

Meeting minutes SUBJECT

Details

Subject	Yatala/Ormeau air quality monitoring
Chair	Eugene Immisch, Department of Environment and Science (DES)
Meeting type	Stakeholder Meeting
Date and location	Tuesday 20 February 2018 Ormeau Centre, Meeting room 1, cnr Cuthbert Drive & Pascoe Road
Timing	4pm - 6pm

Present

Name	Job title	Position/representation
Brad Atkins	Committee Member Representative	Yatala Residents Alliance (YRA)
Siggy Nowak	Committee Representative	YRA
Tim Ebbstein	Committee Member	YRA
David Wainwright	Director Air Quality Sciences	DES
Don Neale	Science Leader, Air Quality Monitoring	DES
Eugene Immisch	Compliance Delivery Manager	DES
Rhoda Johanni	Senior Environmental Officer	DES
Maria Swenson	Environmental Officer, Community Engagement	DES

Apologies

Name	Job title	Position/representation
Cavell Dorman	Coordinator	YRA

Items

Item #	Discussion
	Introductions Department and Environment and Science (DES) staff including DES Science Division - former Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (DSITI) staff Introduction of Yatala Residents Alliance (YRA) members
	DES Presentation DES offered presentation of issues relating to air quality. YRA did not want DES to go through with the presentation, preferring to talk through their issues.
	Issues raised by YRA committee member Siggy Nowak <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Air quality issues continue to be raised by YRA members / Yatala and Ormeau community members, 700+ complaints occurred over the past three years via YRA website. Siggy stated that the department's complaints process is difficult for community to navigate.• A recent invitation by the department to participate in a rating scheme for quarries was raised, with a preference for compliance action before rewarding industry.• Siggy stated he believes that the history of past issues keeps getting lost with the change of personnel in Government.• Siggy requested a clear commitment from DES by the end of the meeting for a real time air quality monitoring station to be put in the Ormeau / Yatala area that samples both dust and chemical emissions.• The Springwood air quality monitoring station was used for Yatala background air quality during the study. The YRA do not believe that this station provides a correct reflection of the Yatala air quality and would like a permanent monitoring station in the Yatala area.• Both monitoring reports indicate there are no health-related issues (based on comparison with published guidelines) however the YRA do not believe the studies were extensive enough (particularly bioaerosols) and contained errors. Siggy highlighted that he had specific concerns around issues relating to mould. The YRA request DES Science Division put in writing that the bioaerosol report findings are not conclusive.
	Issues raised by YRA committee member Brad Atkins <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Unhappy with the approval process that companies go through to get an environmental authority (EA). Stating that the current guidelines made it impossible for DES to be able to prosecute offending companies.• Brad felt the lack of compliance action suggested some sort of collusion by the department with industry/quarries. Brad cited the length of time it took for the DEHP make one company accountable for its emissions, and the way it has conducted several investigations over the past 9 years.• Eugene noted that significant penalties had recently been issued to one of the quarries in the area for stormwater non-compliances and compliance was undertaken where appropriate evidence existed.• Brad, asked for the DEHP to look into a comment made by Minister Miles (on page two, second paragraph of his letter dated 15-08-2017) as Brad felt the statement "previous EA limits were higher" than the recent EA number EPPR01766213 was not correct.• Springwood air monitoring station lists chemicals used by local industry in the Springwood area. Brad advised they has no idea what chemicals are used by the local industry in the Yatala area. Brad suggested that one particular industry in Yatala could be releasing excessive bioaersols and the community wouldn't be aware of it.• Brad advised he has lived in Yatala for around 10 years, zoning however waslight industry at the time he moved there.• Brad advised that the pollution from industry in Yatala is a big issue and is impacting on their lives. Brad wants DES to invest in the health and safety of their community.

Air Quality Report

Monitoring location

- Brad and Sigggy questioned the length of testing carried out in the Air Quality Report. Specifically why testing occurred continuously (for the duration of the report) at Harts Road Luscombe, whilst testing was only carried out for 4 months at Vennor Drive, which are the closest residences to a quarry.
- **DES Science Division response:** The understanding at the time of monitoring was that the perceived key concern of the community was respirable crystalline silica. Monitoring for this was carried out at both sites, however there were logistical issues which made it difficult to find an area where the monitoring equipment for other pollutants could be stationed on Vennor Drive.
- Discussion regarding whether QLD air quality standards were 'best practice'. DES Science Division believe they are, referring to WHO standards.

Asbestos testing

- Brad asked DES Science Division staff if they believed asbestos was present in the local quarries. DES Science Division advised that they did not have information on the quarry rock composition, but that only the non-fibrous mineral, actinolite, was measured in ambient air.
- YRA / Sigggy expressed concerns with the length of the asbestos testing (4 machines for 8 hours each was too short a time period) and why a sample was not collected in Vennor Drive, being the closest residences to a quarry. Brad showed a photo (appendix 2) of the dust in this area.
- In response to the concern around the asbestos testing period, DES Science Division explained that the testing method could be comprised if the canister was open for too long as collecting too much particulate matter could make detection of asbestos in the sample difficult.
- YRA expressed concerns about the differing instructions accompanying each asbestos monitoring device, causing confusion amongst the residents who carried out the asbestos testing. This led the YRA to feel that the data was incorrect and that monitoring should be done by independent researchers.
- DES / Eugene advised that as per advice previously provided, both sets of instructions would have resulted in obtaining a valid sample.
- DES Science Division advised residents were involved in the sampling as they wanted monitoring carried out under "worst case" scenario i.e. when residents felt they were affected.

Bioaerosols Report

- Brad asked how many people in the room had read the Fewkes thesis to get an understanding of bioaerosols. DES Science Division (David) advised Brad he was familiar with the Fewkes thesis.
- Brad queried the credibility of Dr J Smith/JJS Consulting, as there was no information on the web. And the company named in the report had no A.B.N number when a search was conducted.
- DES Science Division / Don stated that Dr James Smith is an adjunct associate professor in the field of microbiology at QUT, with expertise in bioaerosols. Dr Smith supervised Masters student Carol Fewkes' research project on bioaerosols from industrial green waste composting facilities. It was noted that the Fewkes study was a thesis, which is why over 100 samples were taken at substantial cost.
- The report prepared by DES Science Division was a summary of the more technical report provided by Dr. J. Smith. The report conclusions were those of Dr Smith, not DES.
- Brad pointed out that out of the seven tests taken (that lasted 15 minutes each) that three of the tests were conducted "upwind" and were therefore totally ineffective.
- DES Science Division advised that the intent of the sampling locations was not necessarily to have all locations 'upwind' as a mixture of sample locations provided an indication of background/other sources for comparison against levels measured at downwind sites impacted by composting facility emissions.
- Brad queried why DES took 2 years to provide the bioaerosol report to the YRA. Eugene / DES formally apologised for the length of time taken for this report to be provided to the YRA. Brad asked for a written explanation as to why it could possibly

take two years to release?

- Siggie advised that there is an issue due to the cumulative impacts from the local industry on air quality, however cumulative impacts are not being considered when activities are approved under the current standards for issuing EAs. Cumulative impacts should be considered, as this is becoming an increasing issue with the number of industry in the area increasing.
- Siggie advised odour over the last six months has declined in response to enforcement action but felt it took too long to reach that point. He feels however, based on past experience, as though there is a decline in odour for a period but then this will build back up.
- All parties expressed positive comments about the new shed being built at Phoenix.
- Eugene advised there is a current review occurring within DES in regards to the inputs (acceptance criteria) for composting.
- YRA stated they were waiting for this meeting before writing to the minister with questions about the bioaerosol report. This request will have a number of questions including buffer zones, wind direction and why the study was undertaken on bin collection day.
- DES Science Division / David stated that the bioaerosols report was not saying it was good or bad but rather that it was a snap shot of bioaerosol levels under conditions favourable for bioaerosol production.

Further discussion points raised by YRA

- Brad advised that he believes that the air quality reports provided to YRA are a product of the government. The reports, according to Brad are not objective; they make assumptions, contains errors and are written in the favour of the government.
- YRA are unhappy with the air quality and bioaerosol reports as they believe it gives the community a false sense that there are no air quality issues. Brad stated that the YRA's credibility was damaged by the bioaerosols report because to the untrained eye it appeared that there was nothing to worry about.
- YRA said that to them, the report seemed tainted.
- Rhoda referred to a previous dust cloud observation for which monitoring data was provided. Brad stated that observations of dust should reflect on monitors or there is some doubt as to their accuracies. Brad said if he can see the dust, and taste the dust, and video the dust (uploaded to Youtube), but the dust monitoring system show no adverse event then a more accurate method needs to be put in place.
- Eugene advised that it is the role of DES to work with the YRA towards achieving amenity. The Department will continue to respond to the YRAs concerns.
- Brad requested for Eugene's opinion on the bioaerosols / air quality monitoring report. Eugene advised he is not a technical expert in air quality and therefore relies on the technical expertise of the DES Science Division.
- Brad requested a copy of an investigation report that was produced by the department in response to a historical community report regarding a contamination release. Eugene advised he would confirm whether the report could be given to Brad and advised that the YRA could lodge a right to information (RTI) request as an additional option to obtain this information.
- Brad requested that Eugene reply to a list of questions provided (hard copy supplied at the meeting) in regards to the Bioaerosols report, Eugene asked if Brad could send the questions via email (this was sent to Eugene on the 5-3-2018 via email).

Permanent air quality monitoring station / stakeholder reference group

- Brad repeated the YRA's request that an air monitoring station similar to Springwood be installed in Yatala, and would include monitoring other chemicals similar to the list of agents monitored at the springwood site, the YRA's concern is not limited to dust and bioaerosols, there are other chemicals that can be released by industry, and as it stands the nearest monitoring station for these chemicals is Springwood. Eugene advised that he was unable to give the YRA that assurance at today's meeting.
- DES Science Division advised cost of station like Springwood is in excess of \$200K. Due to multiple quarries in Yatala multiple stations may be required to ensure data is indicative of source. Lower cost monitoring equipment may assist in providing spatial data. There is a potential of working on creating a monitoring network using citizen science, however this would only test for PM_{2.5}.
- DES Science Division advised that they would have to go away from this meeting to discuss the potential of an air monitoring station in Yatala.

- Eugene advised that there is the possibility of approaching industry to co-fund future monitoring.
- Eugene advised the possibility of forming a stakeholder reference group between industry and YRA. YRA initially refused to be part of this process. Eugene explained that this reference group would allow YRA to work alongside industry with DES as the facilitator. YRA advised they would be willing to have a real conversation with industry as part of a stakeholder group, however would want industry to follow through on any commitments made.

Action

Item #	Action	Responsible	Status	Due Date	Response
1	DES to follow up on the Hanson EA regarding the current PM10 limit of 150µg/m ³ despite a recent amendment.	DES	Completed	ASAP	Hanson's current EA, (effective 02 September 2016), does not have a PM10 limit of 150µg/m ³ . The EA has a standard nuisance condition.
2	DES to provide written explanation for the 2-year delay in releasing to the bioaerosol report conducted in November 2015.	DES	Not commenced	ASAP	-
3	Eugene to confirm if YRA can have a copy of the investigation report regarding the community report lodged by YRA to DES.	DES	Commenced	ASAP	
4	DES to provide a written response to all 7 questions raised by YRA.	DES	Commenced	DES to provide a response	-
5	DES to organise a Stakeholder reference group.	DES	On hold	-	-
6	YRA to email a copy of the questions they asked during the meeting to Eugene.	YRA	Completed	ASAP	-
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