

Minutes of Meeting with Balmain Residents about cruise ships at White Bay

Date: 16 October 2015 - 11.30 am

Location: SLHD Public Health Unit, Camperdown

Present

Balmain resident representatives:

Lisa Marie Murphy, Kate Horrobin, Kerin Cox, Professor Alan Rosen.

NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA):

Frank Garofalow, Anthony Savage

NSW Department of Planning and Environment (DP&E):

Karen Harragon, Alix Carpenter

Port Authority NSW:

Brad Milner, Joe James, Brendan Elliott, Ryan Bennett

Leichhardt Council:

Anita Smojver

SLHD Public Health Unit (PHU).

Leena Gupta (chair), Graham Burgess, Toni Cains, Shivani Nair, Karen Gover (minutes)

These minutes are a summary record of what was stated at the meeting as they relate to actions, and do not necessarily reflect the views of all attendees.

1. Welcome and introductions

Leena Gupta opened the meeting at 10.30am

Apologies

Maree Thomas, Ryan Cole Leichhardt Council, Richard Broome.

2. Draft minutes of previous meeting 21 August 2015

- Residents advised that Point 5 was recorded incorrectly and that the house was vacated due to air emissions rather than noise issues
- Alan Rosen would like the following added to the Minutes – *'Public Health need to monitor health effects in the community and set a baseline study of the community that can be made public'*

Outcome: Minutes adopted as a true and accurate record: subject to the nominated minor changes.

3. Discussion of minutes

- Department of Premier and Cabinet attendance – under discussion.

4. Input from resident representatives

Residents advised that they are happy that the new Regulation has commenced but had questions about the compliance particularly in regard to black smoke emitted recently from the Pacific Jewel, as they had thought that with the introduction of the Regulation there would be no black smoke.

Residents advised that the health of nearby residents is still affected, mainly with ongoing coughing and headaches.

Alan Rosen said he thought that the scientific evidence was clear about health impacts and that he was not asking for further scientific studies re the likely health impacts of the emissions on local residents. He noted that while some of the GPs and specialists have documented some of the impacts on residents in their private health records, there is no confidential case register neither invited nor kept about this matter. He gave lengthy reasoning about his concerns that there will be no collation of self-reported health effects attributed to White Bay Cruise terminal. He recommended a "health surveillance study" should be conducted by the Health, where health professionals would be asked to report their symptoms to an agency. AR thought the likelihood of mental health consequences associated with the effects of ship emissions was high.

There was lengthy discussion about this and Leena Gupta explained the approach of Health in relation to White Bay, and elsewhere, in relation to concerns about health impacts in the environment. The role of Health is to advise agencies on health risk and work with agencies to achieve the best health outcomes possible. There was also discussion about the scientific pitfalls of the type of approach proposed.

Frank advised that all complaints related to Health in some way.

5. Update from agencies

5.1 EPA

Prior to the commencement of the Regulation on October 1st 2015:

- Community Information Evening held at Balmain Rowing Club Hall on Tuesday 15th September 2015,
- Industry Briefing Session held on Wednesday the 16th October 2015,
- Cruise Ship inspections to brief ship staff and streamline the compliance processes,
- Development of a community webpage outline the changes to the Regulation,
- Development of an Industry webpage, compliance strategy and brochure,
- Preparation of relevant exemption, exception and notification forms for cruise ship owners and masters,
- Development of standard conditions of consent for exemptions and exceptions issued under the Regulation.

Since Part 6A of the Regulation commenced:

- Undertaken compliance inspections on **every ship** that has visited Sydney Harbour for the first time since 1st October 2015.
- All ships that have been subject to compliance inspections were operating in accordance with the Regulation and were using low sulfur fuel at berth,
- No exemptions, exceptions or notifications have been applied for since the low sulfur fuel Regulation came into effect,

- EPA staff continue to liaise with cruise ship technical staff on visits to educate and support full compliance with the Regulation,
- Investigations into visible smoke being emitted from the Pacific Jewel are currently being undertaken (although, it should be noted that the Pacific Jewel has been using low sulfur fuel at berth in compliance with the Regulation).

5.2 Update from Port Authority

- Work on the noise mitigation strategy and the shore power feasibility and cost/benefits study are ongoing. In response to a query about the timing of Ausgrid's work, it was noted that there are on-going meetings with Ausgrid and project discussions as part of the investigations. Ausgrid has been requested to prioritise this piece of work but they have indicated that the timing for their reporting hasn't changed and that it is one of many projects that they have to manage.
- In response to KH asking again for clarity on how decisions are made to berth and move ships around the Harbour, this request was taken on board.
- An introduction to the air quality monitoring data on EnviroSuite was provided, accessible at www.portauthoritynsw.com.au/airmonitoring, including how the website works, what information it provides and what the early information is starting to demonstrate in relation to the effectiveness of the low-sulphur fuel regulation on ambient SO₂ concentrations.
- With respect to shore power, it was noted that the EPA's DNV study is on their website and does discuss shore power

5.3 Update from Department of Planning and Environment

The Department is currently being kept up to date on the Port Authority's noise mitigation strategy. The Department's noise expert has met with the Port Authority in order to be briefed on the methods for data collection.

The Department remains supportive of prioritising mitigation of noise at the source before exploring options for off-site noise barriers.

5.4 Update from Health

The PHU has commenced reviewing the current factsheet with a view to updating to bring in line with present circumstances.


Dr Richard Broome has completed his study, '*Evaluating the Health Impact of Ship Engine Exhaust Emissions in the Sydney Region: An End - to End Approach*' which is currently undergoing peer review.

Leena handed out a copy of the Abstract and the preliminary results found that the use of low sulfur fuel within 300 klm of the population would have reduced ship PM 2.5 emissions within that region by 86 % and resulted in 56 % reduction in population weighted average concentration of ship generated PM 2.5 in the NSW GMR.

Action: Richard Broome will attend next meeting.

6. Other matters

Minutes endorsed at meeting 4 December 2015 as a true and accurate record


Dr Leena Gupta

Director, Public Health, Sydney Local Health District