



MEETING No. 39
Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment
(NCCCE)

MEETING MINUTES

Date: 16 September 2015 **Time:** 5.30 pm

File: EF13/8273

Location: EPA Office Conference Room, Ground Floor,
State Government Offices Building, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle

In attendance: John Tate (Chair), Rick Banyard (Community), Keith Craig (Community),
Nick Godfrey-Smith (Industry), John Mackenzie (Environment – alternate),
Paul McBain (Minister’s Community Nominee),
Sherree Woodroffe (Industry)

Sylvia Bell (EPA Director Stakeholder Engagement and Governance)
Leanne Graham (EPA Project Officer)

Apologies: Andrew Baxter (City of Newcastle), Paul Thomas (Industry) and
Adam Gilligan (EPA Manager Hunter Region)

Meeting Record

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 1	Welcome Chair welcomed attendees.
Item 2	Apologies As above. The Chair advised that Mr Gilligan was attending the public meeting at Stockton, organised by the Department of Defence, regarding ground water contamination from perfluorinated chemicals used on the Williamstown RAAF base. The committee received copies of correspondence distributed to residents in the Williamstown area.
Item 3	Discussion – Advisory committee evaluation Ms Bell explained that the EPA is developing a framework for the evaluation of advisory committees like the NCCCE The Chair led the discussion. Main points are summarised below.

<p>Item 3 (Cont)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Reasons for evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To examine the progress of the Committee’s engagement against its aims, objectives and to identify barriers and outcomes • To focus on achievements and what can be improved • To demonstrate the effectiveness of the committee to stakeholders 2. What will be evaluated (a) by the NCCCE and (b) by others, for example, community, industry, EPA? <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. By the Committee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Performance in relation to Terms of Reference • The appropriateness of committee’s aims and objectives • Actions for specific projects or objectives and events • Performance in relation to a work plan • Community expectations • Level of engagement with the community and others • Members’ attendance at meetings • Processes within the committee, for example: How members communicate / engage with each other; resolve conflicts; communicate with the community; • The role of committee in affecting change, for example: How has environmental management improved in Newcastle / in the EPA? How has a local environmental issue improved? b. By others, for example, the community, industry, the EPA? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee’s performance in relation to aims and objectives • How the committee communicates with the community 3. When should the committee undertake an evaluation? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual evaluation by committee and community in relation to aims and objectives, set at the new year planning session and evaluated late in the year • Evaluation by the community and the committee after specific events 4. How will the evaluation be conducted? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annual anonymous survey of members and others, questionnaire to include a section for free text • Secure online survey to provide analysis • Committee to promote among their networks the survey by community • EPA media release and promote survey on the Committee’s web page • Annual review of evaluation findings by the committee in a new year planning session
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<p>Item 3 (Cont)</p>	<p>5. How will the EPA respond to the evaluation? How will the EPA respond to the evaluation?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annually compile a list of issues raised by the Committee and provide updates on actions being taken • Analyse feedback and report back to committee on major concerns • Inform the Committee about what information flows from the Committee to the EPA • Inform the Committee about its influence on how the EPA does business <p>ACTION 1. EPA to tabulate the main points of the discussion on an evaluation framework and circulate to the committee.</p> <p>ACTION 2. EPA to draft an evaluation process and circulate to the committee for discussion at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION 3. EPA to prepare a draft survey and circulate to committee to complete and bring to the next meeting for discussion.</p> <p>ACTION 4. EPA to update the committee’s statement of achievements and circulate to the committee.</p>
<p>Item 4</p>	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting (17 June 2015) Minutes of the previous meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record.</p>
<p>Item 5</p>	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings summary</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 1:</u> Completed 19/08/15. EPA and OEH facilitated a NCCCE community workshop, demonstrating how to access online air quality information, at the WEA Computer Laboratory, Laman Street, Cooks Hill, Wednesday 19 August 2015. Sessions commenced at 5.30 pm, 6.30 pm and 7.30 pm.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 2:</u> Completed 04/08/15. EPA released media statements and published a press advertisement to promote the NCCCE community workshop to be held on 19 August 2015.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 3:</u> Completed 18/07/15. Mr Craig provided contact details to the EPA for a fortnightly community newspaper, to publicise the NCCCE community event. The Portside Local, edition 23 July - 5 August 2015, page 9, published an advertisement for the workshop to be held on 19 August 2015.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 4:</u> Completed 29/07/15. Ms Woodroffe arranged for the Orica Kooragang Island Community Newsletter, edition August/September 2015, to include a notice promoting the community workshop to be held on 19 August 2015.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 5:</u> Completed 19/08/15. EPA provided copies of the Help Pages on the OEH air quality monitoring web site for participants at the NCCCE community workshop on 19 August 2015.</p>

<p>Item 5 (Cont)</p>	<p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 6:</u> Completed 16/09/15. OEH reported on the number of visits to the air quality monitoring web pages before and after the NCCCE community event. Use of the web pages associated with the air quality monitoring data increased in the days following the workshop.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 7:</u> Completed 29/07/15. NCCCE provided feedback on the format of the draft quarterly report on the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network for autumn 2015. OEH is finalising the report for publishing.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.38 (22 July 2015) Action 8:</u> Progressing. EPA will advise NCCCE members when the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network for autumn 2015 is published.</p>
<p>Item 6</p>	<p>Feedback on community interactive workshop on air quality, 19 August 2015</p> <p>The meeting discussed the workshop participants' evaluation responses, the cost of running the workshop and the lessons learned.</p> <p>Main points were as follows.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All participants provided positive feedback. • Use of the web pages associated with the air quality monitoring data increased in the days following the workshop. • The committee members agreed that the workshop succeeded in providing a positive experience for participants to learn how to access and interpret the online data from the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network. • A community representative noted that members of the local community, who were interested in the workshop but unable to attend, had enquired about the possibility of future workshops. • The EPA noted that the report on the Lower Hunter Community Research Project, by Macquarie University in 2014, questioned the value of community events with low participation rates. • Committee members believed that the cost to the EPA of running the workshop was reasonable and worthwhile compared with the cost of establishing and operating the industry-funded network. • The committee members agreed that the positive community feedback reinforced the high priority given to the committee's objective of increasing community awareness, understanding and use of online air quality monitoring data recorded by the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network. <p>RECOMMENDATION 1: The committee advised that the EPA be more vocal in explaining to the community how to interpret the online air quality monitoring data recorded by the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION 2: The committee advised that the EPA be more vocal in responding to misinterpretations of air quality data reported in the local media.</p>

<p>Item 6 (Cont)</p>	<p>RECOMMENDATION 3: The committee advised that the EPA partner with industry in future community education campaigns on air quality.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION 4: The committee advised that the EPA more actively use newsletters to send messages about air quality to the community.</p> <p>RECOMMENDATION 5: The committee advised that the EPA targeted high school students in future community education campaigns on air quality.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the meeting for the discussion.</p>
<p>Item 7</p>	<p>Update on EPA Lower Hunter Air Quality Projects</p> <p><u>Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The draft final report is in preparation, for peer review in November 2015. • Mr Craig advised that CSIRO and ANSTO outlined the findings of the study to the Project Management Team in August 2015. <p><u>Lake Macquarie-Wyong Air Quality Monthly Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA published the report May 2015 which included a case study of the NSW-wide dust storm on 6 May 2015. OEH monitors recorded PM₁₀ levels above the 24 hour criterion of 50 µg/m³ at Wyong (58.6 µg/m³) and Wallsend (77.5 µg/m³) • The EPA will continue publishing reports for July 2015 to June 2016. <p><u>Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sampling is on track for completion in October 2015. <p><u>North Lake Macquarie Lead (Pb) contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In June, Hunter New England Health (HNEH) commenced screening blood lead (Pb) levels in children and pregnant women living in suburbs north of Lake Macquarie. HNEH screened 72 children aged 6 months to 5 years and eight pregnant women. Results for screenings in June and July showed all levels below the criterion of 5 micrograms per decilitre (µg/dL) and 63 children with levels below 3.3 µg/dL. • Screening is continuing with monthly clinics from September 2015 to February 2016. • Further information is available on the HNEH web site at http://www.hnehealth.nsw.gov.au/hnep/EnvironmentalHealth/Pages/testing-2015.aspx

<p>Item 8</p>	<p>Community feedback – sharing information between community and industry</p> <p>Committee members shared information on issues of environmental concern for their interest groups. Main points were as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr Craig advised of Stockton residents' complaints to the EPA and industries about odours on Kooragang Island. Mr Craig noted black dust deposition at his residence. • Ms Woodroffe noted Orica Kooragang Island's recent media statement informing the community of testing to begin on two new ammonia flaring systems. The flares burn ammonia to release nitrogen and water vapour, thereby reducing emissions of ammonia to the atmosphere. Flares may be visible, with heights of approximately 10 metres (m) and 4m. • Mr McBain noted Islington residents' interest in the visible remediation works progressing at the former Newcastle gas works site. Islington residents welcomed the interim results of the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study. Mr McBain advised that the road closure at Clyde Street Islington and the construction of the new bridge may impact the dust deposition at the nearby Islington residence which hosts the sampling site. Islington residents reported recent increases in vibration, possibly from idling trains. • Dr Mackenzie advised that he would be demonstrating how to access online air quality information to the Tighes Hill community. • Mr Banyard advised that the EPA recently met with community members including representatives of the Correct Planning and Consultation for Mayfield Group (CPCFM) to discuss locomotive emissions. The impact of a specific locomotive was improved. Mr Banyard noted that residents reported concerns to the EPA about sediment runoff from the rail corridor into Throsby Creek and the Hunter River. He noted that the EPA advised that allocating resources to such issues, which were not directly related to health, was a low priority. The residents continue to seek improvements across the locomotive fleet to counter potential contamination from and within the rail corridor. <p>The EPA reminded the committee to advise community members to report complaints to the Environment Line on 131 555.</p> <p>The Chair thanked committee members for their contributions.</p> <p>ACTION 5: Committee members to bring to the next meeting a text summary to accompany their feedback on issues of environmental concern or other relevant communications with their interest groups, for recording in the meeting minutes.</p>
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<p>Item 8 (Cont)</p>	<p>ACTION 6: EPA to report to the next meeting on EPA complaints to the Environment Line.</p> <p>ACTION 7: EPA to advise the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Project Reference Group of the potential impact on dust levels at the Islington sampling site during bridge reconstruction works at Clyde Street.</p>
<p>Item 9</p>	<p>General Business</p> <p>Mr Banyard tabled an email of 16 September 2015, about the EPA’s response to issues arising from the meeting of 20 May 2015. Mr Banyard considered that the EPA responded inadequately to the three of the four issues. Mr Banyard’s email sought clarification, asked further questions. The issues included:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. EPA testing of vehicle emissions, the transferability of the method to test emissions from rail locomotives and what regulatory action was taken regarding locomotive emissions in 2015. 2. Potential contamination of the currently unused section of the rail corridor to Newcastle Station and responsibility for remediation. 3. What action was taken by the EPA and other authorities following an incident with a truck carrying an insecure load of ammonium nitrate on Industrial Drive, Mayfield, on 19 February 2015. Ms Woodroffe noted that the EPA did not attend the incident.. <p>Mr Banyard requested a response from the EPA at the next meeting.</p> <p>ACTION 8: The EPA to provide an update at the next meeting about the issues raised by Mr Banyard at the meeting of 20 May 2015.</p> <p>The EPA reminded the committee that the next meeting on 21 October 2015 would be the final meeting for the current term of office. The EPA outlined the process for re-constituting the committee for a new two year term. Key points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On 6 August 2015, the Minister approved the reconstitution of the committee by the EPA under Division 4 of the NSW Protection of the Environment Administration Act (the Act). • Division 4 Subclause 31 (1) of the Act states that: “An advisory committee is to consist of such number of members as the Authority determines, but is not to exceed more than 9 members without the approval of the Minister.” • The EPA recently consulted the Chair about the expansion of the committee to 10 members. This would permit one new position representing the Ministry for Health, in line with the Upper Hunter Air Quality Advisory Committee (UHAQAC) and the former Rutherford Air Quality Liaison Committee (RAQLC). The presence of a representative of the Ministry for Health would allow expert advice to be available immediately when issues of national air quality goals arose. This often occurred during the review of quarterly air quality monitoring reports by NCCCE and in other committees.

<p>Item 9 (Cont)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the Minister approved the expansion of the committee, then the EPA would amend the Terms of Reference accordingly. • Following the outcome of the above, the EPA intended to advertise publicly for expressions of interest for community, environment and industry representatives for new two year terms of office. <p>In response, some committee members reiterated that they did not support expanding the membership of the committee because it raised the question of whether to include representatives from a range of departments such as health and planning and the OEH. Also, the current Terms of Reference allowed the committee to access independent technical expertise as required.</p> <p>The Chair commended the committee members on working together to build a valuable body of knowledge on local environmental issues and encouraged all members to re-apply for membership to continue the good work of the committee.</p> <p>ACTION 9: EPA to notify the committee about the public call for nominations for the committee's new two-year term.</p>
<p>Item 10</p>	<p>Next Meeting 21 October 2015. Proposed agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality monitoring report for winter 2015. • Low sulfur fuel regulation for cruise ships in Newcastle. • Committee evaluation.
<p>Meeting ended at 7.50 pm</p>	

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<p>ACTION 2: EPA to draft an evaluation process and circulate to the committee for discussion at the next meeting.</p>	<p>ASAP</p>	<p>EPA</p>
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<p>ACTION 5: Committee members to bring to the next meeting a text summary to accompany feedback on issues of environmental concern</p>	<p>21/10/15</p>	<p>NCCCE</p>



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