

TAYLORS ROAD 'LYNDHURST' LANDFILL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

MEETING 14

5.30 - 8.30 pm, Thursday 23 July 2009

Meeting room, SITA Environmental Solutions, Taylors Road Landfill,
Taylors Road, Dandenong South

MEETING MINUTES

(As confirmed at 15th CESC meeting)

1. Attendees and apologies

CESC members present

Helen Russo – Colemans Road Ratepayers Association

Ian Jenz – Colemans Road Ratepayers Association (from item 5)

Jim Houlahan – Dandenong Residents and Ratepayers Association

Thelma Wakelam – Residents Against Toxic Waste in the South East (RATWISE)

Andrew Tytherleigh – Executive Officer, Victorian Waste Management Association

Malcolm Baker – Director, Development Services City of Greater Dandenong

David Richardson – Manager Engineering and Environmental Services, City of Casey

Laurence Halvy – General Manager, Fresh Start Bakeries, Dandenong South

Susan Carter – Community Engagement Facilitator, EPA Victoria

Evan Kyriakopoulos – Operations Manager, SITA Environmental Solutions

Bruce Turner – Phoenix Facilitation (CESC facilitator)

Visitors (non-members)

Renee Deverson – Compliance EH and S Officer, SITA Environmental Solutions (Minutetaker)

Apologies/absent

Mark D'Agostino – Environmental Health Officer, Department of Human Services

Colin McIntosh – EPA Victoria

Michael O'Keeffe – Post Collections Manager, SITA Environmental Solutions

Cr Lynette Keleher – Councillor, City of Casey

Cr Yvonne Herring – Councillor, City of Greater Dandenong

Geraldine Gonsalvez – Community interests in the SE (including RATWISE)

Jason Wood – Lynbrook Residents Association

Tony O'Hara – Hampton Park Progress Association

Marc Boxer – Department of Planning and Community Development

2. Minutes of previous meeting(s)

Bruce advised that he had received comments from Jani Breider on the draft minutes of the previous meeting. Jani indicated she did not disagree with what was recorded in the draft regarding the licence amendment item which she attended as a visitor (item 5). However, she wished the record to make it clear that she had said she strongly believed a works approval was required in order to insert the proposed pre-settlement contour plan into the licence.

With this amendment, the remaining draft minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the previous meeting.

3. Matters carried over from previous meetings

3 a. SITA Waste Update

Evan and Renee were asked to provide an update regarding the disposal of waste from the Victorian bushfire cleanup. It was confirmed that the majority of the clean up has since been completed and that, since the start of the project, Taylors Road has received approximately 100,000 tonnes of bushfire clean up materials (deposited in general waste cell 20). Thelma and Bruce asked how this had affected the ratio of Prescribed Industrial Waste to general waste (that is required under the landfill's licence to

be below 35% overall, and no more than 40% in any one 6 month period). Evan confirmed that the bushfire waste had decreased this ratio. At the time of the meeting Evan was unable to provide an exact figure, but estimated that it would be a percentage in the high 20s. He undertook to provide a more accurate figure at the next meeting.

Thelma asked how many other landfills had accepted wastes from the bush fire clean up. Evan indicated nine landfills were used, and that the waste had been classified as general waste by EPA.

ACTION 14.1: SITA to provide the current PIW/general waste ratio at the next CESC meeting.

3 b. EPA summary of impacts of increased levies for Prescribed Waste

Susan circulated information to the CESC on monthly prescribed waste tonnages disposed to landfills in Victoria since the levy increase in July 2008. While the tonnages fluctuated month to month, they appeared to be trending downwards.

Evan reconfirmed that the overall tonnages had decreased at Taylors Road. Helen asked why the volumes fluctuated seasonally. Evan explained that the fluctuation of PIW volumes, especially soils, is due to weather; most construction/development works are programmed around the dry months of the year to avoid delays. Also, towards the end of the year PIW is received from industries which have their annual clean-ups before shutting down for the Christmas break. It is also typical to see fluctuations before and after the end of the financial year depending on the financial incentives of the various players in the market.

The CESC asked if EPA could provide data from before the levy increase to enable a comparison. Evan confirmed that two years before the levy increase, Taylors Road accepted in the order of 150,000 tonnes in one year; tonnages are now well below this figure.

ACTION 14.2: EPA to provide additional figures for PIW disposed to landfill prior to July 2008.

Jim questioned if the decreased tonnages could be due to on-site storage. Evan indicated that many manufacturers do not have capacity to store waste on site. He commented that the decrease was the result of both cleaner production and more recycling and avoidance of waste, as well as some industry moving to states with lower levies; he advised the CESC that New South Wales' levies are significantly lower for industrial waste and Queensland currently has no levies.

Jim questioned if there was a difference in tip fee costs between the states. Evan confirmed that SITA has another landfill in NSW where the regulations for such wastes are different in that a large proportion of wastes which are classified as prescribed waste in Victoria are classified as general waste in NSW.

3 c. Taylors Road EPA Licence Amendment

Bruce asked Susan to provide a brief update on the progress of the Taylors Road EPA Licence amendment. Susan confirmed that it had been approved by the authority and issued to SITA the day before the meeting. Evan indicated that SITA had not yet received a copy of the amended licence. Bruce questioned if there had been any changes to the 'tracked change' version supplied by EPA to the CESC at the previous meeting. Susan indicated the amendment was made in line with that version including the pre-settlement contour plan provided at the last meeting.

Thelma wished it to be included in the minutes that community representatives felt that a Works Approval should have been required for the amendment, She commented that the process that EPA had undertaken had felt 'token'. Jim agreed with Thelma's comments.

Susan requested that it also be minuted that under the Environment Protection Act, this type of EPA licence amendment is not required to go through a works approval or any form of public consultation process. Bruce noted that the CESC had been advised from the outset by EPA that the opportunity for it to be involved in this type of review was unusual and not part of a formal statutory process.

Evan commented that the pre-settlement contour plan in the amended licence did not increase the landfill's waste capacity and that the contour plan is within the limits of the current planning permit. He

confirmed that if SITA were to seek to increase the height that waste could be placed at the landfill, up to the 35 metres in the planning permit, it would need to apply for a Works Approval, as previously advised. Thelma stated that such a proposal would be opposed by RATWISE.

Mal advised that a meeting between EPA, DPCD and the City of Greater Dandenong regarding alignment of the planning permit with the EPA licence had not yet occurred (Action 13.5 from the previous meeting).

3 d. EPA information on financial assurances for TRL

Bruce reminded the group that Bruce Dawson had previously provided the CESC with details of the financial assurance system and how the process works, including long term aftercare. Jim said the community would want an assurance that there is adequate financial cover to undertake any site remediation that may be required in the future. Susan indicated that EPA was not in a position to reveal the amount of the financial assurance for Taylors Road, but SITA could.

After discussion, Susan undertook to circulate information (EPA Publication 777) outlining how such assurances are calculated.

ACTION 14.3: Susan to circulate EPA Publication 777.

[NB Following the meeting, it was picked up that the financial assurance figure – a \$12 million bank guarantee – had already been provided to the CESC and published in the minutes of its meeting on 17 July 2008]

Helen asked if SITA has its own insurances in addition to the financial assurance (bank guarantee). Evan confirmed that SITA does have post closure and closure provisions that are reviewed annually. He said the financial assurance is in place as a last resort if SITA were to walk away from the landfill. He explained that a percentage of all the fees for waste disposed of at the landfill is put towards closure and post closure provisions and is accrued. He advised that SITA's insurance covers such things as site remediation as well as the landfill operations. Evan advised that it is important for members to keep in mind that if there were to be a catastrophic incident at Taylors Road, EPA would make SITA remediate the site using the site's licence mechanism, as well as through its powers through the Environment Protection Act.

ACTION 14.4: SITA to provide a brief outline of its insurances and contingencies.

Laurence commented that SITA would be subject to audits and have their own internal audit schedule. Andrew advised that for transporters to be able to transport general waste they need to have insurance to the value of \$500,000 and for a prescribed waste transporter it is up to \$5,000,000.

3 e. Groundwater Salinity

Bruce referred to the outstanding question from Jani regarding groundwater salinity (under Action 12.1). It was advised that this was passed onto Anthony for comment however a response had not yet been received. Evan advised that he has liaised with Anthony and he will provide a response in the near future.

ACTION 14.5: SITA to circulate Anthony Lane's comments when received.

3 f. Cell 12 B Layback

Evan said he had received a response from Roger Parker regarding the layback of Cells 12A & 12B late that day and undertook to forward it the following day. (under Action 13.4)

4. Staff Health

In response to Lynette's and some other members' concerns about the CESC meeting venue, it had been suggested that SITA provide a presentation on staff health monitoring at Taylors Road.

Evan provided a presentation on SITA's national health surveillance procedure which requires annual staff medicals that test for a range of aspects such as blood count, lead levels, liver and respiratory

function, hearing levels etc. Evan presented summary results of the annual testing of the four longest-term employees at Taylors Road.

Evan also advised that there is additional occupational health monitoring related to the types of wastes received at the landfill (with air quality monitors set up in active areas of the landfill). For example, Evan said that SITA had undertaken air monitoring for asbestos when bushfire wastes were being received. He said that this was to check if SITA's handling and disposal procedures are effective; no airborne asbestos was detected. Renee also confirmed that this testing was undertaken by a hygienist. Vaporised wastes are also analysed when received under SITA's vapourised waste procedure, which is based on WorkSafe standards.

Jim asked who undertakes the tests and how they determine what are the most appropriate tests to be undertaken. Evan confirmed that SITA's doctor is a specialist in Occupational Medicine and is WorkSafe approved. Tests in addition to SITA's national procedure are determined by a questionnaire on work and lifestyle habits that is completed by the employee when undertaking the annual medical. For example, staff must detail the chemicals they have been exposed to. He also stated that occupational monitoring is in addition to WorkSafe requirements. Jim asked if there was any ongoing monitoring of former staff. Evan stated that the majority of staff at Taylors Road are longer term; he also stated that the health and safety legislation protects workers' rights with regards to long-term health issues, and referred to the James Hardy cases as an example. Furthermore, Evan noted that staff are on-site at Taylors Road on a daily basis and that, in regards to health impacts, safety is SITA's first priority. He noted that Taylors Road had recently achieved over 1100 days without a lost time injury.

Helen asked if there is any reporting that SITA is required to do on the results of its health surveillance. Evan advised that as Taylors Road accepts lead wastes, it reports to WorkSafe. He advised that in regards to asbestos waste, there are no specific reporting obligations; however any reports of monitoring or the site itself are subject to WorkSafe inspections as with any other workplace.

Bruce asked those present how they felt about the health data as presented. David advised that he could not speak for Lynette directly; however she had indicated to him that she does not feel comfortable in attending the meetings while they are at Taylors Road. Thelma suggested that there should be a full health investigation similar to those overseas where residents have lived in close proximity to such landfills. Evan commented that prescribed wastes received at Taylors Road are not on the same scale and type as a number produced overseas. He also later responded to comparisons with the Tullamarine Landfill, saying that no comparisons should or can be made between Tullamarine Landfill and Taylors Road Landfill; they are completely different sites with different wastes received and different histories in terms of environmental & engineering controls.

There was further discussion of the pros and cons of continuing to meet at Taylors Road. While some members continued to have an in-principle concern at meeting there, the CESC acknowledged that there were no significant trends or issues raised by the health data presented that would prevent the committee continuing to meet at Taylors Road.

ACTION 14.6: SITA to circulate the health data presentation to the CESC.

ACTION 14.7: SITA to provide updates on health monitoring as they come to hand, to enable the CESC to keep a 'watching brief' on this matter.

5. Future Plans for Taylors Road

Evan provided a presentation regarding SITA's proposal to establish a soil treatment facility at Taylors Road. He referred to a recent works approval application by Renex (for a soil treatment facility at Ordish Road) as one of the reasons why the project is being planned. Those present confirmed they were aware of this application. Evan advised that the Renex application is completely different to what SITA is proposing; key differences include: Renex is employing one (thermal) treatment technology and are proposing to use a variety of wastes as a fuel in this treatment process; SITA is proposing several technologies, all only involving soils.

Evan then provided a presentation on the following: *Background into soil treatment at Taylors Road (referred to an old WAA for a treatment plant in 2003); Background into soil tonnages; Differences in volume; Why SITA is considering this now.*

Thelma and Jim questioned how the Haz Waste funding is allocated. Evan confirmed that this is determined by EPA and Sustainability Victoria and there are a number of requirements to be met to obtain funding. Evan also advised the location of the proposed facility is likely to be on top of Cell 12A and 12B as this is the part of the site which is likely to settle the least, as prescribed waste is naturally very dense and does not decompose. Thelma questioned if SITA compacts prescribed waste, Evan confirmed it is spread by a bulldozer, which provides some level of compaction, however, the high density is inherent in the majority of the waste.

Types of Treatments proposed

Evan stated that there was an identified gap in the market, particularly due to restrictions such as space and short timelines to achieve soil remediation at contaminated sites. SITA is proposing to provide basic infrastructure, and the time and space for customers to undertake soil treatment. Evan listed the technologies to be used may include:

*Thermal treatment,
Stabilisation,
Bioremediation and
Soil washing.*

Evan stressed to the group that this proposal is in the very early stages and details are yet to be finalised. He also stated that SITA would develop, along with planning permit and works approval applications, a Community Engagement Plan specifically for this project.

There followed questions and discussion by the CESC. Jim stated that what is proposed is similar to Innova's treatment methods (on Westall Road). Evan confirmed that the same technologies (thermal and stabilisation) are used within 10m of residences. Examples are Albert Park Secondary College as well as service stations in suburban areas. He said SITA believed its proposal is not in competition with Innova as it is going to provide a service as well as time and/ or space. Additionally it provides for soils to be treated to meet lower hazard classifications such Category C or cleanfill. This proposal is more likely to compete with the Renex proposal.

Jim questioned the subcontracting procedures that will be in place and how SITA would ensure compliance by waste treaters who used the proposed facility. Evan advised that SITA has overall responsibility for what occurs at Taylors Road; however, there would be contract agreements in place to ensure subcontractors complied with the requirements placed on SITA. Evan advised that SITA last week had had preliminary discussions with EPA regarding this proposal. It is envisaged that SITA will undertake a general works approval application and then, for specific treatment methods to be used, apply to EPA for a Section 30A approval. SITA is proposing to set up a possible matrix of suitable technologies and their capabilities to remediate set levels of contaminants. Evan noted that this application is the first of its kind and it is still in the very early stages of planning.

Helen questioned if there were any risks with the treatment methods proposed, such as potential emissions. Evan advised that the technology proposed is proven technology being used around Melbourne now; there are some emissions particularly with remediation of hydrocarbons through stack emissions, particulates and VOCs (volatile organic compounds). He said that emissions would be controlled through biofilters, scrubbers etc as per EPA requirements. Soil washing has no emissions; liquids used are reprocessed at a treatment facility and reagents are shipped to the United States.

Andrew questioned if there were to be any compliance testing. Evan confirmed that a compliance program would be designed and implemented.

Thelma questioned the feasibility of having mobile treatment plants come to Taylors Road for only a few days at a time. Evan advised that the proposal offers flexibility and it is likely that any plants would be set up for months at a time. Additionally, the proposal is offering storage.

Helen returned to the issue of emissions and asked about the size of the chimney and likely emissions. She noted that the nearby Viridian Glass facility has substantial smokestacks and emissions. Evan said that the emission stack would be quite small (see photo in presentation circulated to CESC members) and will be maintained in accordance with EPA approval conditions and the relevant State Environment Protection Policy.

Jim referred to the thermal treatment technology proposed in the Renex application and suggested that there was a risk of dioxin emissions if run at incorrect temperatures. Evan advised that this technology

was in use now and showed good performance, but there would need to be appropriate contingencies in place as well as engineering controls, to respond to any breakdowns.

Thelma questioned if there are proposed to be one treatment process at a time, or multiple occurring on the site at any one time. Evan stated that this detail had yet to be determined. Thelma questioned if SITA had approached soil treaters to discuss the proposal. Evan confirmed that treaters had expressed interest, however he noted that treatments may not be required in every case.

Bruce commented that this was a good opportunity for the CESC to fulfil its role in helping to highlight questions and issues the wider community may have, and to act as a sounding board in planning any community involvement in the development of, and SITA's seeking approval for, the proposal. He asked if there would be an opportunity to integrate the planning permit and works approval processes. Evan advised that the community engagement plan will hopefully address both DPCD and EPA requirements for community engagement.

Thelma said she believed the community would be interested in the proposal and that this should be the subject of a public meeting. Jim said he believed it was a terrific idea in-principle to reduce waste, but said he was concerned about the cumulative effect of two or more soil treatment facilities in the same region. He said Dandenong already has poor air quality in regards to particulates and this needs to be addressed in the larger context. Thelma suggested it would be preferable to control all soils in one location. Evan referred to the soil treatment facility at Dutson Downs in Gippsland that was intended for this purpose, but said it receives very little waste due to its distant location and limited treatment capacity.

Ian indicated that he would attend CESC meetings while it was discussing this proposal and requested that SITA keep informing the group of the proposal's progress.

Bruce sought confirmation from the CESC that it was willing to assist SITA in firming up its proposal and in planning the community engagement process, and in acting as a channel for two-way information exchange with the community. He emphasised that in fulfilling this role, no CESC member was being asked to endorse the proposal and, under the CESC's Terms of Reference, they had every opportunity to object to it when public comment is formally sought, if they wished.

Jim raised a concern that the CESC would require more information before members could be expected to approach the community. He noted that Renex had looked under-prepared in a recent public meeting; he suggested this made it appear that something was being hidden from the community.

Mal suggested that it would be helpful if SITA was able to be more specific about what types of wastes it proposed to treat, in what volumes and what the likely emissions would be.

Evan confirmed that SITA would be providing such information. He said SITA wanted to make people aware of what is proposed and to understand what the community's concerns are. Bruce summarised key questions and issues that had been raised in the meeting so far (including: emissions, contingency plans if technology failed, and the cumulative impacts of more than one treatment facility in the region) and suggested that CESC members could help identify other questions and issues likely to be of interest or concern to the wider community. Andrew suggested that examples of where this technology is already being used may be helpful.

Bruce circulated a 'public participation spectrum' from the International Association of Public Participation as a tool for discussing the level of involvement of the community in the proposal. Thelma commented that it would be important to have face to face communication.

Bruce questioned Evan on the timeline for the works approval application. Evan advised that SITA has yet to appoint a consultant and that SITA would want to have another meeting with the CESC before doing anything else. It was agreed that holding at least the next few meetings closer to monthly would be helpful to maintain momentum as the application was developed.

Bruce then reminded the group that SITA is not asking for support for the project but rather to ensure that the community engagement process is credible. The members present generally indicated their preparedness to help with the latter task.

ACTION 14.8: SITA to circulate the soil treatment presentation to the CESC.

ACTION 14.9: CESC members to provide any additional questions or comments to SITA prior to, or at, the next meeting.

6. Communication and Consultation

6 a. Posting of Meeting Agendas

Bruce referred to a request from Jani Breider to post the agenda prior to CESC meetings on the CESC page on the EPA website. It was agreed by those present that this would be acceptable.

6 b. RATWISE request for a Public Meeting

Bruce referred to previous requests for a public meeting and commented that the proposal for the soil treatment facility just discussed presented an opportunity for a meaningful forum. He suggested this be considered in the preparation of the community engagement plan for the project.

6 c. Community Newsletter/ Bulletin

Bruce reminded the CESC that since the group had not been able to agree the final wording of a media release on what it had learnt about groundwater monitoring, he had proposed that a newsletter or bulletin might be a better vehicle for updating anyone interested in what the CESC was up to. He circulated a first draft outline of the contents of such a bulletin, which he said could include information about the soil treatment proposal and any opportunities for community involvement. The CESC was generally supportive of this concept.

6 d. Open Day for 2009

Last year's open day was viewed as a success and as a result it was decided to have it as an annual event. Jim stated it is important that the community, including schools, receive enough notice. He suggested that Councils could advertise it in their local community newsletters. Mal indicated the City of Dandenong would need the information a month before it was due to be published. SITA indicated it would want to hold the open day earlier than December this year. A date should be finalised at the following CESC meeting.

7. Other Business

7 a. Review of Prescribed Waste Regulations

Susan confirmed that the revised regulations are on the EPA website and have been approved by the authority and government.

7 b. Landfill gas assessment audit

Susan advised that an Audit report had been submitted to EPA for review and that this will be available on the EPA's website in the upcoming weeks. Jim asked what had happened to landfill gas which had been detected earlier in the year. Evan advised that there are detectable levels of methane at the northern boundary. This is still being investigated; however upgrade works in the vicinity of these detections have seen a decrease in levels. Evan confirmed that the area is adjacent to a general waste cell.

8. Next Meetings

The next meeting is scheduled for:

5.30 – 8.30pm, Thursday 20th August at Taylors Road Landfill.