

MEETING No. 15

Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment (NCCCE)

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 13 February 2013 **Time:** 5:30 pm
File: FIL11/10927
Location: EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West

In attendance: John Tate (Chair), Keith Craig (Community), Adam Gilligan (Newcastle City Council), Nick Godfrey-Smith (Industry), Kate Johnson (Community); Paul McBain (Minister’s Nominee), Zoe Rogers (Environment), Paul Thomas (Industry),
Hon Robyn Parker MP, Minister for the Environment; Nicole Buskiewicz (Minister’s Assistant)
Environment Protection Authority (EPA): Gary Davey (Director North Branch), Sylvia Bell (Director, Stakeholder Engagement and Governance); Leanne Graham (Project Officer).

Apologies Graham Woods (Industry)

Meeting Record

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 1	<p>Welcome from the Chair</p> <p>The Chair welcomed the Minister, the Minister’s Assistant, Committee Members and EPA staff.</p>
Item 2	<p>Apologies</p> <p>As above.</p>
Item 3	<p>Key Messages for NCCCE in 2013</p> <p>The Minister thanked the NCCCE for valued advice, provided to the EPA and the NSW Government during 2012. The Minister commended the interaction and open dialogue between industry, the community and the EPA since the NCCCE was established, emphasising the importance of ongoing community engagement and the role of people who understand the community.</p> <p>The Minister noted that three community forums, facilitated by NCCCE during 2012, demonstrated that air quality remains an issue of community concern. The challenge for NCCCE in 2013 is to advise the EPA on the way air monitoring data can be communicated to the public accurately and meaningfully.</p> <p>The NCCCE enquired about the Minister’s plans for similar committees in NSW and the future of NCCCE, post 2013, emphasising that the (establishment of the industry-funded air quality monitoring) network is one many issues of concern to the NCCCE.</p>

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	<p>The Minister acknowledged that the third community forum indicated the potential for the Newcastle community to want to deal with other environmental issues. The Minister referred to the success of consultative committees associated with Orica in Botany and Newcastle.</p> <p>The Minister proposed that 8 August 2013, the two year anniversary of the Orica incident in Newcastle, represented an appropriate date to take account of the achievements of the EPA and the NCCCE and to consider the future of NCCCE.</p> <p>The Chair supported the proposal and commended the NCCCE's working processes and the capacity to find agreement and solutions through open discussion.</p>
<p>Item 4</p>	<p>Future Communication</p> <p>Sylvia Bell outlined the EPA's plan to improve stakeholder relationships by providing better communication channels, meaningful information and opportunities for feedback.</p> <p>Ms Bell referred to the EPA's quick response to an onsite incident at Botany on 11 February 2013. The EPA website provided a community announcement, describing the nature and consequence of the incident, via a new community portal on the website's homepage.</p> <p>Ms Bell outlined how the EPA is working to increase community satisfaction with the EPA's programs and services, by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Participating in consultative committees, such as NCCCE, as well community meetings and workshops, to provide expert advice and to seek feedback, - Reviewing and improving the EPA website with features such as the new community portal, that provides access to templates for community responses (Have Your Say) and links to consultative committees' websites. An industry portal will be developed in the longer term. - Communicating via social media in coming months. For example, EPA will be on Twitter and Facebook; Smart phone applications will facilitate reporting of smokey vehicles. - Surveying stakeholders in coming months, to find out what stakeholders want and in what format and timeframe. Specific feedback will assist the development and tracking of relevant key performance indicators for the EPA. <p>EPA media releases will inform the community of the introduction of new web-based communication initiatives.</p> <p>A committee member noted that the Botany Media Release (11 February, 2013) reported the type of detail that the NCCCE has been recommending.</p> <p>The Minister reassured the NCCCE that the Minister's Office understands that the community expects a response from the EPA in an environmental emergency, to reassure the community that the lead agency, such as HAZMAT, is on the scene.</p> <p>The NCCCE, EPA and the Minister discussed EPA plans for increasing the number and frequency of good news reports about local and regional environmental protection.</p> <p>The NCCCE welcomed the update and the opportunity to work with the EPA's Stakeholder Engagement and Governance team.</p>

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<p>Item 5</p>	<p>2013 Workshop Program – Air Science, Policy and Communication</p> <p>Gary Davey outlined the background and purpose of the one-day technical workshop for NCCCE, proposed for 12 April 2013. The workshop seeks NCCCE’s input and assistance to improve community understanding of the theory and practice of air quality management by the EPA.</p> <p>The proposed workshop sessions involve presentations and discussions with expert staff from OEH and EPA. Issues will focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • air quality monitoring, data interpretation and air quality standards, • the evidence base for developing air policy and taking account of the views of community, industry and other parts of government, and • the types of information that community members want, and the formats for receiving information and providing feedback. <p>The NCCCE supported the proposed program. The meeting debated the benefits and implications of opening the workshop to participants outside of the NCCCE.</p> <p>Recommendation 1: NCCCE to nominate a limited number of additional people from the community and industry, who are active in local air quality issues, to participate in the Workshop on Air Science, Policy and Communication, scheduled for 12 April 2013.</p>
<p>Item 6</p>	<p>2013 Community Forums</p> <p>The NCCCE community representatives suggested themes for community forums to be facilitated by NCCCE in 2013 (E.g. <i>How are environmental issues considered in the planning process?</i>; <i>What can the EPA do for you?</i>)</p> <p>Discussion identified the need for clarity regarding community expectations of the EPA, methods of interaction between the community and the EPA and the regulatory role of the EPA.</p> <p>The Chair deferred further discussion on the themes for future forums. A more informed discussion will follow the workshop, scheduled for 12 April 2013.</p> <p>Recommendation 2: NCCCE to consider themes for future community forums after the technical workshop scheduled for 12 April 2013.</p>
<p>Item 7</p>	<p>Stockton Air Quality Monitoring Station Report No.1, prepared by NCCCE Community Members</p> <p>Keith Craig tabled a report prepared by NCCCE community members, who reviewed the monitoring results recorded since the establishment of the Orica air quality monitoring station, at Stockton in September 2012. The report identified high levels of particulate pollution, measured as PM₁₀. The 50 µg/m³ assessment criterion was exceeded on 13 occasions over 3½ months.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the potential impact on concentration levels from influences such as wind direction and local sources as well as bushfire smoke. The discussion noted that OEH regional monitors in the Newcastle area do not always record similar peak concentrations of PM₁₀, compared to the new Stockton site.</p> <p>The Chair noted the report and commented that the forthcoming monthly reports on air quality, recorded at OEH and existing industry-operated monitors, will provide more information on local air quality, while the negotiations progress for the establishment of the industry-funded network.</p>

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	<p>NCCCE industry representatives noted that this report is not part of the EPA's negotiations with industry for the establishment of the industry-monitored network.</p> <p>Action 1. The EPA/OEH will review the report, <i>Stockton Air Quality Monitoring Station Report No.1</i>, prepared by NCCCE Community Members, and respond to the NCCCE.</p>
<p>Item 8</p>	<p>Air Quality Modelling for Newcastle Local Government Area</p> <p>NCCCE community members proposed discussion of an air quality model for the Newcastle local government area, to assist in assessing the effects of new air pollution sources, as well as the transport of pollution across the region.</p> <p>The NCCCE agreed to request further information on air quality modelling, from OEH technical experts, as part of the workshop scheduled for 12 April 2013.</p> <p>Recommendation 3: NCCCE request further information on air quality modelling, from OEH technical experts, as part of the workshop scheduled for 12 April 2013.</p>
<p>Item 9</p>	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting</p> <p>Minutes of Meeting No.14 (12 Dec 12) were adopted as a true and accurate record, with minor amendments, as discussed.</p>
<p>Item 10</p>	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meeting</p> <p><u>Meeting No.14 (12 Dec 12) Recommendation 1:</u> Submissions are due on 22 February 2013, for E-Tender EPA-2-2013, <i>Lower Hunter Air Quality Review of Ambient Air Quality Data</i>, to prepare monthly reports summarising and analysing against accepted standards, the data collected from air quality monitoring stations operated by the OEH and industries in the Newcastle area, from March 2013 to August 2013.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.14 (12 Dec 12) Recommendation 2:</u> Completed. The NCCCE supported the locations of the four air quality monitoring stations, at the optimal sites at Mayfield, Carrington, Stockton and Fern Bay, as presented in the OEH site assessment reports and briefing paper.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.13 (5 Nov 12) Action 1:</u> Deferred to 13 March 2013. NCCCE to review comments and feedback from the Community Forum on Health and Air Quality for discussion at the next meeting.</p>
<p>Item 11</p>	<p>Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network</p> <p>Negotiations continue between the EPA and industry, regarding the establishment of the industry-funded air quality monitoring stations in the Newcastle area.</p> <p>The EPA provided a discussion paper to industry, in February, detailing two funding models for the establishment of a network which comprises four new air quality monitoring stations, proposed for optimal sites at Mayfield, Carrington, Stockton and Fern Bay. NCCCE industry representatives confirmed that their organisations had received the relevant information and specific costings.</p> <p>The EPA and industry will meet on 14 March 2013 for further discussion.</p>
<p>Item 12</p>	<p>General Business</p> <p>Adam Gilligan enquired about results of the social research survey, <i>Who Cares About the Environment</i>, conducted by the EPA in 2012. The EPA confirmed the report will be available soon.</p>

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	<p>Zoe Rogers advised that the EPA received her request to re-evaluate the EPA's position on the air quality assessment of the proposed fourth coal loader in Newcastle, the Port Waratah Coal Services' T4 project. The EPA will respond to Ms Rogers.</p> <p>Kate Johnson enquired about an update from the hygienists involved in the Port Waratah Coal Services' Health Study. Nick Godfrey-Smith will provide Ms Johnson with details of the relevant contact person, by the next meeting.</p> <p>The NCCCE acknowledged the outstanding service of Mr Grahame Clarke, EPA Manager - Hunter Region, on his retirement, 28 February 2012.</p>
Item 13	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Date: Wednesday 13 March 2013</p> <p>Location: EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West</p> <p>Time: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</p>
Meeting ended at 19:40	

ACTION ITEM LOG

MEETING NO. 15, 13 FEBRUARY 2013	ACTION ITEM DESCRIPTION/ RECOMMENDATION	DUE DATE	RESP
RECOMMENDATION 1	NCCCE to nominate a limited number of additional people from the community and industry, who are active in local air quality issues, to participate in the Workshop on Air Science, Policy and Communication, scheduled for 12 April 2013.	13 Mar 13	All
RECOMMENDATION 2	NCCCE to consider themes for future community forums after the technical workshop, scheduled for 12 April 2013.	TBA, post 12 April 13	All
RECOMMENDATION 3	NCCCE request further information on air quality modelling, from OEH technical experts, as part of the workshop, scheduled for 12 April 2013.	13 Mar 13	All
ACTION 1	The EPA/OEH will review the report, <i>Stockton Air Quality Monitoring Station Report No.1</i> , prepared by NCCCE Community Members, and respond to the NCCCE.	13 Mar 13	EPA