

Minutes

Air Pollution Expert Advisory Committee

**Held Tuesday 14 December 2010
73 Miller Street, North Sydney**

Attended:

Members: Prof. Bruce Armstrong, Prof. Guy Marks, Dr Mark Hibberd,

Observers: Prof. Wayne Smith, Dr Vicky Sheppard, Prof. Bin Jalaludin, Dr Jeremy McAnulty, Dr Tony Merritt (proxy for Dr Durrheim), Dr Greg Stewart (Acting CGHO, proxy for Dr Chant)

Apologies:

Dr David Durrheim, Prof. Alison Jones, Prof. Michael Hensley, Dr Kerry Chant.

Minutes: Minutes for previous meeting were approved and it was agreed that these be posted on the Environmental Health Branch website. A link to this posting will be sent to Tony Merritt for distribution to John Drinan.

Business arising

Campaign monitoring:

- It was suggested that the name for this to be changed to 'Special Additional Pollution Measures' to avoid ambiguity.
- To be conducted in stages.
- Stage 1 is to monitor PM1 and PM 2.5 in various locations throughout Upper Hunter, starting with DECCW monitoring array sites in Singleton, Camberwell and Muswellbrook, thence maintaining one at a DECCW site and moving the other to selected sites on a rotational basis. The hypothesis to be tested is that there is not great variance in fine and very fine particles throughout the Upper Hunter airshed.
- Stage 1 was approved by the EAC, to commence as soon as monitors can be purchased, and maintenance and data collection issues are finalized.
- Stage 2 will be to assess current information on speciation, and to collect more speciation data, as required. The hypothesis to be tested is that much of the particulate matter emanates from mining activities. There was some discussion of the timing and scope of a speciation assessment. Timing and scope for this stage was not resolved and will be considered as a priority agenda item at the next EAC meeting.

Action: Siting and maintenance to be discussed with DECCW. Purchase of machines to as soon as feasible. EHB are responsible.

Health study protocol:

- A draft modular Health Study protocol was presented, containing 5 suggested modules, or Work Packages to be considered and finalised if agreed to.
- A major issue highlighted was the need to complete work package 1 - Develop a spatio-temporal air pollution exposure model for the Upper Hunter Valley - prior to any further work, as exposure information and exposure differentials would be required for statistical power calculations and for geographical sampling of subjects
- Also discussed was the issue of statistical power to detect likely chronic cardiovascular and respiratory effects, including the assumptions about likely effect sizes for measureable intermediate outcomes. This affects the feasibility and design of the remaining work packages.

Action: Profs Jalaludin and Marks to progress planning for working packages, including further assessment of statistical power and outcome measures.

Organic material used for rehabilitation:

This item was held over to the next meeting as there was insufficient time to discuss

Other Business:

- SSHEG letter & document: Tony Merritt highlighted the major concerns raised by SSHEG: seeking a focus on short-term (1 hour or less) monitoring & reporting; concerns re particle composition & toxicity; seek increased number & distribution of PM2.5 monitors; seek PM2.5 standards and health risk assessment requirements in DAs (policy issue).
- The committee noted that several of these concerns will be addressed by the proposed special health monitoring program.
- Desk-top analysis of blast chemistry: committee members requested update on progress

Next meeting: To be scheduled first week in February