

**MEETING No. 17**  
**Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment**  
**(NCCCE)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** 8 May 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), Paul McBain (Minister’s Nominee), Paul Thomas (Industry), Graham Woods (Industry)

Environment Protection Authority (EPA): Kieran Lynch (A/Manager Compliance and Assurance Section, Reform and Compliance), Brad Deane (Project Officer, Reform and Compliance), Mitchell Bennett (A/Manager Hunter Region), Mark Hartwell (Head, Regional Operations, Hunter Region), Leanne Graham (Project Officer, Hunter Region).

Todoroski Air Sciences: Aleks Todoroski (Principal), Dan Kjellberg (Environmental Scientist)

**Apologies** Kate Johnson (Community); Zoe Rogers (Environment)

**Meeting Record**

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<b>Item 1</b>	<b>Welcome from the Chair</b> The Chair welcomed Committee Members, EPA staff and guest presenters
<b>Item 2</b>	<b>Apologies</b> As above.
<b>Item 3</b>	<b>Minutes from Previous Meeting</b> Minutes of Meeting No.16 (13Mar13) were adopted as a true and accurate record, with minor typographical amendments.
<b>Item 4</b>	<b>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings</b> <u>Meeting No.15 (13Feb13) Recommendation 1:</u> Completed. NCCCE nominated people from the community and industry participated with NCCCE in the EPA workshop on air science, policy and communication, held on 12 April 2013. <u>Meeting No.15 (13Feb13) Recommendation 2:</u> In progress. NCCCE will consider themes for future community forums following feedback from EPA on the outcomes of the workshop held on 12 April 2013. <u>Meeting No.15 (13Feb13) Recommendation 3:</u> In progress. EPA invited the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) to present information on air quality modelling at NCCCE Meeting No.18, scheduled for 12 June 2013.

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
	<p><u>Meeting No.15 (13Feb13) Action 1:</u> In progress. EPA invited OEHL to give a presentation at NCCCE Meeting No.18, scheduled for 12 June 2013, in response to the <i>Stockton Air Quality Monitoring Station Report No.1</i>, prepared by NCCCE community representatives.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.16 (13Mar13) Action 1:</u> In progress. NCCCE recommended that EPA provides the Committee with an outline of new policies and regulations on coal seam gas activities in NSW.</p>
<p><b>Item 5</b></p>	<p><b>Environmental Monitoring and Regulation</b></p> <p><b>5.1 Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network</b></p> <p>Mark Hartwell reported that the EPA and industry representatives met on 14 March 2013 and discussed the two funding models proposed by the EPA for the industry-funded air quality monitoring network in the Newcastle area.</p> <p>In response to a question from the Committee, about the likely course of action if agreement could not be reached or was delayed, Mr Hartwell advised that options for the EPA are to continue negotiations with industry or to introduce a regulation. No further information is available currently.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Hartwell for his report and noted that the Committee hoped to see negotiations come to fruition. The Chair requested an update at the next meeting.</p>
<p><b>Item 5 (cont)</b></p>	<p><b>5.2 Proposed Risk Based Environmental Regulatory Framework</b></p> <p>Kieran Lynch and Brad Deane (EPA Reform and Compliance Branch) introduced the EPA's proposed risk-based regulatory framework, which will be introduced as an amendment to the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation</i> (the Regulation).</p> <p>The consultation with NCCCE is part of the first stage of the consultation process. Similar workshops have been held in recent weeks with government agencies, environmental groups and peak industry associations.</p> <p>In summary, each licence will be allocated a risk level (Level 1 High; Level 2 Medium; Level 3 Low). The higher the risk level, the higher the level of regulatory intervention and licence conditions. The framework will provide the public with a better understanding of each industry's environmental performance and clarify the EPA's regulatory decisions and expectations of industry.</p> <p>Benefits of the proposed framework include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An evidence-based approach to risk assessment</li> <li>• Greater financial incentives to licensees to improve performance</li> <li>• Improved identification of emerging environmental issues and potential impacts</li> <li>• Improved public information about licensee performance</li> <li>• More efficient resource allocation including cost recovery for EPA.</li> </ul> <p>Comments from the NCCCE on the proposed risk-based regulatory framework may be made by 31 May 2013, via email to Brad Deane (<a href="mailto:brad.deane@epa.nsw.gov.au">brad.deane@epa.nsw.gov.au</a>).</p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<p><b>Item 5 (cont)</b></p>	<p>In response to questions, the EPA advised that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The new fee structure will provide high risk licensees with a greater incentive for compliance and clearer guidance on improving performance.</li> <li>• For licensees, licence risk level will be based on the nature of the activity and will include an assessment of operator performance.</li> <li>• For operators with multiple licensed sites, risk assessment will be done at the site level.</li> <li>• Consultation commenced in May with government agencies and peak industry associations with feedback to be provided by 31 May 2013.</li> <li>• The financial details of the framework currently are being developed and will appear in the full draft POEO (General) Regulation.</li> <li>• The next round of consultation will seek feedback in response to the full draft POEO (General) Regulation and the supporting regulatory impact statement.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair thanked Mr Lynch and Mr Deane. EPA will provide a copy of the slide presentation to NCCCE.</p>
<p><b>Item 5 (cont)</b></p>	<p><b>5.3 Draft Lower Hunter Monthly Air Quality Monitoring Report, March 2013</b></p> <p>Aleks Todoroski presented the draft report of the <i>Lower Hunter Air Quality Review of Ambient Air Quality Data Monitoring Report, March 2013</i> (Draft Report).</p> <p>The Draft Report discussed data recorded at air quality monitoring stations (AQMS) operated by OEH at Newcastle, Wallsend and Beresfield and industry-operated AQMS located at Mayfield, Steel River and Stockton.</p> <p>The findings for March 2013 show that winds were mostly on-shore. All the air pollutant monitors recorded levels that were considered very good or good in terms of the OEH Air Quality Index.</p> <p>Mr Todoroski proposed a method of investigating elevated air pollution levels, if these occur in monthly results. The proposed discussion would consider wind speeds, wind directions and air temperatures; and their likely role in elevating air pollution levels.</p> <p>The Committee discussed the factors affecting local variations in air quality. Mr Todoroski explained that levels of particulate matter and gaseous pollutants (nitrogen dioxide and sulphur dioxide) typically do not follow a daily pattern. Seasonally, particulate levels may increase in winter, showing the influence of atmospheric temperature inversions and emissions from wood heaters. Mr Todoroski explained that wind sensors typically perform poorly during periods of low winds speeds, due to weight of the component parts of the instruments.</p> <p>The Committee suggested amendments to the Draft Report. The EPA agreed to provide the Committee with the updated electronic version of the Draft Report as soon as possible.</p> <p><b>ACTION1: NCCCE to provide to the EPA feedback from the wider community regarding the draft report of the <i>Lower Hunter Air Quality Review of Ambient Air Quality Data Monitoring Report, March 2013</i>.</b></p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<b>Item 6</b>	<p><b>Environmental Management Issues, including Health Impacts</b></p> <p><b>6.1 Feedback - Workshop on Air Science, Policy and Communication</b></p> <p>On 12 April 2013, the EPA held a workshop with the NCCCE and invited representatives from the community and industry. The workshop was attended by 33 people, including an independent facilitator and EPA/OEH staff. The workshop included presentations on the science of air quality monitoring, evidence-based policy making and communication of air quality monitoring data.</p> <p>Facilitated workshop sessions explored:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How can the EPA better communicate air science and policy to the wider community?</li> <li>• What types of information do community members want?</li> <li>• How do community members want to receive information?</li> <li>• How do community members want to provide feedback?</li> <li>• What can EPA and NCCCE do to build trust with the community regarding local air quality issues?</li> </ul> <p>The EPA is reviewing the notes from the facilitated workshop sessions to identify common themes and future directions.</p> <p>The EPA provided to NCCCE the notes collated from the evaluation forms which were completed by workshop participants. In general, participants valued the technical detail of the presentations and the opportunities to communicate face to face with EPA/OEH.</p> <p>The EPA will distribute copies of presentations to NCCCE members who were unable to attend the workshop.</p> <p>Following the EPA's review, outcomes will be submitted to the NCCCE for consideration and posted on the NCCCE page on the EPA website.</p>
<b>Item 7</b>	<p><b>General Business</b></p> <p>The Chair declared a pecuniary interest as a member of the Board of the Newcastle Hunter Rugby Union.</p>
<b>Item 11</b>	<p><b>Next Meetings</b></p> <p><b>Date:</b> Wednesday 12 June, Wednesday 10 July 2013</p> <p><b>Location:</b> EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West</p> <p><b>Time:</b> 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</p>
<p><b>Meeting ended at 7:30 pm</b></p>	

## ACTION ITEM LOG

MEETING NO. 17, 8 APRIL 2013	ACTION ITEM DESCRIPTION/ RECOMMENDATION	DUE DATE	RESP
<b>Action 1:</b>	NCCCE to provide to the EPA feedback from the wider community regarding the draft report of the <i>Lower Hunter Air Quality Review of Ambient Air Quality Data Monitoring Report, March 2013</i>	Within one week of receipt of updated draft	NCCCE