tower
- Coal dust pollution. Despite studies on this showing percent coal dust in PM10 and dust on houses, this is still an issue causing concern in the community
- Water quality in the Hunter River and harbour- fishing, swimming
- Plant processes and methods to control Naphthalene emissions which cause concern periodically to the community (Koppers)
- Noise in the port
- Details of the plants and emissions from industry on Kooragang Island and in Newcastle LGA generally.
- Ongoing communication methodologies and consideration of a periodic newsletter
- Improvement in fuel quality for ships in Newcastle Port to reduce air pollution.

Discussion then continued with Committee members. The Port movements were highlighted and issues relating to Federal jurisdiction of cruise ships. The EPA will invite representatives from the Commonwealth to speak at the next meeting.

Ms Love asked some questions to prompt further discussion

Why did you join the NCCCE?

What problem are you trying to solve?

Over the last 6 months, what environmental issues in Newcastle have you spoken to family and friends about?

The Committee members responded as follows:

Mr Banyard: stated that he believed that the atmosphere, water and environment in Newcastle can be pristine and best standard. We have come a long way since BHP. A large challenge is new people coming to town, changing demographics and educating people that we have come a long way.

Ms Woodroffe: To know what the EPA's strategies are and raising the profile of the EPA and what the EPA is doing.

Mr Tola: Illegal Dumping and monitoring first flush storm water.

Mr Levick: Throsby creek and using permeable surfaces in creek bank construction/maintenance over time instead of concrete. Landfills and a review of similar sites that may appear over time. Invasive flora and fauna at Glenrock, especially with the rise of eco-tourism. Seismic testing and the fact that as we move to a tourist port we don't want a drill in the ocean. Urban revegetation. Temperature hot spots where there is a lot of concrete like at 9 ways Broadmeadow.

	<p>The Chair commented that all suggestions and comments were welcome. Specifically:</p> <p>“As a committee we need to see things on a continuum. If you know your history, you can predict the future”.</p> <p>The EPA committed to exploring these suggestions are coming back to the next meeting with a project proposal for the Committee to focus on.</p>
13	<p>General Business</p> <p>The Chair asked Mr Gilligan for an update on Williamtown. The Chair explained that from time to time the Committee will need a brief on issues outside of the Newcastle LGA in case members are asked for an opinion by the groups they represent.</p> <p>Mr Gilligan advised that in mid-November 2017 the investigation phase for the Williamtown PFAS contamination concluded and Defence is now transitioning to a management phase. With this change, and in response to additional monitoring information being provided in an updated Human Health Risk Assessment, the NSW Government has expanded the area to which precautionary advice to limit PFAS exposure will apply. The expanded area now includes 3 management zones being the:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Primary Management Zone -Secondary Management Zone; and -Broader Management Zone <p>There is a focus now on delivering strategies to help residents live with the contamination in the long term. Mr Gilligan outlined the work done by HWC to provide reticulated town water for properties and noted that property value remains a big concern for residents. Mr Gilligan also outlined that Defence’s approach to containment and remediation has been much slower to be finalised than everyone would like. The EPA expects Defence to do more to stop contamination leaving the RAAF Base. The EPA have a dedicated Engagement officer for Williamtown and the Department of Premier and Cabinet is coordinating a Community Reference Group (CRG). An Expression of Interest process for membership for a new Williamtown CRG is opening soon. The CRG’s focus is to advise the EPA how it can get information out to the community and set up a communication strategy that has longevity.</p> <p>Ms Love informed the group that the Williamtown web content had been redesigned and a link to this would be provide in the minutes. See below:</p> <p>http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/community-news/raaf-williamtown-contamination</p>
14	<p>Next Meeting 12 June 2018, 5:30-7:30pm</p>
<p>Meeting closed: 7:29 pm</p>	

ACTION ITEM LOG		
NCCCE MEETING NO. 46, 17 May 2017	DUE	RESP
Action 7. The Committee would like an update on the EPA funding for contaminated land management. The EPA will provide this information as it becomes available.	Ongoing	EPA
NCCCE MEETING NO. 47, 19 July 2017	DUE	RESP
Recommendation 2. The Committee recommended the EPA prepares a communications strategy for the Committee's consideration, detailing key messages on air quality, audience groups and costs and benefits of communication channels.	Ongoing	EPA
NCCCE MEETING NO. 49, 13 March 2018	DUE	RESP
Action 1. The Committee agreed that in future meetings will open with an acknowledgement of.	On-going	Chair
Action 2. EPA to provide briefing on funding for the Taylor Review Reforms	ASAP	EPA
Recommendation 1. The EPA prepares a communications strategy for the Committee's consideration, detailing key messages on air quality, audience groups and costs and benefits of communication channels.	ASAP	EPA
Action 3. OEH to provide update at the next meeting about new technology for air monitoring at Stockton.	June 2018	OEH
Action 4. Federal government representatives to be invited next meeting to discuss air emission issues at the Port of Newcastle	June 2018	EPA