



MEETING No. 41
Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment
(NCCCE)

Meeting Minutes

Date: 17 February 2016 **Time:** 5.30 pm

File: EF13/8273

Location: EPA Office Paterson Room, 117 Bull Street, Newcastle

In attendance: Members: John Tate (Chair), Rick Banyard (Community), Andrew Baxter (City of Newcastle), A/Prof Howard Bridgman (Minister's Community Nominee), Keith Craig (Community), Dr Craig Dalton (NSW Health), Michael Dowzer (Industry), Peter Kibble (Industry), John Mackenzie (Environment).

Visitors/Observers: Alan Betts (Office and Environment (OEH) Senior Team Leader, Quality Systems and Reporting, Climate and Atmospheric Science), Sylvia Bell (EPA Director Stakeholder Engagement and Governance), Adam Gilligan (EPA Manager Hunter Region), Leanne Graham (EPA Project Officer).

Apologies: Sherree Woodroffe (Industry), Antony Taylor (Industry Deputy for Ms Woodroffe).

Meeting Record

Agenda Item	Meeting Details
Item 1	Welcome Chair welcomed attendees and guests to the first meeting of the NCCCE's third term.
Item 2	Introductory Comments from the Committee New NCCCE members outlined their experience relevant to the committee. <ul style="list-style-type: none">• A/Prof Bridgman has over 30 years' experience in air quality research in the Hunter and has participated on two other EPA advisory committees as a technical expert.• Dr Dalton has over 20 years' experience in public health and local air quality issues and is a member of two other EPA advisory committees.• Mr Kibble is responsible for projects to improve environmental performance at Port Waratah Coal Services.• Mr Dowzer is responsible for environmental management projects at the Port of Newcastle.

<p>Item 3</p>	<p>Apologies As above.</p>
<p>Item 4</p>	<p>Opening Remarks from the EPA Mr Gilligan welcomed new committee members and noted the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA established the NCCCE at the request of the Minister for the Environment, following the environmental incident at Orica in August 2011. • The EPA has established advisory committees to address community concerns on a range of local environmental issues in NSW, including issues at north Lake Macquarie, Williamtown and Port Botany. • The NCCCE’s Terms of Reference guide the work of the committee to advise the Minister and the EPA on environmental issues of community concern. Priority issues in the NCCCE’s previous terms were the establishment of the Newcastle local air quality monitoring network and communicating the air monitoring results to the wider community. • Specific concerns about pollution should be reported to the EPA’s Environment Line on 131 555, in the first instance. NCCCE members are encouraged to bring issues to the committee’s attention if they are not satisfied with the response from the Environment Line. • In previous terms, the NCCCE met monthly during the establishment of the NLAQMN. In this term, the NCCCE would meet quarterly to review the seasonal results of the NLAQMN. Informal dialogue between NCCCE members may occur out of session via email. <p>The Chair outlined committee procedures, noting the following.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members are encouraged to reach consensus decisions. Where consensus cannot be reached, the Chair will call for a vote. Members may express dissenting views and have these minuted. • Members may forward agenda items to the EPA, for the Chair’s consideration. The Chair will allow matters to be brought to the committee if the issues are within the scope of the Terms of Reference. If the matter is not considered to be within the Terms of Reference, it can be referred to the EPA for consideration. A template for proposing agenda papers was provided. • In media liaison, the Chair speaks on behalf of the NCCCE. While members have the right to express personal opinions outside of the NCCCE, including to the media, they cannot speak on behalf of the NCCCE. Any comments by the Chair on behalf of the NCCCE will be based on the contents of the minutes of NCCCE meetings.
<p>Item 5</p>	<p>Minutes from Previous Meeting (21 October 2015) In December 2015, the EPA circulated the draft minutes to former members and received two responses supporting the minutes. Other members in attendance provided no responses. The Chair presented the draft minutes to the committee for consideration. Mr Banyard, NCCCE member in the previous term, supported the draft minutes. The minutes of the previous meeting were adopted as a true and accurate record.</p>

<p>Item 6</p>	<p>Actions Arising from Previous Meetings summary</p> <p><u>Meeting No.40 (21 October 2015) Action 1:</u> Progressing 17/02/16. The OEH expect to publish the quarterly newsletters for the Newcastle air quality seasonal reports within a week of each meeting.</p> <p><u>Meeting No.40 (21 October 2015) Action 2:</u> Completed 17/02/16. The EPA emailed to the NCCCE the EPA's responses to questions raised regarding emissions testing of locomotives, regulatory action regarding locomotive emissions, and an incident with a truck and an insecure load of ammonium nitrate on Industrial Drive, Mayfield.</p>
<p>Item 7</p>	<p>Air Quality in Newcastle: Spring 2015</p> <p>Mr Riley presented the draft air quality seasonal newsletter, reporting on the Lower Hunter and Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Networks' results for spring 2015.</p> <p>Main points included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality was generally good from 1 September to 30 November 2015. • Levels of fine particulate matter PM_{2.5} (particles less than or equal to 2.5 microns in diameter), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), sulfur dioxide (SO₂) and ammonia (NH₃) were all below benchmark concentrations and lower than for previous spring seasons. • Levels of PM₁₀ (particles less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter) were above the 50 µg/m³ benchmark on 20 days (3-9 and 28-29 October 2015 and 5, 12, 19-20, 22-23 and 25-29 November 2015). • Stockton recorded elevated PM₁₀ levels on all 20 days, with maximum values ranging from 51.0 to 101.4 µg/m³ and averaging 65.1 µg/m³. The maximum PM₁₀ level occurred on 4 October 2015, during seven consecutive days of elevated particle levels and heatwave conditions with north-easterly to north-westerly winds. The forthcoming results of the Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study would provide new information on the composition of particulate matter at Stockton and the relative contribution of sea salt and particles from other sources. • Stockton recorded elevated hourly PM₁₀ levels (>75 µg/m³) 9.8% of the time during spring 2015, predominantly under onshore north-east winds. • At the other monitors, the elevated PM₁₀ levels in November 2015 were slightly above the daily benchmark and may have been influenced by a bushfire at Stanford Merthyr, northwest of Newcastle. The highest levels recorded were Beresfield 57.5 µg/m³, Carrington 56.4 µg/m³, Newcastle 54.8 µg/m³ and Mayfield 53.8 µg/m³. • The region experienced average rainfall during spring. The Bureau of Meteorology reported that NSW experienced an early season heatwave in October 2015. Newcastle recorded an unprecedented four consecutive days with temperatures over 30°C. • PM₁₀ levels were similar compared with previous spring seasons.

<p>Item 7 (Cont.)</p>	<p>In response to questions Mr Riley noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OEH conventionally uses 75 µg/m³ as benchmark 1-hour average PM₁₀ level, in the absence of a 1-hour national standard, to be distinguished from the national standard of 50 µg/m³ for 24-hour average PM₁₀ concentrations. • The OEH operates a rigorous quality assurance system in managing the NSW air quality monitoring network, which includes 43 monitoring stations. <p>Mr Riley acknowledged the NCCCE’s role in developing the format and key messages of the air quality seasonal newsletters.</p> <p>Dr Dalton requested that future air quality seasonal newsletters reported the rolling annual average concentrations for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} and comparisons with annual criteria.</p> <p>The NCCCE endorsed the newsletter. The seasonal air quality newsletters will be accessible from the OEH and EPA websites.</p> <p>The Chair thanked the Mr Riley and the NCCCE for the discussion.</p> <p>Action 1. The OEH to provide, at the next meeting, a wind rose of ammonia concentrations recorded at Stockton during summer 2015-2016.</p> <p>Action 2. The OEH to expand the explanation for the use of 75 µg/m³ as a benchmark for discussing elevated 1-hour average PM₁₀ levels in future air quality newsletters.</p> <p>Action 3. The OEH to report the rolling annual average concentrations for PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5} and comparisons with annual criteria in future air quality seasonal newsletters.</p>
<p>Item 8</p>	<p>Update on Lower Hunter Air Quality Research Projects</p> <p>The EPA and OEH provided updates on current air quality research projects to improve the body of knowledge on the composition of airborne particles and deposited dust in the lower Hunter and the levels of air quality in the Lake Macquarie - Wyong area.</p> <p><u>Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study (LHPCS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA commissioned the OEH, the CSIRO and the Australian Nuclear Science and Technology Organisation (ANSTO) to study the composition of PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ particles over a 12 month period, followed by comprehensive analysis. • The OEH coordinated the Project Management Team which included Mr Craig as the representative of the NCCCE. • The EPA and OEH plan to release the findings at briefings for the NCCCE and the public in April 2016. <p><u>Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study (LHDDS)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA commissioned a consultant to investigate the composition of the visible dust deposited in residential areas of Newcastle. • The EPA established the LHDD Project Reference Group, including community and industry representatives and technical experts, as recommended by the NCCCE. The Group steered the design of the research questions and the study methodology and advised on the key communication of the findings.

<p>Item 8 (Cont.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA plans to release the LHDDS final report in April 2016, conjunction with LHPCS findings. <p>In discussion, Mr Kibble advised the EPA that Port Waratah Coal Services was awaiting the EPA's response to a question regarding the confidence levels in the results reported in the Six Month Interim Report of the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study. The EPA noted that the information had been gathered and a reply would be sent as soon as possible.</p> <p>Action 4: The EPA to respond to the enquiry from Port Waratah Coal Services about the confidence levels of the dust particle characterisation results reported in the Six Month Interim Report of the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study.</p> <p><u>Lake Macquarie – Wyong Air Quality Reports</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The monthly and annual reports for 2015 showed good air quality levels, within the relevant criteria at industry and OEHL monitoring stations, with the exception of an ozone event during a heat wave, local bushfires and a state wide dust storm. The reports will continue to June 2016. <p>The EPA provided updates on other issues of environmental concern:</p> <p><u>North Lake Macquarie Lead contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Hunter New England Health screening of blood lead levels in children was completed in February 2016 and showed all levels below the criterion of 5 micrograms per decilitre. <p><u>Williamstown Groundwater contamination</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water, soil and biota testing was continuing. • A health risk assessment is expected in mid-2016. • The EPA is engaging with the community directly and via the EPA website. <p><u>Shipping emissions in the Port of Newcastle</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA introduced a Regulation in 2015 to reduce emissions from cruise ships in Sydney Harbour. • The EPA, assisted by Mr Banyard, engaged with operators of smoky ships in the Port of Newcastle, to raise awareness of obligations to reduce emissions during start-up operations and manoeuvres in the port. <p><u>Improving the community's understanding of local air quality</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA was investigating the production of a short animation to improve the community's understanding of air quality in the lower and upper Hunter, following a meeting with the Chair and the Minister for the Environment in 2015. • The EPA would seek the NCCCE's input on the development and promotion of the animation. • The video would follow the style of the EPA's short animation which explained air pollution in the Sydney basin, covering the key sources of particle and ozone pollution and how geography and weather influenced the concentration and dispersion of air pollution. The animation may be viewed on the EPA website at http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/air/.
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<p>Item 8 (Cont.)</p>	<p>Action 5: The EPA to email to committee members the link to the EPA's webpage, to view the animation that explains air pollution in the Sydney basin.</p> <p>Action 6. The EPA to email to committee members the links, provided by Mr Banyard, to webpages to view global air quality monitoring levels.</p>
<p>Item 9</p>	<p>Evaluation of the Committee</p> <p>Ms Bell informed the new committee members that the EPA, in consultation with the NCCCE in its previous term, developed a draft protocol to evaluate the EPA's consultative committees. The protocol aligned with the outcomes of the NSW Parliamentary Inquiry into the Performance of EPA in February 2015, which recommended that the EPA ensure its committees had genuine participation and were evaluated transparently.</p> <p>Ms Bell noted that the process was a work in progress and proposed two surveys, to involve the NCCCE and the range of people engaged by NCCCE. In October 2015, the EPA asked the NCCCE members to respond to the first survey. The second survey is planned for 2016 and would involve people in the NCCCE members' contact networks and people who had participated in NCCCE forums, planning sessions or meetings.</p> <p>Ms Bell tabled the draft report on the <i>Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment, Evaluation and Survey, October 2015</i> and the transcripts of the previous committee members' responses. The respondents' names were not included in the transcripts.</p> <p>The EPA reiterated that the members' feedback would assist in improving the role of the NCCCE and improving the EPA's performance in community engagement. The EPA invited feedback on the draft report, noting the final version would be published on the EPA website.</p> <p>The Chair commended the EPA, the process and the participants.</p> <p>Action 7. NCCCE members to review the draft report <i>Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment, Evaluation and Survey, October 2015</i>, considering its readability and to send feedback to the EPA, by email, by 5 pm Friday 26 February 2016.</p>
<p>Item 10</p>	<p>Committee Procedures and Priorities for 2016</p> <p>The Chair reiterated that the NCCCE's core business was tied to its Terms of Reference, advising the Minister and the EPA and receiving reports on the results and performance of the lower Hunter and Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Networks.</p> <p>The EPA noted that key responsibilities for the EPA and the NCCCE included that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA would provide the air quality newsletters for the NCCCE's review before the meeting. • The EPA would distribute key messages, agreed to at the meeting, for NCCCE members to distribute to their community or industry networks after the meeting and for NCCCE to report any feedback at the next meeting. • The OEHL would publish the air quality newsletters after the meeting.

<p>Item 10 (Cont.)</p>	<p>The Chair and the EPA re-iterated that the NCCCE's priority issues in previous terms were to advise on the establishment of the Newcastle Local Air Quality Monitoring Network and the communication of the air monitoring results to the wider community. The EPA advised that NCCCE priorities for 2016 could be discussed at future meeting.</p>
<p>Item 11</p>	<p>General Business</p> <p>A/Prof Bridgman noted that the Clean Air Society of Australia and New Zealand would write to the Commonwealth Government, expressing concern for the government's decision to cut resourcing of the CSIRO's climate modelling and monitoring team.</p> <p>Mr Craig noted that the NCCCE, in the previous term, recommended inviting representatives of local industries to brief the NCCCE on the industries' environmental management and performance. Mr Craig recommended that the new committee keeps this in mind.</p> <p>Dr Mackenzie requested that the EPA provided the committee with regular updates on changes to Schedule 1 of the <i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1991</i>, to license rail rolling stock operators.</p> <p>Mr Banyard requested that EPA consider the negative impact of its waste levy on the profit margins of metal recyclers given the recent falls in metal prices. Mr Gilligan agreed to follow up with the EPA's Waste and Resource Recovery Branch.</p> <p>Action 8. The EPA to consider the negative impact of the EPA's waste levy on the profit margins of metal recyclers given the recent falls in metal prices.</p> <p>The Chair suggested the EPA invited Mr Scot MacDonald to attend the next meeting to hear the findings of Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation and Dust Deposition Studies.</p> <p>Action 9. The EPA to invite Mr Scot MacDonald, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and Central Coast, to attend the next NCCCE meeting on 20 April 2016, to hear the findings of Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation and Dust Deposition Studies.</p> <p>The Chair thanked members for their contributions and encouraged members to seek and embrace opportunities to continue the good work of the NCCCE in leading community debate on local environmental concerns.</p>
<p>Item 12</p>	<p>Next Meeting</p> <p>20 April 2016. Tentative agenda items included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Air quality monitoring report for summer 2015-2016. • Briefing on findings of the Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study and the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study.
<p>Meeting ended at 7.45 pm</p>	

ACTION ITEM LOG NCCCE MEETING NO. 41, 17 February 2016	DUE	RESP
Action 1: The OEH to provide, at the next meeting, a wind rose of ammonia concentrations recorded at Stockton during summer 2015-2016.	20/04/16	OEH
Action 2: The OEH to expand the explanation for the use of 75 µg/m ³ as a benchmark for discussing elevated 1-hour average PM ₁₀ levels in future air quality newsletters.	As relevant	OEH
Action 3: The OEH to report the rolling annual average concentrations for PM ₁₀ and PM _{2.5} and comparisons with annual criteria in future air quality seasonal newsletters.	20/04/16	OEH
Action 4: The EPA to respond to the enquiry from Port Waratah Coal Services about the confidence levels of the dust particle characterisation results reported in the Six Month Interim Report of the Lower Hunter Dust Deposition Study.	20/04/16	EPA
Action 5: The EPA to email to committee members the link to the EPA's webpage, to view the animation that explains air pollution in the Sydney basin.	20/04/16	EPA
Action 6: The EPA to email to committee members the links, provided by Mr Banyard, to webpages to view global air quality monitoring levels.	20/04/16	EPA
Action 7: NCCCE members to review the draft report Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment, Evaluation and Survey, October 2015, considering its readability and to send feedback to the EPA, by email, by 5 pm Friday 26 February 2016	20/04/16	NCCCE
Action 8. The EPA to consider the negative impact of the EPA's waste levy on the profit margins of metal recyclers given the recent falls in metal prices.	ASAP	EPA
Action 9: The EPA to invite Mr Scot MacDonald, MLC, Parliamentary Secretary for the Hunter and Central Coast, to attend the next NCCCE meeting on 20 April 2016, to hear the findings of Lower Hunter particle characterisation and dust deposition studies.	ASAP	EPA