

MEETING No. 21
Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment
(NCCCE)

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 16 September 2013 **Time:** 5:30 pm

File: EF13/8723

Location: EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor,
 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West

In attendance: John Tate (Chair), Keith Craig (Community),
 Paul McBain (Minister’s Nominee), Paul Thomas (Industry),
 Zoe Rogers (Environment) Graham Woods (Industry),
 Gary Davey (EPA Director North),
 Peter Jamieson (EPA Acting Manager Hunter Region)
 Catharina Boer (EPA Senior Public Affairs Officer, Stakeholder
 Engagement and Governance), Leanne Graham (EPA Project Officer,
 Hunter Region)

Apologies Adam Gilligan (Newcastle City Council),
 Nick Godfrey-Smith (Industry), Kate Johnson (Community)

Meeting Record

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 1	Welcome and Introductions The Chair welcomed Committee Members and EPA staff.
Item 2	Apologies As above.
Item 3	Minutes from Previous Meeting NCCCE community representative requested an amendment to the draft minutes. Item 11: General Business Additional text: NCCCE environment and community representatives suggested that the project management team for particle characterisation study includes an additional community member with links to the wider community. The Committee noted that Mr Keith Craig was the NCCCE nominee and is a highly competent representative. Nonetheless, the Committee considered that Mr Craig’s workload and other commitments meant that a second representative would be useful. The EPA noted that the NCCCE was the primary conduit for community consultation and that NCCCE member Keith Craig had been nominated as that representative. Accordingly, the EPA did not support expanding the project management team. Minutes of Meeting No.20 (14 August 2013), incorporating the above amendment, were adopted as a true and accurate record.

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 4	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings</p> <p><u>Meeting No.18 (12Jun13) Action 1:</u> In progress. See below, Item 10, Committee's Role in Improving Communication Between Industry and the Community</p> <p><u>Meeting No.18 (12Jun13) Action 2:</u> In progress. See below, Item 9, Committee's Achievements and Priorities for Action.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.19 (10Jul13) Action 1:</u> In progress. See below, Item 5, Update on the Newcastle Particle Characterisation Study.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.19 (10Jul13) Action 2:</u> In progress. See below, Item 6, Update on the Lower Hunter Community Information, Communication and Research Project.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.19 (10Jul13) Action 3:</u> In progress. See below, Item 7, EPA Response to Outcomes of Workshop on Air, Science, Policy and Communication, 12 April 2013.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.19 (10 Jul13) Action 4:</u> Completed. See below, Item 7. NCCCE members identified top six outcomes for action from the workshop for discussion.</p>
Item 5	<p>Update on Newcastle Particle Characterisation Study</p> <p>Mr Gary Davey advised that the EPA and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) are considering expanding the scope of the study in view of community concern to include characterisation of larger particles, known as PM₁₀, in addition to PM_{2.5} particles.</p> <p>Expanding the study design to include additional particle fractions will increase the cost of the study.</p> <p>OEH will lead the project and is investigating opportunities for a joint study with potential partners. Once negotiations are finalised, OEH will contact Keith Craig, the NCCCE-nominated community representative on the project steering team.</p> <p>OEH is aiming to commence sampling and monitoring in summer 2013 - 2014.</p> <p>The committee discussed the suggestion that the project steering team includes an additional non-NCCCE community member with links to the wider community. The EPA advised that correspondence from the Coal Terminal Action Group (CTAG, 19 August 2013) recommended an additional community representative nominated by CTAG. The EPA was considering the recommendation but was of the view that the NCCCE representative was adequate as a conduit to raise community issues.</p> <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Davey.</p>
Item 6	<p>Update on Lower Hunter Community Based Participatory Research Project</p> <p>Ms Catharina Boer advised that the project's collaborative approach will involve the community in all stages of the project, from development of research questions, the recommendation of solutions and the interpretation and dissemination of results.</p> <p>The EPA is developing the project brief which will go to tender shortly. The project consists of two stages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase 1 will identify and consult with a broad range of community representatives, report on the community's concerns and identify possible relevant research or other actions to address these concerns. • Phase 2 will undertake research to address community concerns and actions to improve community knowledge and understanding of air quality issues.

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<p>Item 6 (cont.)</p>	<p>Update Lower Hunter Community Based Participatory Research Project (Cont)</p> <p>The NCCCE and EPA discussed options for community engagement and potential issues for investigation, including the following points.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee members noted that the key issues for the community were now in the public domain, following the NCCCE’s public forums in 2012 and the EPA workshops in April and August 2013. • Committee members recommended allocating the largest proportion of the project budget to Phase 2. The Committee was firmly of the view that the project should focus on outcomes and actions, rather than further research. • The EPA reassured the NCCCE that Phase 1 will incorporate existing information and seek to fill information gaps, such as identifying the key issues for younger people and people in other areas of the Lower Hunter. • The Chair supported gathering information via surveys of school students and their families. • Mr Davey recommended that Phase 1 contractors consult with NCCCE community representative Kate Johnson regarding the involvement of students in Technical and Further Education (TAFE). • Committee members recommended the Newcastle City Council initiative, The Voice, as a model for gathering community input across demographic and geographic areas. <p>The Chair sought clarification on NCCCE’s role in the project.</p> <p>The EPA noted that the scope of the project would consider the recommendations expressed by the NCCCE at the meeting. The EPA envisaged a role for the NCCCE in providing feedback on the key issues identified in Phase 1.</p> <p>The EPA emphasised the importance of the project being driven by the community rather than the EPA.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION 1: That the EPA informs the NCCCE in more detail on the scoping stage of the Community Based Participatory Research Project.</p> <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Ms Boer.</p>
<p>Item 7</p>	<p>EPA Response to Outcomes of Workshop on Air, Science, Policy and Communication, held on 12 April 2013</p> <p>Ms Boer thanked the NCCCE for its review of the workshop recommendations on how the EPA can improve communication of air quality issues. Ms Boer reported on initial steps in responding to the top six outcomes for action recommended by the NCCCE.</p> <p>i. Improve education and participation to better understand issues</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA’s recent initiatives include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The new EPA website, linked to the OEH website: Community news webpages, accessed from the EPA home page, provide targeted information on consultative committees and media updates, view at: http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/MediaInformation/epacomcmtee.htm ○ An air quality video outlining monitoring methods for priority air pollutants: Available soon on the EPA website and NCCCE feedback appreciated. ○ EPA Twitter account https://twitter.com/NSW_EPA or @NSW_EPA: Providing updates on media releases and incident reports.

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 7 (cont.)	<p>i. Improve education and participation to better understand issues (Cont_</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In 2014, the EPA intends to publish regular updates of the air emissions inventory, including an annual review of coal mining emissions and guidance on using the web-based tool to view and compare local and regional air emissions. <p>ii. A regular local radio weekly timeslot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EPA's new spokesperson program will identify an appropriate spokesperson for air quality and provide regular opportunities for communicating the EPA's work. EPA and OEH regularly provide updates and responses to the media on air quality issues. Recent examples include the Dust Stop Program media release and Ministerial announcements on 9 September, at the 21st International Clean Air and Environment Conference, view at: http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/epamedia/EPAMedia13090901.htm <p>iii. Provide performance of key industries in the Lower Hunter and how they meet licence conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The new EPA website home page provides a link to the Public Register of industries that hold Environment Protection Licences. The Public Register provides details of compliance with licence conditions, on an annual basis, as well as pollution incident response management plans. Recent legislation requires licensees to publicise monitoring data on their own websites. <p>iv. Develop a smart phone 'Air App' to include air pollution hot spot reporting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The EPA noted this recommendation and acknowledged community interest in a smart phone app which provides information on local air quality. Examples exist for cities in China, United Kingdom and the United States of America, as examples. The EPA acknowledged that local air monitoring data is available and welcomes further information. <p>v. Provide monthly average concentration of PM_{2.5} and year to date average PM_{2.5} concentration, to illustrate how values are tracking towards the annual average PM_{2.5} criterion of 8 micrograms per cubic metre.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The OEH website publishes air quality data, near real time. Monthly average PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} concentrations are available using the "Search Air Quality Data" function at http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/AQMS/search.htm. The public are also able to search for and calculate daily averages and daily, monthly and annual maximums and numbers of exceedences. <p>vi. Publicising the cost of pollution to society, both in terms of damages to the environment and the health burden in NSW.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NSW Government and the EPA lead Australian agencies in publishing the health cost of air pollution. In 2005, the NSW government published <i>Air Pollution Economics: Health costs in the Greater Sydney Metropolitan Region</i>, available at http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/aqms/airpollution05623.pdf. The report estimates the health costs of ambient air pollution in Sydney, the Illawarra and lower Hunter. The EPA uses this information in decision-making on proposals that have the potential to affect air quality.
Item 7	

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
(cont.)	<p>vi. Publicising the cost of pollution to society, both in terms of damages to the environment and the health burden in NSW (cont)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The NSW EPA chairs the Australian Air Thematic Oversight Group, a standing committee under the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), which is responsible for the National Plan for Clean Air and the review of the current national air quality standards. The review considers the health costs of air pollution. • The <i>NSW State of the Environment Report 2012</i> covers 22 different environmental issues including performance indicators and costs, available at http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/soe/soe2012/ • The EPA acknowledged the potential to improve the availability of information, for example, by publishing on the website a list of papers on the social and human cost of air pollution, currently used by the EPA. <p>As feedback, Committee members made the following points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NCCCE committee members noted the EPA's recent projects and web-based initiatives to improve communication of air quality information. • Committee members reiterated the potential of a regular local radio segment allowing the EPA to engage directly with the community, noting that: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Many community members interested in air quality, such as participants at NCCCE forums, rarely access web based and social media; and ○ News bulletins often repackage information, opening a range of interpretations. • The Chair reiterated that the EPA web-based air quality monitoring information is not user-friendly for some community members and the information needs to be more easily available. • NCCCE committee members expressed disappointment that the EPA was not taking up any of the options specifically recommended by the NCCCE. <p>ACTION 1. EPA to provide NCCCE with feedback and outcomes from the state-wide stakeholder engagement survey, when available.</p> <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Ms Boer.</p>
Item 8	<p>Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network</p> <p>Mr Peter Jamieson advised that the Hunter Business Chamber received a subdued response from industry to a meeting it had proposed to progress discussions with industry on the establishment and operation of the network.</p> <p>In line with community preference, the EPA recommends an industry-funded network, built and operated by OEHL and administered by a Regulation under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act</i>. The EPA has a preferred funding model and favours the three of the four sites, endorsed by the NCCCE; namely Mayfield West (CSIRO site), Carrington (Hargrave Street reserve) and Stockton (Orica monitoring station at Fullerton Street).</p> <p>The next step will be for EPA to formally write to industry seeking their views on the proposed network and funding option. The EPA will also begin the process of drafting a Regulation. The development of a Regulation will require a formal consultation process.</p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<p>Item 8 (cont.)</p>	<p>Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network (Cont) The EPA will also need to consult with planning authorities such as the Department of Planning and Infrastructure and Newcastle City Council, with regard to rationalising redundant monitoring sites currently operated by industries, as a requirement of development consent. The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Jamieson.</p>
<p>Item 9</p>	<p>Committee’s Achievements and Priorities for Action The NCCCE members agreed that the NCCCE community forums in 2012 successfully focussed the attention of the wider community on air quality issues. The NCCCE discussed new priorities for the committee’s second term, to November 2015. Suggestions included raising community awareness of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water quality of the Hunter River, Throsby Creek, the harbour and beaches. • Noise pollution. • Contaminated sites. <p>The Committee discussed ideas for a series of forums:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to provide an overview of the current best practices of many local agencies involved in water quality management, and • to identify gaps and options for projects to improve water quality and public awareness. <p>The EPA confirmed that the suggestions met with Minister’s intention for NCCCE to provide advice on emerging environmental issues in addition to air quality. The priority for water quality agreed with a list of projects identified by the EPA’s wider community consultations in Newcastle.</p> <p>The Chair suggested that NCCCE progress new priorities for action concurrently with the committee’s involvement in air quality projects during 2013.</p>
<p>Item 10</p>	<p>Committee’s Role in Improving Communication Between Industry and the Community NCCCE Minister’s nominee, Mr Paul McBain, noted that a key function of the NCCCE is to advise on improving communication between industry and the community. NCCCE industry representative, Mr Paul Thomas, outlined community engagement practices of One Steel in Newcastle. Community liaison committees for three specific plant locations successfully resolved site-specific issues, including vibration, noise, dust and odour. Improvements included an automated system to alert plant supervisors when upset conditions occur, and noise ameliorative works on automatic gates. NCCCE industry representative, Mr Graham Wood, reported on Incitec’s community liaison committee and an education program to improve community awareness of Incitec’s management of the hazards and risks in storing ammonium nitrate. Mr McBain asked how the industry representatives view industry and community relationships improving, due to the actions of the NCCCE. NCCCE industry representatives agreed that the NCCCE’s work to bring government and technical experts together at community forums has raised significantly the awareness and understanding of air quality issues in the general community.</p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 10 (cont.)	<p>Committee's Role in Improving Communication Between Industry and the Community (Cont)</p> <p>Mr Thomas noted that the community becoming more informed benefited industry as well the community. Mr Thomas reiterated the potential for NCCCE to raise community awareness on other environmental issues.</p> <p>Other major industries running liaison committees include Newcastle Coal Infrastructure Group, Port Waratah Coal Services and the Newcastle Port Corporation.</p>
Item 11	<p>General Business</p> <p>The Chair asked the EPA about progress to reduce emissions from off-road diesel engines. The EPA confirmed the priority of the issue for EPA. Challenges include cost and logistics in the absence of a national standard on emission limits for off-road vehicles.</p> <p>The Chair expressed the view that the community would welcome the setting and enforcement of limits on emissions.</p> <p>The Chair tabled a set of principles and protocols for community engagement, for NCCCE's consideration and discussion at the next meeting. Ms Fee Mozeley, of the Coal Terminal Action Group, provided the principles and protocols and recommended that NCCCE consider their adoption. NCCCE environment representative Ms Zoe Rogers noted that these rules, if properly adopted, would have led to a second community representative, nominated by CTAG, on the project steering team for the particle characterisation study.</p> <p>ACTION 2: EPA to circulate to NCCCE the tabled principles and protocols for community engagement for discussion at the next meeting</p>
Item 12	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>Date: Wednesday, 16 October 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 7:45 pm	

ACTION ITEM LOG

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION		STATUS	RESP
MEETING NO. 21, 16 September 2013			
RECOMMENDATIONS			
1	That the EPA informs the NCCCE in more detail on the scoping stage of the Community Based Participatory Research Project.	16 Oct 13	EPA
ACTIONS			
1	EPA to provide NCCCE with feedback and outcomes from the state-wide stakeholder engagement survey, when available.	ASAP	EPA
2	EPA to circulate to NCCCE the tabled principles and protocols for community engagement for discussion at the next meeting	16 Oct 13	All