

MINUTES

Lower Maribyrnong Audit Reference Group (LMARG) Meeting No 3

Held: 5.00pm Thursday 23rd February 2006, Hyde Street Church, Maribyrnong City Council Offices, Hyde Street Footscray.

Present: Prof. John Cary, Chairman
Prof. Ian Rae - Technical Adviser
Ray Cranke - Albright & Wilson
Linden Birch - CSR
David Prismall – Sugar Australia
Bill Crowe, James Fairweather- Orica
Janelle Donnelly, Mick Lobianco - PoMC
Peter Kemp - Parks Victoria
Deborah Macfarlane - Community
Andrew Clifton, Michael Isaachsen, Peter Somerville - river users/community
Peter Nadebaum, Venetia Stewart – GHD
Theo Pykoulas – Maribyrnong City Council
Stuart McConnell, Quentin Cooke, Gary Laidlaw - EPA

Chair John Cary welcomed Deborah Macfarlane to her first LMARG meeting. Deborah has a long history of community work in the Kensington area.

1. Apologies Eric Braslis - Hobsons Bay CC
Adrian Havryluk - Maribyrnong CC
Doug Knight - EPA

2. Minutes

Meeting #2 minutes accepted as presented (*Somerville/ Rae*). All outstanding issues from minutes actioned.

3. Audit update – report on phase 2 & 3

Peter Nadebaum (GHD) provided an update on the environmental risk-based audit assessing any impact on the Maribyrnong River from the industrial sites in the “Whitehall precinct”. He explained how phase 2 was about gathering information and screening environmental risk.

To do this work GHD have met with industry, EPA industry client managers, Melbourne Water, community members and used the risk screening method outlined in Australian Standard AS:4360. Exposure pathway analysis has then been used to detect high and medium risk scenarios for activities like stormwater runoff, soil contamination, groundwater contamination and potential river contamination.

Peter also explained how the Maribyrnong river flow is complex and there is no net flow for some months – essentially there is a “plug” which moves up and down the river with little tidal oscillation. Groundwater flow is small (~2% of river volume/month) with higher concentrated flow closer to the banks.

The Yarra River, however, has a net flow in all months of the year, tidal flushing is significant and groundwater infiltration is highly diluted.

Groundwater data assessment by GHD is preliminary but indicates some raised levels of metals (PoMC, Orica, Albright and Wilson); phosphate (PoMC, Orica, Albright and Wilson); ammonia (PoMC, Orica) and biological oxygen demand (BOD – Sugar Australia/CSR). Mobil groundwater data is still being evaluated.

Maribyrnong River water quality data shows uniform concentrations on contaminant metals with some raised levels of copper and selenium which require further interpretation.

Sediment data shows similar contaminant concentrations for both the Maribyrnong And Yarra Rivers. Arsenic levels are elevated in the Whitehall St precinct area but still below ISQG low levels.

Fish data shows no sampling was carried out in the vicinity of the Whitehall Street precinct. There is generally no significant issue with the exception of PCBs detected in eels caught in the Yarra.

4. EPA Update

EPA reported that follow-up testing revealed no PCBs in Yarra River sediments around Herring Island.

EPA is coordinating a boat excursion on the Maribyrnong River on the Blackbird (Peter Somerville) – proposed date is Thursday 9 March.

5. LMARG Revised Communication Strategy

Gary Laidlaw reported that a meeting has been held with Colleen Hartland and Helen Morrissey (Maribyrnong Council) to improve the draft communication strategy and discuss effectively getting information out into the community. Bill Crowe was unable to attend but provided comment via email. It was suggested that the Department of Human Services (DHS) should be added to the government stakeholders – in particular with regard to the fish study outcomes.

7. Other Business

Nil.

8. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 27th April, 2006 at Maribyrnong City Council offices, Footscray.

Meeting closed at 7.10pm

Summary of Action Items

Nil.

Meeting handouts

LMARG Draft Communications Management Strategy v. 2 Jan 2006