

# TAYLORS ROAD 'LYNDHURST' LANDFILL COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STEERING COMMITTEE

## MEETING 3

5.00 – 8.00pm, Thursday 22 May 2008

Meeting room, SITA Environmental Solutions, Hallam road Landfill,  
Hallam Road, Hampton Park

### **MEETING MINUTES** (As confirmed at 4<sup>th</sup> CESC meeting)

## 1. Attendees and apologies

### **CESC members present**

Ian Jenz – President, Colemans Road Ratepayers Association  
Tony O'Hara – Hampton Park Progress Association  
Jason Wood – Lynbrook Residents Association  
Thelma Wakelam – Residents Against Toxic Waste in the South East (RATWISE)  
Geraldine Gonsalvez – Community interests in the SE (including RATWISE)  
Malcolm Baker – Director, Development Services City of Greater Dandenong  
David Richardson – Manager Engineering and Environmental Services, City of Casey  
Andrew Tytherleigh – Executive Officer, Victorian Waste Management Association (VWMA)  
Mark D'Agostino – Environmental Health Officer, Department of Human Services  
Evan Kyriakopoulos – Operations Manager, SITA Environmental Solutions  
George Tsivoulidis – Regional Manager, EPA SE Metro Region  
Alexa Powell – Community Relations Officer, EPA SE Metro Region  
Bruce Turner – Phoenix Facilitation (CESC facilitator) [*referred to in these minutes as 'Bruce'*]

### **Visitors (non-members)**

Renée Deverson, SITA Environmental Solutions  
Melinda Barker, Manager Waste Unit EPA  
Bruce Dawson, Director, Regional Services EPA [*referred to in these minutes as 'Bruce Dawson'*]

### **Apologies**

Grant Tishler – Manager, Property and Development, Pellicano Pty Ltd.  
Laurence Halvy – Manager, Fresh Start Bakery, Dandenong South  
Jim Memeti – Councillor, City of Greater Dandenong  
Rob Wilson – Councillor, City of Casey  
Michael O'Keeffe – Post Collection Manager, SITA Environmental Solutions  
Daniel Fyfe – State Manager, SITA Environmental Solutions  
Jim Houlahan – Dandenong Residents and Ratepayers Association

## 2. Minutes of previous meeting

Tony sought a minor correction to the draft minutes on page 2 – he said he had referred to the incident that had occurred some years ago as an "escape of gas". With this correction, the minutes were endorsed as an accurate record of the previous meeting. Alexa confirmed that the minutes and meeting papers from the first meeting had been circulated to the stakeholder list including local MPs.

Bruce reminded the group that the question of whether to record meetings had been deferred from the last meeting. He invited Thelma to elaborate her suggestion. She indicated that she felt a recording would provide a valuable resource for members to help recall what happened at meetings, especially technical points, and that they could also assist in writing the minutes. She said the aim would not include using recordings for legal purposes in the future.

The group discussed the issue and raised several concerns; that recording could constrain the discussion at CESC meetings (e.g. make people more cautious about offering opinions), that once they existed recordings could not be kept as a resource 'just for the CESC', that quotes could be taken out of context, and that some items discussed could be commercial-in-confidence.

All members agreed that the minutes were a good and sufficient record of meetings and that recording could lead to less productive meetings. More technical information can easily be provided and clarification sought on complex issues at subsequent meetings. *It was agreed* that meetings would not be recorded, but that the issue could be revisited again in the future if any member believed there was a need.

(It was also noted that the Hallam Road meeting room does have a security camera, which records images without sound. The videotape is re-recorded over on a weekly basis.)

### **3. Terms of Reference**

The draft TOR document had been revised to reflect suggestions made by Andrew via email, which the group had agreed to at the last meeting. Thelma asked for clarification on a statement at the end of Section 6 about the independent facilitator not being called on as a witness. After some discussion, the group agreed to remove the sentence and, with that change, those present indicated their preparedness to endorse the TOR.

Bruce raised the idea of developing a protocols or "housekeeping" document to exist independently of the final TOR as a ready reference for any process or procedural-type agreements the group made. This document could be added to more frequently and easily than the TOR. The group agreed this would be useful.

**Action 1: Bruce and Alexa to finalise the TOR for formal endorsement at the next meeting.**

**Action 2: Alexa to set up and maintain a protocols document.**

### **4. Prescribed Industrial Waste (PIW)**

Bruce Dawson and Melinda Barker delivered a joint presentation on PIW for the group. The presentation gave a background history on PIW and the way that hazardous waste has been handled and disposed of in the past through to present day.

Bruce Dawson said waste disposal practices had improved in the past 38 years. However EPA is still dealing with the legacies of the 1970s and 1980s when there were very low requirements for how waste was disposed to landfill and liquid wastes were allowed to go directly into unlined cells. Today requirements are much more stringent and cells need to be lined and liquid is no longer allowed to be disposed directly to landfill.

Thelma asked what happened to liquid waste in the present day. Bruce Dawson explained that solids and liquids were separated and remaining liquid was treated to standards acceptable to sewer disposal. The residual treated and immobilised solids were disposed of in landfill. He said EPA's aim since the 1990s has been to minimise the amount of hazardous waste generated by producers, and create incentives to change manufacturing processes, by increasing levies (cost per tonne) for disposal. The EPA has classified different types (categories) of waste and the State Government has introduced policy to eliminate more hazardous types (i.e. Category B) going to landfill by 2020 (Category A waste is already banned from landfill).

Geraldine indicated that there was community concern about how the increased levy rates will be monitored and enforced. Bruce Dawson acknowledged the potential to encourage improper disposal of waste to try to avoid the increased costs of proper disposal. He explained how EPA audits industry to keep track of the waste stream.

Melinda indicated that the categorisation and treatment process for waste could be perceived to be confusing and that EPA was keen to improve communication to the wider community to assist with better understanding. She invited the CESC's feedback on the material in the presentation in terms of its usefulness and clarity for the wider community.

There was discussion around the amount of PIW that goes to landfill each year and the processes used to treat it. Melinda explained the waste management hierarchy from avoidance, to reuse and recycling would be more attractive to producers of waste. Bruce Dawson added that avoidance and cleaner production processes were aimed at getting industry to view waste as a resource that had value.

Thelma asked what was to stop industries stockpiling and storing waste to avoid paying the levies on disposal. Bruce explained that EPA is aware of the major producers of waste (NB 40-50 generators out of about 2000 produce about 60% of the waste going to landfill) and that many companies wouldn't have the space to store waste. Major generators of waste are licenced (by EPA) as are storage facilities and have requirements in their licences on how they store and dispose of waste.

There was discussion of how treatment is able to reduce the hazard, and therefore the categorization, of a waste stream. Currently no Category A waste can be disposed of to landfill, but must go through a treatment process to become classified as Category B "immobilised" waste which can then be disposed to landfill.

Ian raised a concern that it seems to be misleading for EPA to say Category A waste doesn't go to landfill when it does if it is treated to Category B standards first.

Tony asked why Category B waste that is treated to reduce its hazard is referred to as "Category C immobilised". He suggested it would be more transparent to refer to it as "Category B immobilised" once it is treated. Melinda explained that the categorization process really related to the levies and to deciding what waste can go where and, if it goes to landfill, what is 'high' (Category B) or 'low' (Category C) hazard. She indicated that EPA is aware this information is confusing and could be misunderstood. The Prescribed Industrial Waste guidelines and policy are to be reviewed in 2009 and work has already begun on getting community, government, industry and council input into how they could be improved. The language used to refer to PIW waste was definitely high on the agenda as it is a big issue for the community. Ian agreed that people were confused by what 'prescribed' meant and that the public could be scared and think that EPA was trying to hide waste by not calling it hazardous.

Tony pointed out that some EPA publications used the word "hazardous" and "toxic". He suggested that the word "prescribed" is misleading because it could imply prescription, as in something that was good for people. He also suggested that the EPA website has lots of useful information on it but it is difficult to navigate and people don't know about the good things EPA is doing. Thelma agreed that it was easier for the public to identify what EPA was not doing than what it is doing, with some believing it stood for "Encouraging Public Anger". Bruce Dawson said this was valuable feedback and indicated that the CESC and the upcoming policy review process were both very important means of gaining understanding of wider public perceptions to be addressed by EPA and the Government in refining the system.

Tony pointed out that all the major development projects in Victoria that have high hazard waste would need to dispose of it at Taylors Road. He said he believed it wasn't possible that none of this waste would be produced beyond 2020. He asked what would happen when the landfill was full. Bruce Dawson reiterated that the emphasis in Victoria had moved from simply making waste disposal safe to avoiding the need to generate waste in the first place. He said the system of levies and funding reinvestment in cleaner production was leading the way nationally. Bruce (Turner) suggested that Tony's question be put on the list of issues for further discussion by the CESC. He also noted it was not the main focus of the group's Terms of Reference since it related to broader government policy for which there are other avenues for input.

Geraldine said there was concern locally about the desalination plant and the waste from that ending up in Lyndhurst. Bruce Dawson said no decisions had been made about this or the actual plant as it was still going through an EES process.

**Action 3: EPA to circulate a copy of the PIW presentation to the CESC along with a copy of the current policy and guidelines.**

## **5. Review of site visit**

Bruce explained that this item had been listed to give the CESC a chance to discuss the site visit that was held on 2 May, as there hadn't been much opportunity to do so at the last meeting.

Ian said he was concerned to see dust drifting across the prescribed industrial waste (PIW) cell from a truck that had been dumping a load of waste when the group was visiting. He said he had contacted Evan after the visit to express his concern about this and wondered how often it happened. He asked what EPA and SITA were doing to make sure this didn't happen in the future.

Evan responded that the incident had been a surprise and concern to SITA. He said the usual procedure is for the customer to inform SITA of loads which contain dusty material. The load in question had contained packaging material for a product containing sodium sulphite, bentonite (which is a mineral used in the landfill liner) and soda ash. Packaging is classified as PIW waste if its contents are hazardous. Evan said he had followed up with the customer (the trucking company) about the issue and the fact they hadn't informed SITA the load was dusty. The customer was following up with their client (the waste producer) and SITA was not accepting any further loads unless they were bagged appropriately. He said SITA had specific unloading procedures that are followed for this type of waste (to ensure the bagged material was not ruptured).

Evan added that dust monitoring occurs on site and most dust is found to be blowing onto the site from the nearby unsealed roads rather than from the site to the surrounds.

George said that he had also been concerned about the dust and had sought an explanation from Evan and SITA after the visit. SITA had provided an incident report to EPA and details of methods for preventing similar incidents in the future.

Tony indicated he was happy the issue had been raised and discussed outside the meeting. It had been a wakeup call for all concerned.

Evan explained that staff at the tipping face monitor incidents like this, and that bulldozer operators are trained to recognise waste, handle it appropriately and report any problems.

**Action 4: SITA to provide copies of its procedures for handling dusty loads to the CESC.**

The other matter from the site visit that was reviewed was the question of the relationship between Cell 11 (a mixed PIW and general waste cell) and the construction of PIW Cell 12A. Evan circulated copies of a cross-section showing how Cell 12A and its liner overlapped the tapered edge of Cell 11 so as to create a final landform that is smooth rather than having valleys between all the waste cells.

It was noted that some members of the group who were unable to attend the site tour were liaising with SITA to arrange their own visits. Bruce said he would assist with contacting people to make sure everyone was aware of this opportunity. Thelma suggested he also contact the Federal Member for Isaacs, Mark Dreyfus, to see if he was interested in visiting the site.

**Action 5: Bruce to contact members who were unable to attend the site visit, and Mark Dreyfus MP, to make them aware of the opportunity to visit the site at their convenience.**

## 6. Communications

The group discussed the insights and information that it was gaining that would be useful to share with the wider community. Suggested topics included:

- Construction of a cell (including the potential condition of the older liners)
- Liquid waste policy and disposal methods
- Gas management systems (including types of gas generated, and the potential to generate from contact with water)
- Chemical interactions in a PIW cell
- Clarification of hazardous waste terminology
- Percentage of PIW waste that is accepted
- What the closure of the Tullamarine landfill would mean to Lyndhurst
- The role of EPA
- The role of Council
- Where the waste comes from; what types; what happens to it.

Ian suggested the production of a package of information like a 'kit' on all the topics would be useful. Jason said that information about the design of the cells and the use of cell liners had been the big lesson for the Lynbrook Residents Association when they had visited the site. It was recommended that SITA prepare an information sheet on this topic first.

**Action 6: SITA to prepare a draft information sheet on cell construction and the condition of liners for review at the next meeting.**

The group also briefly discussed ideas for activities that could be coordinated to assist in engaging the community. Geraldine recommended that a public meeting be held. Due to time constraints Bruce suggested, and the group agreed, that a fuller discussion of ideas towards a community engagement strategy be deferred to the next meeting.

## **7. Landfill update**

In view of the preceding discussion following up on the site visit, there was no additional discussion under this standing item. The group agreed that this item should be higher on the agenda at the next meeting.

## **8. Next meeting**

The next meeting will be at 5-8 pm on 19 June 2008, at the Hallam Road meeting room.

**Agenda items for the next meeting include:**

- **Landfill update**
- **Towards a Community Engagement Strategy**
- **Discussion of Mark Dreyfus' role in the CESC process**