



ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE
No 23 (City of Brisbane) Squadron

**Minutes of
Meeting**

23SQN/BP3776279

**MINUTES OF THE 40th MEETING OF THE AMBERLEY CONSULTATIVE
WORKING GROUP (ACWG),
HELD AT RAAF BASE AMBERLEY, 23 SQUADRON ON 11 JUN 19**

Attendees:

WGCDR M Thompson	RAAF AMB ABXO	Chairperson
Mr M Davies	RAAF AMB BM	
SQNLDR D Nott	RES Community Engagement Officer	
Ms L Wapler	PFAS Investigation and Management Branch	
Ms V Glyde	PFAS Investigation and Management Branch	
Mr M Le Riche	PFAS Investigation and Management Branch	
Mr G Hatchman	Willowbank Area Group - President	
Mr I Dainer	Willowbank Area Group – Vice President	
Ms J Lecinski	Dep Principal, West Moreton Anglican College	
Mr E Dawson	Dawson’s Technical Services	
REV R Heathwood	Local Resident	
Mr B Behm	Local Resident	
Mrs G Ashton	Local Resident	
ACW S Henningsen	23SQN ABCP	Meeting Secretary

Apologies:

The Hon S Neumann, MP	Federal Member for Blair
Ms Jennifer Howard, MP	Member for Ipswich
Mr Jim Madden, MP	Member for Ipswich West
Mr Jon Krause, MP	Member for Scenic Rim
Mr G McLay	West Moreton Anglican College
Mr A Mullins	Local Resident
Mr M Goddard	Local Resident
Ms A Nutley	Local Resident
Aircraft Noise Ombudsman’s Office	

ITEM 1: OPENING

1. WGCDR Thompson opened the meeting at 1720 h.

ITEM 2 / ITEM 3: REVIEW OF COMMITTEE ATTENDEES/APOLOGIES

2. WGCDR Thompson carried out a review of apologies received as detailed in the meeting agenda. It was advised that Lola and Don Hooper are withdrawing from the ACWG due to health reasons.

ITEM 4: CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

3. All attendees acknowledged that they had received and read the previous meeting's minutes.

ITEM 5: PFAS INVESTIGATION PROJECT – PROGRESS UPDATE

4. Mr Le Riche advised that he will be giving an update on where all of the major reports are in terms of the project. They are currently working through the Human Health Risk Assessment Report. Last week all of the inputs were refined from the Water Use Survey and a draft report was provided to the Defence Technical Advisor on Friday 7 Jun 19. Comments back on that report are expected by Friday 21 Jun 19. Once the report has been finalised by Defence, a community information session will be held and the report will be released to the public. At this time there is no date for the community information session but is likely to be in the third quarter of 2019. Another report being worked on is the Ecological Risk Assessment Report which is currently being drafted by the lead consultant and are expecting a preliminary draft by the end of the week. The final report being drafted is the Amberley PFAS Management Area Plan which is currently being done by the lead consultant. This will be the final product that will wrap up all of the information from the Detailed Site Investigation, Health Risk Assessment and Ecological Risk Assessment. It will outline on base plans to reduce and minimise impacts of PFAS going off base in relation to surface water and ground water.

5. Mr Le Riche invited Ms Wapler to give an update on community relations. Ms Wapler advised that they are planning towards the community information session in the third quarter of this year which will be advertised through letter box drops and an email to the database. Ms Wapler advised that the last update on the timeline for the project was in March therefore a new update on timings will be done in the coming weeks.

6. Mr Le Riche invited any questions from the group in regards to the investigation.

7. Mrs Ashton asked for clarification as to whether the Oakey court case which became public this week was health related or property related. Mr Le Riche replied that he will have to get back to Mrs Ashton on that question.

Action item: Mr Le Riche to follow up whether the court case was health or property related.

8. Mr Hatchman stated that there has been a media announcement on blood tests available for people in the immediate surrounds of military bases and questioned whether it was available for Amberley. Mr Le Riche replied that the Commonwealth Department of Health is responsible for the administration of the Voluntary Blood Testing Program and the only bases in Australia currently involved in the program are Tindal, Williamstown and Oakey. Mr Dainer added that there was a resident in the last meeting who raised concerns about the exclusion of Amberley and was directed to contact The Honourable Shayne Neumann on behalf of the residents in the community.

ITEM 6: BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

9. WGC DR Thompson advised he reviewed the ACWG Terms of Reference provided by Mr Behm at the last meeting and they turned out to be a draft version. The actual version was sent out with the previous minutes with the only change to the Terms of Reference being the addition of West Moreton Anglican College. Mr Behm asked whether there is a date for when the terms were reviewed on the published version. WGC DR Thompson advised that he reviewed the terms this year and will be able to provide a date for Mr Behm. Mr Hatchman added that the Rosewood Walloon Consultative Committee (RWCC) has been disbanded and should be removed from the memberships in the Terms of Reference. He also advised that brackets around the word residents in the Willowbank Area Residents Group (WAG) should also be removed.

Action item: WGC DR Thompson to update changes in the Terms of Reference.

10. WGC DR Thompson handed over to Mr Davies for the next item on the fire warning sign at the back gate. Mr Davies advised that he checked with the Fire Section in regard to concerns raised from Mr Behm that the warning sign was incorrect. Mr Davies was informed that the current fire warnings in the green area are what was advised to Fire Section. Mr Behm responded that the fire warning signs are under review as they are outdated and don't reflect an accurate depiction of the threat levels in the area. Mr Behm was also concerned about the fire risk of the grassy paddocks coming into winter and asked what is being done about it. Mr Davies advised that there are controlled burns being considered and there are controlled burns carried out routinely around the base.

11. Mr Davies then moved on to Mr Behm's next concern regarding the condition of the perimeter fence. Mr Davies advised that SPOTLESS has been working on the issues for quite some time now and the issues have now been rectified. Mr Behm added that he was disappointed that no one else noticed the damage when multiple workers drive past it every day. Mr Davies replied that there is more of an incentive by SPOTLESS now to drive around and carry out maintenance as required.

12. Mr Hatchman raised concerns over the safety of Behms Road coming out of the back gate. He advised that there is an optical illusion that the road is going to go straight but then deviates all of a sudden. It was advised that as the road is off base it would be a matter for the Council.

ITEM 7: AMBERLEY BASE UPDATE

13. WGC DR Thompson advised of the major exercise coming up in Amberley during July; TALISMAN SABRE. It will be happening for the whole month of July and involve all of the aircraft based at Amberley plus an American squadron as well as heavy lift aircraft. The flying window is from around 0900 h until 1900 h, so there is no night flying. There will also be some Army helicopters based here, however their routine is unknown at this point in time. Increased flying working up towards the exercise is expected which will include day and night flying in the next couple of weeks.

14. WGC DR Thompson mentioned the large wave of jets that took off early in the morning a couple of weeks ago for a Dawn Strike Exercise which was advertised in the paper and on Facebook. WGC DR Thompson noted this exercise was well received by the community due to the well-publicised notice given. Mr Hatchman thanked on behalf of the community for the Facebook post and mentioned there was a lot of good response from the public. He pointed out that Facebook was a good medium and should be used again in the future.

ITEM 8: NOISE COMPLAINTS

15. WGCDR Thompson stated that between mid-March and the beginning of June there has been 21 noise complaints. 11 of those were F18s, 7 of them C17, 2 unknown and 1 F111. Concerning, 6 of the complaints were made on ANZAC Day.

ITEM 9: AGENDA ITEMS

16. WGCDR Thompson invited Mr Hatchman to talk about the Amberley Boys Honour Stone. Mr Hatchman advised that due to the end of the ANZAC Day services at RAAF Base Amberley there are concerns regarding the Amberley Boys Honour Stone Memorial which gives recognition to those members who served and fell in the First and Second World Wars from the Amberley community. After numerous relocations around the base, the Memorial is now located in the Memorial Gardens. Mr Hatchman pushed to keep the Memorial in Amberley with the understanding that it would be available to descendants of those on the Stone and local community with interest to give recognition to the Stone on ANZAC Day and Armistice Day. WGCDR Thompson replied that due to the significance of the Memorial there should be no issue with having a dedicated function around the Stone either on, before or after ANZAC Day. The only problem with ANZAC Day is that due to there being no service in Amberley, Defence members participate in services elsewhere therefore military personnel support on ANZAC Day will be problematic. WGCDR Thompson advised that before or after ANZAC Day shouldn't be any issue as well as Armistice Day. Mr Dainer suggested that Armistice Day is probably the most suitable. He advised that the base traditionally has a formal commemorative service on that day and it would be a good opportunity to invite a small number of local residents. WGCDR Thompson replied that the only issue is we don't want what was happening with ANZAC Day with thousands of people attending. Mr Dainer responded that it wouldn't turn into that as Armistice Day isn't a public holiday therefore only those with a genuine interest would want to attend. WGCDR Thompson advised that he can work with the community organisations to organise a service on Armistice Day. Mr Dainer and Mr Hatchman both agreed that a service once a year on Armistice Day would suffice for those who have a connection to the Memorial to pay tribute. Mrs Ashton added that she knows someone who is related to a descendant on the Stone and they were very disappointed when they found out they couldn't pay tribute to the memorial on ANZAC Day.

17. Mr Hatchman nominated David Pahlke to join the ACWG. He put forward that Mr Pahlke is very active within local community groups and would be able to represent the Rosewood area which currently isn't being represented in the ACWG. There were no objections from the members and WGCDR Thompson approved for Mr Pahlke to join the ACWG.

18. Mr Hatchman recently came across some Amberley heritage; the headstones of Edwin and Martha Collett. Mr Hatchman advised that RAAF Amberley carries the name Amberley from the property Edwin and Martha established. Seeing as the RAAF will be celebrating 100 years in 2021, Mr Hatchman would like to contact the descendants of the Colletts and get Ipswich Council approval to design an historical plaque for their graves. SQNLDR Nott added that she is currently working on moving the Scar Tree (a tree with Aboriginal significance on the base) to the front of 36SQN and asked Mr Hatchman to share his research with her as it would be good to add some more Amberley history to the plaque for the tree.

Action item: Mr Hatchman to email SQNLDR Nott his research on Amberley history.

19. Mrs Ashton advised she wanted to discuss the utilisation of Defence land surrounding the base. There is a fire hazard due to the amount of vacant land around the base and Mrs Ashton has suggested on multiple occasions using the land for grazing. It would also assist in these difficult times of drought and Mrs Ashton advised that she has never had a response on what the next steps are for this to be approved. Mrs Ashton said she is grateful for everything that has been done with the baling operation but would also like to see the vacant land be utilised. She assured that the request for grazing is purely for off base land. Mr Davies said that he is happy to investigate, however it may take some time. Mrs Ashton replied that the farmers do not have much time and she would really appreciate some action to be taken.

Action item: Mr Davies to investigate whether it is possible to use vacant land for grazing and what the procedures are for the next step.

ITEM 10: COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE'S FEEDBACK

20. Mr Dawson advised that he is in support of the cattle grazing as it could help to cut back on the amount of kangaroos which is currently an ongoing issue.

21. Mr Hatchman advised on behalf of WAG that they will keep pushing for the Cunningham Highway upgrade and in conjunction they are concerned about the landfill application. It won't only affect the residential community but also impact noise and traffic. Mr Hatchman advised he has a meeting with the Minister of Department of Environment and Science in regard to these issues on 21 Jun 19.

22. Mr Hatchman advised they have had some odours throughout the community due to bio solids. He understands it's an acceptable practice however it is being done when the wind is going from the west to the east. On 8 and 9 May when spraying was being done, there were various complaints throughout the community of health issues. Mr Hatchman's wife was admitted to hospital after the event due to a rare virus linked to bio solids and an investigation is now being carried out by the Department of Health and Science for health hazards in relation to these bio solids being sprayed. Mr Hatchman will advise the group of the outcome.

23. Mrs Ashton reiterated the traffic issue to Mr Hatchman and that the Commonwealth should be upgrading the intersection especially if there are plans for development. Mrs Ashton also advised that the heavy vehicles have not been going through the back gate like they are supposed to. She also added she is disappointed about the Amberley ANZAC Services not going ahead anymore however she understands the security concerns.

24. Mr Behm advised that the night patrols are coming from the front of his property causing light to shine through his house and he requested again for the night patrol to come from the back. The 272 gates were open for half of May but are closed now and the 250 gates have been open all of May and are still open now. SQNLDR Nott acknowledged that Mr Behm has brought up these issues before and advised him that they do pass this information on.

25. Ms Lecinski commented that the West Moreton Anglican College is grateful for the great support they receive from Amberley.

26. Mr Dawson requested a letter of appreciation be sent to Don and Lola Hooper to thank them for their participation in the Committee.

Action item: WGCDR Thompson to send a letter of appreciation to Don and Lola Hooper on behalf of the group.

Action item: WGCDR Thompson to provide a list of common numbers for the group.

ITEM 12: NEXT MEETING

27. The next meeting for the ACWG will be held at 23SQN Headquarters Spurgeon Room on 27 Aug 19.

28. The meeting was officially closed at 1824 h.

M Thompson
WGCDR
Chairperson

Jul 19

M Davies
MR
Base Manager

Jul 19