

MINUTES

**NSW Minerals Council
UHMD – Joint Working Group – Emissions & Health
UMHD Resource Centre, Singleton Town Square Shopping Centre, Singleton**

Wednesday 15 March 2017: 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm

Present:

John Hindmarsh	The Bloomfield Group (Chair)
Matt Parkinson	Bayswater Power Station
Sarah Withell	BHP Billiton
Julie Thomas	Muswellbrook Coal Company Limited
Wendy Bowman	NSW Mine Watch
Doug Fenton	Rio Tinto
Melinda Hale	Singleton Council
Neville Hodgkinson	Singleton Shire Healthy Environment Group
Julie McNaughton	Yancoal
Bob Mackie	The Resource
Greg Sullivan	NSW Minerals Council
Craig Milton	NSW Minerals Council
Kari Dahlgren	PhD Candidate (observer)

Guests:

Emma Coombs	NSW Environment Protection Authority
Mitch Bennett	NSW Environment Protection Authority

Apology:

John Watson	Glencore
Peter Jaeger	Peabody Energy
Benjamin Harrison	Department of Planning and Environment
John Drinan	Singleton Shire Healthy Environment Group
Karen Marler	NSW Environment Protection Authority

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed all members and noted apologies. The Chair acknowledged that Dr Drinan was now an apology at what was to be his last JWG meeting and relayed a farewell message that Dr Drinan had prepared. The JWG acknowledged Dr Drinan for his contributions to the Dialogue over many years.

2. Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from the previous meeting were accepted. Mr Milton provided an overview of actions.

3. Presentation - Emma Coombs and Mitch Bennett (EPA) - Adverse Weather Investigation Project

Ms Coombs and Mr Bennett provided an update on the project that was discussed at the previous JWG meeting regarding the development of a forecasting program that is currently being tested and analysed, with the new program to be trialed in Spring 2017.

The EPA is working to determine if the changes in results on days with similar conditions is due to industry modifying their actions through utilising forecasts. Comprehensive historical data will enable EPA to see trends as they emerge. Further, the EPA is now looking at the differences between Merriwa and Singleton.

The Working Group discussed that many of the region's worst days come about from a specific set of conditions arising from an overnight change, a north westerly moving down the valley meeting a southerly moving the air up again.

The EPA advised that they would be looking to incorporate some daily production information from sites into this trial, such as tonnes of coal moved.

ACTION:

- **UHMD secretariat to locate the final report of the Adverse Weather Investigation project and distribute amongst Working Group members.**

4. Upper Hunter Air Quality Monitoring Network Update

The EPA advised that the OEH is undertaking a review of the UHAQMN and is keen to hear from Working Group members if there's any suggestions or concerns they would like to raise. EPA advised to contact them via email.

The Chair advised that OEH will also be looking at the data collected. Given the cost of operating the network is borne by industry, this provides a good opportunity for the review to determine whether so many monitors are needed in a cluster if they provide the same results.

Mr Hodgkinson advised that the position of monitors was originally criticised by many members and that most monitors do not measure the more harmful PM2.5 particles. Mr Bennett advised that there are 3 monitors across the region that measure PM2.5 and didn't think that more monitoring devices would tell us anything more than what we already know. Mr Bennett further advised that this consultation is currently being discussed with OEH on proposed changes and that industry would be consulted throughout this process.

5. Clean Air for NSW

Mr Milton advised the working group that NSWMC had provided a submission to this consultation. Overall, 120 submission have been received, with EPA advising these have now been made public.

6. Upper Hunter Air Quality Education Fact Sheet

Mr Milton advised that there was concern that inaccurate information about air quality in the Upper Hunter was being provided in schools across the region and there was a need for an updated fact sheet on air quality to be produced to provide students with accurate information, given that local councils receive regular requests for this information.

The EPA representatives advised that they would be happy to provide support to the UHMD secretariat in revising this information as they have all relevant information on their website. However, it is not packaged in a way that is easily accessible or understood for the intended student audience.

Ms Hale advised that it is important to give this a local view and that it would serve well as a Dialogue project. There are a number of contributors to air quality in the region, not just from the coal industry, and it would be beneficial to provide information to students for where they can visit to retrieve the relevant information. Ms Hale advised that from the council requests she has received appear to already link air quality with dust in the air which is attributable to mining activity.

ACTIONS:

- **UHMD secretariat to prepare a draft air quality information sheet, in conjunction with the EPA, and distribute amongst Committee for review.**

7. UHMD 2017 Structure

Mr Sullivan provided an update on the structural changes to the Dialogue, noting the disbandment of the Executive Oversight Committee and the joint meeting structure of the Land Management and Water working groups for the remainder of 2017.

8. Community Perceptions Survey

Mr Milton provided an overview of the survey and key points for consideration, encouraging members to review the report and consider how to improve engagement with the wider community.

9. School Bus Tour Update

Mr Mackie provided an update on the school bus tours project and advised that a working group is being established to oversee the organisation of the 2017 rollout of the project, encouraging members to nominate appropriate personnel to form this group.

10. Forum Review

Mr Milton provided an overview of the Forum noting that participants surveyed were generally positive towards the 2016 event. Mr Milton provided a number of suggestions for working group members to consider as we plan the 2017 event.

One of the key outcomes for the 2016 forum was the commitment from the Department of Planning to host a community workshop in 2017. An update on this workshop was provided at the Land Management and Water JWG meeting, but members recommended it remain on this working group's agenda as an update moving forward.

ACTION:

- **UHMD Secretariat to include Synoptic Plan workshop and review on future JWG meeting agendas.**

11. Communications Update

Mr Mackie provided an update on the UHMD's communications activities, noting that Ian Kirkwood's tour of the region for multiple Newcastle Herald articles provided a valuable opportunity to increase Mr Kirkwood's knowledge of industry practices.

12. Update on current projects

Mr Milton provided a brief update on other projects and advised that progress is being made on the Mine Dust and You fact sheet which should provide an update for the next Working Group meeting.

13. Other business

Mr Milton advised members on the proposed non-road diesel PRS, with the EPA representatives noting that this work is still progressing.

Ms Hale advised the Working Group that the EPA have funded a joint 'wood smoke reduction' campaign with Muswellbrook and Singleton Councils worth \$4,000.

Ms Hale further advised that Bruce Devonport would no longer sit as a representative on Dialogue matters and that the UHMD secretariat contact Maryanne Crawford to invite to future meetings.

ACTION:

- **UHMD secretariat to invite Maryanne Crawford to future Dialogue meetings in place of Mr Devonport.**

14. Meeting Close

Meeting closed at 3:40 pm

**Action items arising from 15 March 2017 meeting
UHMD Joint Working Group - Emissions and Health**

Task	Responsibility	Status
Presentation - Emma Coombs and Mitch Bennett (EPA) - Adverse Weather Investigation Project Update		
UHMD secretariat to locate the final report of the Adverse Weather Investigation project and distribute amongst Working Group members.	UHMD secretariat	In progress - Report yet to be released
Upper Hunter Air Quality Education Fact Sheet		
UHMD secretariat to prepare a draft air quality information sheet, in conjunction with the EPA, and distribute amongst Committee for review.	UHMD secretariat	Completed (to be provided at June 2017 meeting)
2016 Forum Review		
UHMD Secretariat to include Synoptic Plan workshop and review on future JWG meeting agendas.	UHMD secretariat	Completed
Other business		
UHMD secretariat to invite Maryann Crawford to future Dialogue meetings in place of Mr Devonport.	UHMD secretariat	Completed

FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION