



Minutes

Meeting:	Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment (No 58)	Date:	Monday 8 February 2021
Location:	EPA Office, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West 230	Time:	5.30pm-7.30pm
Last Meeting Date:	Monday 2 November 2020	Next Meeting Date:	Monday 17 th May 2021
Present:	John Tate – Chairperson Keith Craig – community representative Rick Banyard – community representative Christopher Tola – community representative Steven Crick – environmental representative Trudie Larnach – industry representative Nathan Robinson – industry representative Leah Cook – industry representative Adam Gilligan – EPA Megan Whelan - EPA Cathy Ajaka – EPA Leanne Graham -DPIE Scott Thompson - DPIE		
Apologies:	Kristy Anderson – council representative (12 months leave) Loredana Warren - DPIE		

Agenda items:

1. Introduction

1.1. Acknowledgment of Country and COVID-19 Procedures

The Chair opened the meeting at 5.30pm and acknowledged the Awabakal and Worimi people as the traditional owners of the land and paid respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

Ms Ajaka ran through COVID-19 procedures and housekeeping.

1.2. Present, apologies and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed the committee and noted the apologies.

2. Previous Minutes and Outstanding Actions

2.1. Adoption of minutes from previous meeting (No 57)

The previous minutes were adopted with minor changes from Nathan Robinson.

The Chair asked the committee to advise prior to each meeting if they require printouts of the minutes, otherwise members are expected to bring devices to review online.

2.2. Outstanding actions

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible	Status
1	EPA to organise a presentation from HCCDC in relation to long term remediation on Kooragang Island	Adam Gilligan	Ongoing – continuing to negotiate with HCCDC on the form of ongoing regulation. Suggest resolving before moving forward with presentation. Committee happy to carry forward to next meeting.
2	Publish a media release detailing the reestablishment of the committee	Gina Bradley/ Cathy Ajaka	Awaiting final responses from members to update website profiles – media release on hold until website updated.
3	Circulate EPA Stakeholder Survey results once available	Gina Bradley/ Cathy Ajaka	Carry over to next meeting.

3. Strategic Plan 2020-2022

3.1. Looking forward: Out of Session Strategy Meeting

Mr Gilligan thanked members who completed the survey. Results received to-date were shared with committee members. Mr Gilligan requested members who have not completed the survey to do so at earliest opportunity.

Once all members have completed the survey, results will be reviewed before setting an agenda and selecting the top 3 topics for discussion at a virtual out of session strategy meeting – date to be confirmed.

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible
4	Committee members to complete Survey	All
5	Virtual out of session Strategy Meeting to be organised	Cathy Ajaka

4. Network feedback – standing item

4.1. Information sharing and feedback from broader networks

Stockton Community Group

Mr Craig shared updates from the Stockton Community Group (SCG). Thanked Ms Larnach and Mr Gilligan for presenting at previous SCG meetings and advised some new members and chair had joined the group. He also advised there is now a website for the SCG – [click here](#) to visit the website.

Ammonium nitrate manufacture, storage and transport in Newcastle LGA

Mr Craig would like an update at each meeting regarding Orica and exactly where they are at with the PM2.5 scrubbers that will be installed on their Prill tower.

Mr Robinson – provided update to the Orica PRP. Progressing well - detailed design completed in October 2021. Practical completion November 2023. Will provide report to the EPA within 60 days of milestones date and will provide an update at future committee meetings.

Coal dust management on Kooragang Island

Mr Craig flagged community concern around the ongoing coal dust issue in strong westerly winds. Mr Tate mentioned that he raised this at previous meetings and requested that the dust deposition study be distributed for everyone to read. Mr Banyard asked if the study could be redone, following drought changes and the COVID shutdown.

Mr Craig asked for an update on Koppers. Mr Gilligan provided an update regarding prevention notices and Pollution Reduction Programs for that site. A risk audit was undertaken and made several recommendations – report received March 2020 and 50/57 recommendations completed to-date. Mr Banyard noted Koppers have been active in sorting long-term issues out and a community consultative committee is now in place (which he is a

member of) and have met numerous times to-date. Mr Tola advised a newsletter had been published. [Click here](#) for the August 2020 Newsletter.

Mr Robinson – provided update to the Orica PRP. Progressing well - detailed design due for completion by October 2021. Practical completion November 2023. Will provide report to EPA within 60 days of milestones and is happy to provide an update at future committee meetings. Mr Gilligan to check figures in eConnect newsletter are correct and include Orica PRP cost.

Newsletter to improve communication with community surrounding the Port

Mr Craig also raised the ongoing issue of improved EPA communication with the community. Mr Gilligan confirmed the EPA could not commit to a hardcopy version of a newsletter, however, could consider an online version and recommended using the current EPA Newsletter – eConnect. The E-newsletter is a state-wide initiative so we would need to justify bang-for-buck for a tailored solution for the NCCCE.

Mr Tate would like to endorse online newsletter versus hardcopy. Mr Craig raised concerns not everyone would have access as you would need to subscribe (opt-in system).

Water quality study on the Hunter Estuary

Mr Craig raised the water quality study on the Hunter estuary in the last period of the NCCCE and depending on funding an update provided and if such a study is possible.

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible
6	Distribute results of Dust Deposition Study	Adam Gilligan
7	Distribute copy of current EPA eConnect newsletter for members review	Adam Gilligan

4.2. New Train Regulations presentation

Ms Cook presented on the changes to the Protection of the Environment Operations Act (POEO Act), that were amended in May 2019 with environment protection licences issued in August 2020.

Mr Tate asked members for any feedback on the presentation.

Mr Banyard flagged the changes to the regulations are welcomed.

Mr Crick asked what about the conditions of the rollingstock licences. Ms Cook advised that noise is the main issue but there are also a number of standard conditions.

Mr Craig noted that noise limits were no longer included. Ms Cook and Mr Gilligan advised that the EPA do have noise protocols in place and are more outcome driven.

Mr Tate advised that this is a state act and Ms Cook confirmed that each state operates under their own separate licences.

Mr Tate thanked Ms Cook.

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible
8	Distribute EPL Rail Presentation	Cathy Ajaka

4.3. Transport (rail, road and ship) and storage of Ammonium Nitrate by Crawfords and other majors

Mr Banyard provided an update, advising that some shipping companies had changed fuel and scrubber technology. Alternate fuel vessels are currently active in port which has resulted in improvements from ships emissions within the Newcastle Harbour. Also, the lack of cruise liners during COVID have made a huge difference in emissions.

There are still 2 major concerns with road transport and the first is carting of Ammonium Nitrate from 3 major storage facilities in Newcastle LGA. Orica, Crawfords and Toll operate the various storage units. Crawfords and Toll unload from ships and then transport by road to the bulk storage units. Concerns are raised about the way the Ammonium Nitrate is transported from the bulk storage units and transported into the valley. Concerns also raised about the train transport between Botany and Port Kembla.

The second is grain transport and the rail situation where significant number of trucks transporting grain and the volume and dust associated with the transporting and unloading. Situation hasn't improved from spillage and a new formal complaint is currently underway. Grain trains are worse than coal trains at present and grain dust is very significant and causing substantial concern on the rail network. Copies of the lodged complaint to be circulated amongst the NCCCE members. Mr Banyard would like complaint to be formally lodged prior to next meeting. Mr Tate flagged that progress was made some time ago about cleaning of coal trains, however this seems to have fallen by the wayside. Mr Banyard raises concerns that the new regulations were watered down. Mr Tate asked if we can obtain a report?

Mr Gilligan advised that we have yet to receive any complaints about the grain dust. The EPA have received complaints around bird deaths from birds eating the grain spillage. There are some overall issues around the grain spillage which the EPA are looking into. Some grain trains have fiberglass lids to prevent spillage – numbers are unclear on how many.

Mr Gilligan advised Coal spillage currently not as significant in the corridor as previously advised. Mr Banyard challenged this providing various examples. Mr Tate would like the EPA to provide feedback at next meeting.

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible
9	Provide picture of vertical rotor sails (wind turbines) on ships	Trudie Larnach

5. EPA Update – standing item

5.1. Regulatory Operations Metropolitan North

Mr Gilligan indicated he had touched on Koppers and Orica earlier and therefore no further updates required.

6. Air Quality Monitoring Network Seasonal Newsletter – standing item

6.1. Autumn, Winter and Spring 2020 Newsletters

The committee were provided with copies of the Draft Autumn, Winter & Spring 2020 Newsletters.

Ms Graham represented DPIE and informed the committee of Loredana Warren's apologies and advised changes to reporting in 2020 in response to community feedback from the 2019/2020 bushfires. The changes implemented provide more accuracy around how air quality is changing in the short term.

Mr Banyard flagged the positive numbers in spring are related to the weather pattern changes that have occurred over the past year.

Mr Banyard also flagged collection of rainfall readings are from certain stations versus all stations. Ms Graham indicated rain gauges are being introduced and will provide an update on what changes are in place with the distribution/rollout of rain gauges across the network.

The presentation was well received, and it was suggested that a 1-year lookback on Air Quality be presented at the first committee meeting of each calendar year.

Action Item No	Action	Person Responsible
10	Publish Autumn, Winter and Spring Newsletters	Loredana Warren
11	Distribute Air Quality Presentation to members	Cathy Ajaka

7. General Business

7.1. Other

Nil.

7.2. Next meeting date

The next meeting date is confirmed as Monday 17th May 2021 and will take place at the usual location at the Newcastle EPA office, COVID-19 restrictions permitting.

Meeting concluded at 7.48pm.