



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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NEWCASTLE TO HAVE DEDICATED AIR QUALITY NETWORK

Newcastle and the Lower Hunter will have a dedicated air quality monitoring network commencing in August.

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today announced the location of the three air monitoring sites which will make up the **Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network**: Mayfield; Stockton; and Carrington.

Ms Parker said the sites for the three air quality monitoring stations were selected in consultation with the community and expert advice was also sought from NSW Health's Air Pollution Expert Advisory Committee.

"Selecting the sites is a major milestone in establishing the Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network," Ms Parker said.

"Industries with environment protection licences in the Newcastle LGA will fund the monitoring network.

"This network will provide continuous, high quality measurements of pollutants, including PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀ concentrations, and makes this information publicly available in near real-time.

"The data from the air quality network means we can monitor long term trends and informs government actions and policies.

Ms Parker also announced the **Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation study** and a **dust deposition study** focussing on the rail corridor.

"Four sampling sites at Newcastle, Beresfield, Mayfield and Stockton have been selected for the Particle Characterisation study which will commence in March and run for 12 months followed by detailed analysis of likely sources," Ms Parker said.

"We've consulted with the Lower Hunter community in the development of the study design and the Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment (NCCCE). The design of the study been scientifically peer reviewed.

"This latest study will provide important air quality data for the Lower Hunter region, including Lake Macquarie, and inform strategies to provide the best long-term reductions in particulate pollution for the greatest health benefit."

The particle study was foreshadowed in the 2013-14 budget when the NSW government announced more than \$4million to address air quality through a number of projects including a new particle characterisation study for the Lower Hunter.

Coal fired power station emissions of PM_{2.5}, sulphur dioxide and oxides of nitrogen in the region, including at Lake Macquarie and the Upper Hunter, travel large distances and their presence will be captured by the samplers used in the Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation Study.

In addition Ms Parker announced that data from the current industry monitoring at Lake Macquarie will become part of the overall air monitoring report to the Lower Hunter community.

Ms Parker said that a dust deposition study will provide additional information on visible dust in the community. The EPA is undertaking the dust deposition study in the Lower Hunter, focussing on the rail corridor.

“This study will measure rates of dust deposition to identify what makes up the visible dust that is deposited along the rail corridor,” said Ms Parker.

“The EPA is currently calling for nominations for a project reference group for the study.”

“These studies are critical to our understanding of particle pollution and dust, which will help to inform actions to improve air quality,” Ms Parker said.

For more information on the Newcastle Air Quality Monitoring Network or Lower Hunter Particle Characterisation study –
<http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/air/LHairqualstuds.htm>

For more information on the dust deposition study or to nominate for the reference group - <http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/air/LHduststudy.htm>