

MEETING No. 23
Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment
(NCCCE)

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 13 November 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),
 Nick Godfrey-Smith (Industry),
 Paul McBain (Minister's Nominee), Paul Thomas (Industry),
 Zoe Rogers (Environment), Graham Woods (Industry),
 Gary Davey (EPA Director North),
 Mark Hartwell (EPA Acting Manager Hunter Region)
 Leanne Graham (EPA Project Officer)

Guest Speakers Matt Riley (Office of Environment and Heritage, Director Climate and
 Atmospheric Science)
 Catharina Boer (EPA Senior Public Affairs Officer, Stakeholder
 Engagement and Governance),

Apologies Adam Gilligan (Newcastle City Council),

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 Nick Godfrey-Smith requested minor amendments to the draft minutes Item 6. Minutes of Meeting No.22 (16 October 2013), incorporating the requested minor amendments, were adopted as a true and accurate record.
Item 4	Actions Arising from Previous Meetings <u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 1:</u> In progress. EPA is preparing a briefing document on the study design and governance of a Lower Hunter deposited dust study, to circulate to NCCCE for comment.

<p>Item 4 (Cont)</p>	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings (Cont)</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 2:</u> Completed. EPA considered the request of NCCCE industry representatives to allow industries six weeks to respond to the proposed arrangements for the industry-funded air quality monitoring network. EPA allowed industries four weeks to respond, and advised that if more time was required individuals should seek an extension.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 3:</u> In progress. EPA continues to involve NCCCE in the development and implementation of the Lower Hunter Air Quality Community Research Project. EPA invited Chair John Tate to join the project management team.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 4:</u> Completed. EPA circulated to NCCCE the web link to the <i>Environment Protection Authority Strategic Plan 2013-16</i>, via email on 17/10/13. Refer to http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/epa/130550stratplan.pdf</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 5:</u> In progress. EPA provided an update to NCCCE on the Stakeholder Engagement Survey 2013. EPA intends to publish the full report and the EPA's response in December 2013. Refer to Item 9 below.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 6:</u> Completed. NCCCE Environment representative confirmed that Ms Mozeley had requested that the NCCCE adopt the tabled set of principles and protocols to guide its own consultation with the community. Refer to Item 7 below.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 7:</u> Completed. EPA circulated to NCCCE the web link to the EPA's video, <i>Air Quality in NSW</i> located on the 'Air Quality' page (refer to http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/air/index.htm) and public place recycling events (refer to http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/warr/publicrecycling.htm).</p> <p><u>Meeting No.22 (16Sep13) Action 8:</u> Commenced. EPA has commenced the process for a public advertisement to call for nominees for NCCCE vacant positions.</p>
<p>Item 5</p>	<p>Committee's Achievements and Priorities for Action</p> <p>Mr Paul McBain opened discussion on the NCCCE's achievements since Committee's inception and priorities for future action.</p> <p>Committee members identified the follow achievements of NCCCE.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Providing feedback on the proposed Newcastle air quality monitoring network - Initiating community forums on air quality, resulting in positive interaction and more effective communication between the wider community and the EPA. - Initiating monthly air quality monitoring reports, which help the community to better understand local air quality issues and monitoring results. - Providing a catalyst for the allocation of funding for forthcoming air quality projects in the Lower Hunter, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o a particle characterisation study for PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ (atmospheric particulate matter with diameters less than 2.5 micrometers (µm) and less than 10 µm, respectively); o a study to characterise larger deposited dust particles, including identification of coal particles deposited on domestic exterior surfaces; o a community research project to recommend actions to improve community awareness of and access to information on air quality; o and the development of a smart phone app to present summary results of all NSW air quality monitoring stations.

<p>Item 5 (Cont)</p>	<p>Committee’s Achievements and Priorities for Action (Cont)</p> <p>Priorities for future action included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Supporting the establishment of the Newcastle air quality monitoring network; - Participating in the governance and communication of outcomes relating to EPA’s air quality projects in the Lower Hunter, listed above; - Exploring issues of local water quality, including the influence of contaminated sites on water quality. <p>The Chair thanked Committee members for their contributions and noted the relevance of the discussion for the next agenda item.</p>
<p>Item 6</p>	<p>Committee’s Role in Improving Communication Between Industry and the Community</p> <p>Mr McBain opened the discussion. Committee members identified the need to clarify NCCCE’s approach to improving communication between industry and the wider community.</p> <p>In discussion, committee members expressed the following views and raised the following issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - A broad group of stakeholders remain unaware of the NCCCE. How can NCCCE better communicate the NCCCE’s achievements and priorities for actions? - Community forums were well received although poorly advertised. - How can NCCCE best work with groups that oppose industrial activity? - Communities commonly perceive industrial projects as risky to health. - To date, NCCCE contact with the wider community has been ad hoc. To be an important contact with the wider community NCCCE needs a structure to provide support and direct action. - To date, the effectiveness of members’ interactions and communications has depended on the skills and practices of individual members networking with groups beyond the NCCCE. - A regular newsletter, as a letterbox drop or E-new, could provide information about NCCCE, updates on complaints data and good news stories. - NCCCE needs a two year plan to state what the committee hopes to achieve. <p>The Chair thanked Committee members for their contributions and noted the above points for further discussion.</p>
<p>Item 7</p>	<p>NCCCE Principles and Protocols for Community Engagement</p> <p>The Chair re-opened the discussion on the principles and protocols for community engagement, tabled at the previous meeting, at the request of Ms Fee Mozeley, member of the Coal Terminal Action Group and the Hunter Community Environment Centre.</p> <p>Ms Zoe Rogers confirmed that Ms Mozeley had requested that the NCCCE adopt the principles and protocols to guide its own consultation with the community.</p>

<p>Item 7 (Cont)</p>	<p>NCCCE Principles and Protocols for Community Engagement (Cont)</p> <p>Mr Paul Thomas expressed the view that he was not convinced of the value in the NCCCE’s adopting the principles and protocols; however, he would support the adoption if sufficient support existed within the NCCCE. Mr Thomas noted that the question of adopting the principles and protocols related to understanding what the NCCCE wants to achieve in future. Mr Thomas also noted that the NCCCE generally operates in ways not in conflict with the tabled principles and protocols.</p> <p>The Chair agreed that the tabled principles and protocols do not conflict with the way that NCCCE operates and questioned whether the principles and protocols could be added to the NCCCE Terms of Reference.</p> <p>Mr Gary Davey clarified that the Minister for the Environment set the NCCCE’s Terms of Reference. However, it would not contravene the principles under which the NCCCE was established if committee members adopted the tabled principles and protocols as a document, outside of the Terms of Reference, to which individuals paid full regard.</p> <p>In further discussion, Committee Members reached general agreement on the value of the tabled principles and protocols; agreed to individually consider these when interacting with the wider community; and agreed to incorporate these within individuals’ roles on the NCCCE.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Committee members for their contributions and confirmed that the tabled principles and protocols were received and noted.</p>
<p>Item 8</p>	<p>Results of the Upper Hunter Fine Particle Characterisation Study Update on Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study, and Changes to Messaging for Automated Alerts for Air Monitoring Networks</p> <p>Upper Hunter Fine Particle Characterisation Study - Mr Matt Riley presented an overview of the recent Upper Hunter Fine Particle Characterisation Study. The study was co-funded by the Office of Environment and Health (OEH) and NSW Health; and undertaken by the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO). The study aimed to determine the chemical composition of PM_{2.5}; the main sources of PM_{2.5} and their relative contributions; and any seasonal variations in composition. Samples of PM_{2.5} were collected for 24-hour every third day during 2012 at the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Stations at Muswellbrook and Singleton.</p> <p>The samples were analysed by ANSTO and CSIRO, and common factors or patterns of chemicals occurring together, were used to ‘fingerprint’ likely sources of particles.</p> <p>In Muswellbrook, on an annual basis, woodsmoke accounts for 30% of PM_{2.5}, followed by local and regional power station emissions (17%); reactions between sea salt and power station emissions over a regional scale (13%); and wildfires and hazard reduction burning (12%). Soil and fugitive coal dust makes up 11%.</p>

<p>Item 8 (Cont)</p>	<p>Results of the Upper Hunter Fine Particle Characterisation Study (cont)</p> <p>In Singleton, on an annual basis, 20% of PM_{2.5} is attributable to local and regional scale power station emissions; followed by reactions between sea salt and power station emissions over a regional scale (18%); vehicle and industry emissions (17%) and woodsmoke (14%). Soil and fugitive coal dust makes up 12 %.</p> <p>In winter, woodsmoke is the dominant source of particles in winter at both sites (Muswellbrook 62%, Singleton 38%).</p> <p>In response to questions from the Committee Mr Riley confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local geographical effects may explain the difference in concentrations of woodsmoke and sea salt at Muswellbrook compared to Singleton. - Regional power station emissions may include sources in the upper Hunter, central coast and western coal fields of NSW. - Soils sources were not differentiated to identify natural top soil or sandstone in stockpiles of mine overburden. Currently there is no evidence in the relevant literature that identifies a method to differentiate between naturally eroded material and overburden from open cut mining. - International literature reviews provide little epidemiological evidence of the harmfulness of sea salt (Refer to http://www.euro.who.int/_data/assets/pdf_file/0004/193108/REVIHAAP-Final-technical-report-final-version.pdf). <p>Mr Riley emphasised that PM_{2.5} particles are very fine are and potentially remain airborne for very long periods and may be transported for long distances over local, regional and national scales.</p> <p>Mr Riley noted that the results at Muswellbrook and Singleton generally were similar, showing the influence of local and regional scale power station emissions and a local woodsmoke impact in winter.</p> <p>The study concluded that the dominant sources of fine particles are likely to be local and regional scale power station emissions in summer and local woodsmoke in winter.</p> <p>Mr Riley tabled a factsheet which provides a summary report on the study and noted that the factsheet (summary report) and full report are available on OEH website at http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/aqms/uhaqmnfpcs.htm .</p> <p>Mr Riley noted the relevance of the study for informing the design of a particle characterisation study for the Lower Hunter.</p> <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Riley.</p> <p>ACTION 1: EPA to circulate to NCCCE the factsheet summarising the final report of the Upper Hunter Valley Particle Characterisation Study.</p>
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<p>Item 8 (Cont)</p>	<p>Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study - Mr Riley noted that the study was announced at a public meeting facilitated by the EPA in August 2013. In response to community feedback at the meeting, EPA CEO Barry Buffier confirmed, at a forum on air quality and health held in Newcastle, in September 2013, that the study will include characterisation of PM₁₀ particles. The planned study will be led by OEH and funded jointly by EPA, OEH, CSIRO and ANSTO. The initial meeting of the Project Management Committee, including NCCCE representative Mr Keith Craig and representatives of EPA, OEH, CSIRO, ANSTO and NSW Health, was held on 6 November 2013 and discussed the scope and design of the study.</p> <p>In response to questions from the Committee Mr Riley confirmed that an independent peer reviewer will assess the project design before the study commences. OEH expects sampling to commence in autumn 2014 at two sites, Stockton and Mayfield, and to continue for twelve months.</p> <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Riley.</p> <p>Changes to Messaging for Automated Alerts for Air Monitoring Networks –</p> <p>Mr Riley informed NCCCE that in early 2014, OEH intends to replace references to “health standards” with references to “air quality standards” in the messages sent via SMS and email, to subscribers to the automated alerts from the OEH air quality monitoring networks across NSW. In consultation with NSW Health, OEH proposed the changes to provide a clearer message that exceeding an air quality value represents the deterioration in air quality, rather than a significant change in health risk to all people in the community. An air pollution alert, rather than a health alert, is intended to reduce the risk of unnecessary alarm in the community. Messaging retains the reference to the web site, which in turn, retains the colour coding of the Air Quality Index and the corresponding health messages about appropriate actions for people, including sensitive individuals, in response to deteriorating air quality.</p> <p>In response to questions from NCCCE, Mr Riley confirmed the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Values of the NSW Air Quality Index (AQI) less than 100 indicate that air quality is within national health standards - During the recent bushfires in NSW, AQI values reached 4,000 in Sydney and 50 to 1,000 in the Hunter <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Riley.</p>

<p>Item 9</p>	<p>Updates on Lower Hunter Air Quality Community Research Project, Ipsos Stakeholder and Community Survey, and EPA's response to NCCCE's recommendations from the workshop of April 2013</p> <p>Ms Catharina Boer provided the following updates.</p> <p>Updates on Lower Hunter Air Quality Community Research Project</p> <p>EPA invited the University of Technology Sydney, Macquarie University and the University of Newcastle to submit proposals to undertake the Lower Hunter Air Quality Community Research. Submissions are due 18 November 2013 and the successful contractor will be notified by 25 November 2013. NCCCE Chair, John Tate, will be on the selection committee.</p> <p>In response to questions from NCCCE, Ms Boer confirmed that the project brief identified NCCCE as a key stakeholder in the project.</p> <p>Ipsos Stakeholder and Community Survey</p> <p>Ms Boer noted that effective stakeholder engagement is one of the EPA's strategic goals, as outlined in the <i>Strategic Plan 2013-16</i>. The EPA commissioned the Ipsos Social Research Institute in March 2013, to conduct an independent survey of the EPA's key stakeholders and community in a confidential setting which sought to understand the opinions, priorities and expectations of community and environment groups, government and industry. The survey encouraged key stakeholders, including EPA's most vocal critics, to provide honest perceptions and opinions about the EPA and its management of environmental issues. The survey included over 300 individuals state-wide, including NCCCE members. Ipsos provided the final report in October 2013 which will be published with the EPA's response in December 2013. The outcomes of report will inform EPA's engagement activities and strengthen stakeholder relationships.</p> <p>EPA's response to NCCCE's recommendations from the workshop of April 2013</p> <p>Ms Boer provided an update on the EPA's response to NCCCE's priority recommendations from the workshop on air quality, science and communication:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - EPA is preparing a brief to develop a smart phone app to report on real time air quality monitoring across NSW by the Office of Environment and Heritage - EPA has commenced discussion with local ABC Radio regarding the broadcasting of a short series of programs on air quality. <p>Ms Boer noted that information needs to be new to ensure publication in the local media, rather than focussed on a previously reported EPA initiative.</p> <p>The Chair thanked Ms Boer for the updates and noted the information.</p>
<p>Item 10</p>	<p>Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network</p> <p>Mr Mark Hartwell confirmed that the EPA had written to relevant industries in early November 2013 requesting a formal response by the end of the month regarding the industries' support for OEH to establish and operate an industry-funded air quality monitoring network for the inner city and port areas of Newcastle.</p>

<p>Item 10 (Cont)</p>	<p>Progress Report – Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network (Cont)</p> <p>The network would operate according to a Regulation under the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act</i>, which would specify the method for calculating the funding levies to be paid by industries. A similar Regulation for the Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network (UHAQMN) was passed by the NSW Government in December 2012.</p> <p>In response to questions from NCCCE, EPA provided the following advice:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Protracted discussions were also a feature of the process to gain industry support for the operation of the UHAQMN. The recent Regulation for the UHAQMN was preceded initially by a Memorandum of Understanding and then followed by a Deed of Agreement between the EPA and relevant coal mines and power stations; - In developing a Regulation for the Newcastle network, the EPA would prepare a Regulatory Impact Statement which would be publicly exhibited. The EPA will respond to public submissions. - EPA expects the Impact Statement to be available in the first quarter of 2014, and construction to commence in the last quarter of 2014. - Industries requiring more time to respond were advised to contact the EPA. - Following commissioning of the network, EPA would engage with industry and the Department of Planning to discuss the decommissioning of redundant air quality monitors and implications for the industries' Environment Protection Licences. <p>The Chair noted the information and thanked Mr Hartwell and Mr Davey.</p>
<p>Item 11</p>	<p>General Business</p> <p>The Chair re-opened discussion on NCCCE's priority actions. The outcomes of the discussion are summarised by the following actions.</p> <p>ACTION 2: EPA to prepare a timeline of EPA all air quality projects approved for 2014-2015, incorporating any implications for NCCCE's involvement, to assist in defining and planning future actions for NCCCE.</p> <p>ACTION 3: EPA to organise an independently facilitated workshop for the next meeting of NCCCE, to plan priority actions for 2014-05.</p> <p>ACTION 4: Mr McBain to initiate action by a subcommittee of NCCCE to gather information on water quality management studies, roles and responsibilities in the Lower Hunter for discussion at the workshop, to be held at the next NCCCE meeting.</p> <p>The Chair, on behalf of the NCCCE, and Mr Davey, on behalf of EPA, thanked retiring industry representative, Mr Graham Wood, for his valued and constructive contribution since the inception of NCCCE.</p> <p>In conclusion, the Chair thanked all participants and expressed keen support for the proposed air quality initiatives in 2014-2015.</p>
<p>Item 12</p>	<p>Next Meetings</p> <p>Date: Wednesday, 29 January 2013 and Wednesday 12 February 2013. Location: EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West Time: 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</p>
<p>Meeting ended at 7:50 pm</p>	

ACTION ITEM LOG

ACTION / RECOMMENDATION	DUE	RESP	
MEETING NO. 23, 13 November 2013			
ACTIONS			
1	EPA to circulate to NCCCE the factsheet summarising the final report of the Upper Hunter Valley Particle Characterisation Study.	ASAP	EPA
2	EPA to prepare a timeline of EPA all air quality projects approved for 2014-2015, incorporating any implications for NCCCE's involvement, to assist in defining and planning future actions for NCCCE.	29 January 2014	EPA
3	EPA to organise an independently facilitated workshop for the next meeting of NCCCE, to plan priority actions for 2014-05.	29 January 2014	EPA
4	Mr McBain to initiate action by a subcommittee of NCCCE to gather information on water quality management studies, roles and responsibilities in the Lower Hunter for discussion at the workshop, to be held at the next NCCCE meeting		