

**MEETING No. 33**  
**Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment**  
**(NCCCE)**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Date:** 10 December 2014 **Time:** 5.30 pm

**File:** EF13/8723

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

**In attendance:** John Tate (Chair), Rick Banyard (Community),  
 Paul McBain (Minister's Nominee), James Whelan (Community - alternate),  
 Sherree Woodroffe (Industry)

Matt Riley (OEH Director, Climate and Atmospheric Science),  
 Lori Warren (OEH, Senior Climate and Atmospheric Scientist)

Adam Gilligan (EPA Manager Hunter Region),  
 Leanne Graham (EPA Project Officer).

**Apologies**

Andrew Baxter (Newcastle City Council representative)  
 Keith Craig (Community), Gary Davey (EPA Director North),  
 Nick Godfrey-Smith (Industry), Paul Thomas (Industry)

**Meeting Record**

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<b>Item 1</b>	<p><b>Welcome</b></p> <p>Chair welcomed attendees.</p> <p>The Chair delivered a message from Mr Davey, passing on his personal thanks to the NCCCE members for their work over 2014 and to wish everyone all the best for Christmas and the New Year.</p>
<b>Item 2</b>	<p><b>Apologies</b></p> <p>As above.</p>
<b>Item 3</b>	<p><b>Minutes from Previous Meeting (12 November 2014)</b></p> <p>The previous minutes were adopted, pending approval by absent committee members.</p>
<b>Item 4</b>	<p><b>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings</b></p> <p><u>Meeting No.32 (12Nov14) Action 1:</u> Completed 10/12/14. EPA briefing explaining the structure of the Department of Planning and Environment Cluster and the responsibilities of the EPA and the Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH) (Item 8 below).</p> <p><u>Meeting No.32 (12Nov14) Action 2:</u> Completed. The EPA emailed to NCCCE a draft summary of NCCCE's achievements, for comment by 19/11/14.</p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
<p><b>Item 4 (cont)</b></p>	<p><u>Meeting No.32 (12Nov14) Action 3:</u> Completed. Chair submitted the NCCCE's Achievements paper and a cover letter to the Parliamentary Upper House Inquiry into the EPA, in response to a submission which criticised the NCCCE (Item 8 below).</p> <p><u>Meeting No.32 (12Nov14) Action 4:</u> Update. Pending Minister's approval, the EPA to publish NCCCE's Achievements paper on the NCCCE webpage and release a media statement, to coincide with the call for nominations to fill the vacancy for the environment representative.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.32 (12Nov14) Action 5:</u> Completed 10/12/14. The EPA to provide an update on the progress of the Orica environmental service orders required by the Land and Environment Court as penalty for various pollution incidents in the Newcastle area (Item 10 below).</p>
<p><b>Item 5</b></p>	<p><b>Air Quality Monitoring Report</b></p> <p>Mr Riley and Ms Warren, Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), presented the first draft report on the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network (NLAQMN). The report provided background on the NLAQMN, site information for the newly constructed air quality monitoring stations, a summary of how well the network is performing to date, and pollutant levels since the commissioning of the new sites from August 2014 to October 2014.</p> <p>The network comprises three new stations at Carrington, Mayfield and Stockton. The Stockton monitor replaces the existing Orica site. Each site continuously measures particles as PM<sub>10</sub>, and PM<sub>2.5</sub>, oxides of nitrogen (NO<sub>x</sub>), sulfur dioxide (SO<sub>2</sub>), and meteorology (wind speed, wind direction, temperature and humidity). Ammonia (NH<sub>3</sub>) is also monitored at Stockton. These sites complement the already existing OEH Lower Hunter monitoring sites at Newcastle, Beresfield and Wallsend.</p> <p>During the reporting period, air quality levels were mostly less than the relevant benchmark. The report analysed wind data and concluded that days with elevated PM<sub>10</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> levels were most likely associated with bushfire activity.</p> <p>Mr Riley demonstrated how to navigate the OEH website to view hourly updates of current air quality in near real-time, as tables and graphs.</p> <p>On a long-term basis, the analysis of trends in air quality will inform regulatory programs that may be required to reduce these emissions.</p> <p>In 2015, OEH will commence quarterly air quality reports to the NCCCE, including a seasonal analysis of weather conditions, based on information from the air quality monitoring stations that OEH operates in the Lower Hunter.</p> <p>Dr Whelan, community representative, requested that Orica's monitoring data be incorporated into the OEH data set in, order to make it accessible for the purposes of longer term analysis.</p>

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<p><b>Item 5 (cont)</b></p>	<p>Dr Whelan also asked that the OEH identify ‘natural event’ days and to document the justification for classifying these days. This could, for instance, include documenting wind speed and direction, the location of fires and the corresponding location of monitoring sites.</p> <p>The Chair noted the draft report, thanked Mr Riley and Ms Warren and commended OEH on the establishment of the Network.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 1: NCCCE recommended that OEH considers including the following additional information in the preparation of the quarterly air quality reports:</b></p> <p><b>(1) References to reports or satellite images of bushfire activity.</b>  <b>(2) A brief explanation on how to read a wind rose.</b></p>
<p><b>Item 6</b></p>	<p><b>Update on the progress of the Orica environmental service orders, required by the Land and Environment Court.</b></p> <p>Mr Gilligan provided the following updates.</p> <p><b>Restoration of Kooragang Dykes – Stage 2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) engaged a contractor to restore and stabilise the dykes within the Hunter Wetlands National Park.</li> <li>• The Review of Environmental Factors is complete.</li> <li>• Works will commence in March 2015, after birds migrate.</li> </ul> <p><b>Tomago Wetland Rehabilitation Project – Stage 3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The NPWS engaged a contractor to restore tidal flushing to rehabilitate the salt marsh.</li> <li>• Construction of new floodgates has commenced, with installation expected in March and commissioning in April, weather permitting.</li> <li>• NPWS is considering an opening ceremony.</li> </ul> <p><b>Hunter River Health Monitoring Program</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• OEH commenced water quality monitoring in August 2014.</li> <li>• The study will determine whether the cluster of industries in the heavy industrial precinct is having a significant cumulative impact on the health of the river.</li> <li>• The survey design for event-based monitoring is finalised, with monitoring planned for January to June 2015.</li> <li>• Literature review commenced, with completion expected in late January 2015.</li> </ul> <p><b>Pitt Street Reserve, South Stockton Public Domain Enhancement</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The revegetation works will establish riparian native vegetation and provide shade and windbreaks.</li> <li>• The work will stabilise foreshores and improve biodiversity and public amenity of the reserve and the Stockton cycleway.</li> <li>• At future meetings, Mr Andrew Baxter, NCCCE’s new member representing Newcastle City Council will provide ongoing updates.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Item 7</b></p>	<p><b>Update on EPA Lower Hunter Air Quality Projects</b></p> <p><b>Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network</b>            OEH presented for comment the draft <i>Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network, Commissioning Report: August 2014 – October 2015</i>. Report Refer to Item 5.</p> <p><b>Lower Hunter Community Research Project</b>            EPA advised that it expected to publish the report by 31 December 2014 and to publish EPA's response in early 2015. The Committee discussed the advantages and disadvantages of publishing the report close to the Christmas holiday period.</p> <p><b>Recommendation 2: The NCCCE recommended that the EPA publishes the report on the Lower Hunter Community Research Project in early 2015, to coincide with the publication of the EPA's response to the report.</b></p> <p><b>Lake Macquarie-Wyong Monthly Air Quality Reports</b>            On 4 December 2014, the EPA held a workshop with industry and community representatives at Lake Macquarie City Council, to review the first draft report by Todoroski Air Sciences. The report included data from OEH monitoring stations at Wyong and Wallsend and four industry monitoring stations. The workshop participants welcomed the report and provided feedback. The EPA expects to publish the first report by 31 December 2014.</p> <p><b>Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study</b>            The Project Management Group met on 27 November 2014. Sampling commenced in March 2014 and is proceeding into the third quarter, for the spring period. The final report is due in early 2016.</p> <p><b>Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study</b>            The Project Reference Group met on 20 November 2014. The contractor responded to the feedback from the peer review and community review of the methodology paper. The EPA expects the methodology will be finalised by 31 December 2014.</p> <p>The contractor installed dust gauges at 12 sites identified previously in consultation with the Group. The first month of sampling commenced on 16 October 2014. The second month includes trial swab and brush sampling for one to two days with consistent wind direction. The contractor will report on the trial at the milestone meeting on 11 February 2015.</p>
<p><b>Item 8</b></p>	<p><b>Climate Change Projections</b></p> <p>OEH outlined new regional climate change projections for NSW and the Hunter.</p> <p>The NSW and ACT Regional Climate Modelling (NARClIM) Project is a research partnership between the NSW and ACT governments and the Climate Change Research Centre at the University of NSW.</p>

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<p><b>Item 8 (cont)</b></p>	<p>The projections cover changes in temperature, rainfall, wind, fire weather, humidity, evaporation and over 100 other climate variables.</p> <p>In the Hunter, temperature projections show more hot days and fewer cold nights, especially for areas away from the coast. Annual rainfall projections show a slight increase to 2070, with more rain falling in autumn and less in spring.</p> <p>Detailed projections, at the local regional scale of 10 kilometres square, are available at a dedicated portal on the OEH website <a href="http://climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/">http://climatechange.environment.nsw.gov.au/</a>.</p> <p>The Chair noted the presentation and thanked Mr Riley. The Chair and NCCCE members congratulated Mr Riley on the high quality and comprehensive detail of the work.</p> <p>On behalf of NCCCE, the Chair commended the Minister, the NSW Government, OEH and the project partners for taking the initiative to lead the nation in this important area of research.</p>
<p><b>Item 9</b></p>	<p><b>NCCCE Achievement 2014 – Summary Paper</b></p> <p>The EPA will publish the summary paper <i>NCCCE Achievements 2011-2014</i> on the NCCCE webpage.</p>
<p><b>Item 10</b></p>	<p><b>Briefing on NSW Department of Planning and Environment Cluster and the responsibility of the EPA and the OEH</b></p> <p>The EPA circulated information explaining roles of the organisations and affiliated agencies that make up the Department of Planning and Environment Cluster. Key roles include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) works with local government and the community on long term regional planning and protecting environment and heritage through the planning system.</li> <li>• Agencies affiliated with the DPE include OEH, Hunter Development Corporation, Urban Growth, Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority and Office of Local Government.</li> <li>• OEH consists of eight areas including NPWS, Heritage, Policy, Legal and Science.</li> <li>• The EPA, the state’s principal environmental regulator, uses licences, audits, regulations and education to protect the environment and people from air, water and noise pollution and to manage contaminated land, and waste and resource recovery.</li> <li>• The EPA has a service agreement with OEH for the provision of various services, including legal support and scientific support.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Item 11</b></p>	<p><b>General Business</b></p> <p>Mr Banyard reported that he attended a site tour of Summerhill Waste Management Facility, as a member of NCC’s environment committee. Mr Banyard praised the operation and management of the facility and recommended that NCCCE members consider requesting a site tour during 2015. The Chair advised the committee to consider Mr Banyard’s recommendation at the planning session in January 2015.</p>

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 11 (cont)	<b>Recommendation 3. Mr Banyard, NCCCE Community Representative, recommended that at the planning session in January, the committee considers requesting a site tour of Summerhill Waste Management Facility in 2015.</b>
Item 12	<p><b>Next Meetings</b>            NCCCE Planning Session 2015  <b>Date:</b> To be confirmed, Tuesday 27 January or Wednesday 28 January 2015.  <b>Location:</b> EPA Conference Room, Ground Floor, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle West  <b>Time:</b> 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm</p> <p>Meetings in 2015            18 Feb – Spring Air Quality Report and Seasonal Analysis            22 Apr – Summer Air Quality Report and Seasonal Analysis            22 Jul – Autumn Air Quality Report and Seasonal Analysis            21 Oct – Winter Air Quality Report and Seasonal Analysis</p> <p>Other meeting dates may be discussed at the planning session in January 2015.</p>
<b>Meeting ended at 8.00 pm</b>	

### ACTION ITEM LOG

NCCCE MEETING NO. 31, 8 October 2014 - RECOMMENDATIONS	DUE	RESP
1. NCCCE recommended that OEH considers including the following additional information in the preparation of the quarterly air quality: (1) References to reports or satellite images of bushfire activity. (2) A brief explanation on how to read a wind rose.	18/02/15	OEH
2. The NCCCE recommended that the EPA publishes the report on the Lower Hunter Community Research Project in early 2015, to coincide with the publication of the EPA's response to the report.	Early 2015	EPA
3. Mr Banyard, NCCCE Community Representative, recommended that at the planning session in January, the committee considers requesting a site tour of Summerhill Waste Management Facility in 2015.	January 2015	NCCCE