



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

**Minutes of
Meeting**

23SQN/BP2112684

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

Attendees:

WGCDR M Thompson	RAAF AMB ABXO	Chairperson
Mr M Davies	RAAF AMB BM	
Ms C Parsons	Representing The Hon S Neumann, MP	
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 E Dawson	Dawson's Technical Services	
Mr T Dawson	Dawson's Technical Services	
Mr I Dainer	Willowbank Area Group - Vice President	
Mr D Hooper	Winston Glades Community Group	
Mrs L Hooper	Winston Glades Community Group	
Mr B Behm	Local Resident	
Mrs R Conroy	Local Resident	
Mr P Conroy	Local Resident	
Ms A Nutley	Local Resident	
Mr M Goddard	Local Resident	
Ms G Ashton	Local Resident	
CPL H Freeman	ADMIN 23SQN	Meeting Secretary

Apologies:

The Hon S Neumann, MP	Federal Member for Blair
Ms Jennifer Howard, MP	Member for Ipswich
SQNLDR Deanna Nott	Reserve Community Engagement Officer
Mr G Hatchman	Willowbank Area Group - President
Mr A Mullins	Local Resident
Mr G McLay	West Moreton Anglican College
Mrs L Ashton-Stewart	Local Resident

ITEM 1: OPENING

1. WGCDR Thompson opened the meeting at 1720h.

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

2. Nil

ITEM 4: CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES

3. Mr Hooper moved and Mr Dawson seconded that the previous Minutes be accepted, all in favour.

ITEM 5: PFAS INVESTIGATION PROJECT – PROGRESS UPDATE

4. Mr Le Riche advised that all aquatic biota sampling for the Investigation has now been completed, with the last round undertaken late in 2018. Some aquatic biota samples taken downstream of the project Investigation Area at Riverlink and Cribb Park in Ipswich were found to be above the 'safe food guidelines' set by the Food Standards Authority of Australia and New Zealand (FSANZ). Queensland Government received this data as per normal practice, and made the decision that the current precautionary fishing advice that applied to the Investigation Area should be expanded to include those downstream locations outside the Investigation Area. Defence are working with Ipswich City Council to update the signs that are currently installed at popular fishing locations on the Bremer River and Warrill Creek. The signs will be updated, provided to Council and replaced as soon as possible.
5. The project Investigation Area has been expanded to include approximately 325 additional properties in a particular section of the suburb of Leichhardt. This is as a result of soil testing undertaken at the public parks areas in the suburb, in an area that was once a golf course. As the golf course historically is likely to have been irrigated with water from the Bremer River, which is impacted by PFAS, the soil testing was undertaken to see if the PFAS had impacted the soil. The soil sample results from the parks areas showed levels that were below the guidelines for 'public open spaces', but above the guidelines for 'residential properties and gardens'. Therefore, Defence decided to investigate this residential area further to determine if PFAS is present in the soil of these private properties. This potential PFAS presence does not affect mains water in the area, but it may affect home grown produce and chicken eggs. The local population have been informed via a letterbox drop, and door knocking will commence this week to go through the Land and Water Use Survey.
6. Mr Le Riche invited any questions from the group about the Investigation.
7. Ms Ashton inquired whether fishing signs had been installed at the location she had recommended on Warrill Creek to Ms Wapler. Ms Wapler replied that additional signs will be erected at Warrill Creek, predominantly around the areas most frequented by fishers, and that she had provided information to Ipswich City Council about Ms Ashton's recommended location. The Council are responsible for installing the signs.
8. Ms Nutley inquired about whether there will be a blood testing program in Ipswich and who the decision maker in Defence is for this. Mr Le Riche replied that the Commonwealth Department of Health make the decisions about where blood testing is undertaken. Currently there are blood testing programs at Katherine (Tindal), Oakey and Williamtown. The reason these sites have blood testing programs is because the sources of drinking water there (whether ground or surface water) have been impacted by PFAS, and that is the main pathway for a Human Health Risk. Amberley does not have the issue of drinking water being impacted by PFAS, therefore, the Health Department have not recommended a blood testing program at Amberley. The Queensland Government Department of Health have received and assessed all data from the Amberley investigation and have not made any recommendations regarding blood testing.
9. Ms Nutley advised that she has requested blood testing for her children and has been refused by Defence. Ms Wapler advised Ms Nutley had not been refused by Defence, but had received advice from Defence in December 2018 in response to her query, that she was able to consult with the Department of Health PFAS hotline, and also her GP in order to gain information about blood testing for her family, which would assist her with deciding if she wanted to proceed with the tests.

10. Ms Nutley requested again to know the Defence decision maker regarding this matter, and Mr Dainer recommended that she approach her local member.

Action item: Ms Parsons will inquire through The Honourable Shayne Neumann, Federal Member for Blair on behalf of Ms Nutley.

11. Mr Behm inquired about why the old Amberley Golf Course was not included as a site in the Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) for PFAS testing, as he does not see it specified in the DSI report. Ms Glyde advised that the decision of what areas to test was informed by historical data as well as interviews with base staff, hydro-geological analysis and other technical assessments.

Action item: Ms Glyde is to ask the technical project team members about this area and the rationale for not including it in the DSI.

12. Ms Ashton inquired about heavy metal testing results from Warrill Creek and whether they have any bearing on the PFAS testing results. Ms Glyde advised that her project team is specifically tasked to assess the impacts of PFAS at Amberley and surrounding areas, and that other heavy metal tests are managed by a separate section within Defence. She also advised that the Defence Contamination Assessment and Remediation Branch (DCARM) conduct investigations and assessments for all types of contamination at Defence sites Australia wide, and they also receive all PFAS data, so they would be assessing contamination impacts per site holistically and making relevant decisions.

13. Ms Nutley inquired whether testing of town water is considered, and if there is a risk of PFAS impacted soil leaching PFAS into the town water pipes that run underground. Ms Wapler advised this is not currently a standard concern in PFAS Investigations, but she can approach the Urban Utilities providers to enquire about their water testing regimes with regard to PFAS.

Action item: Ms Wapler will make an enquiry to Urban Utilities regarding testing for PFAS.

ITEM 6: BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

14. Regarding the 'Terms of Reference for the ACWG' document. Mr Behm advised that he had a copy of version 3, whilst the one being used was still version 1. It has since been discovered that Mr Behm's was draft version 0.3. The published document was version 1.

Action item: WGCDR Thompson to send out the Terms of Reference with the minute of the meeting

15. As per paragraphs 54-56 of the previous Minutes, there was concern over Amberley signing off on the Willowbank landfill proposal, despite the massive impact it would have on the base. Mr Davies advised that after undertaking an investigation into this matter he could find no evidence that anyone in Defence had made comments to support the Willowbank Landfill Proposal.

16. As per paragraph 33 of the previous Minutes, Mr Behm expressed concern over the use of the gravel road by AFSEC, as the findings have noted that PFAS can spread via dust. Mr Davies advised that AFSEC are required to use the road in order to carry out random boundary inspections to comply with Defence security standards. Unfortunately there is currently no funding available to seal the road.

17. Mr Behm requested if the AFSEC vehicles could patrol in a different direction, as the headlights and floodlights cause major disruption when they shine into his home.

Action Item: Mr Davies will ask AFSEC if they can conduct their evening patrols in the opposite direction.

18. As per para 43 of the previous meeting, Mr Behm advised that the fire warning sign at the back gate has been changing to the green when it possibly should be in the red.

Action Item: Mr Davies will follow this up with Fire Section.

ITEM 7: AMBERLEY BASE UPDATE

19. WGCDR Thompson advised that 35SQN is continuing its relocation from Richmond to Amberley with ten C-27 aircraft and approximately 200 personnel.

20. There has been a lot of recent flying at Amberley after the end of the reduced activity period, due to pilot requalification, Townsville flood relief support, and the current exercise involving USAF refuelling. Exercise TALISMAN SABRE will occur in July involving USAF jets, and there will be an Air Show at Amberley in 2021 for the 100 Year RAAF Anniversary.

ITEM 8: NOISE COMPLAINTS

21. WGCDR Thompson advised that there have been 45 noise complaints between Nov 18 and Mar 19, which is higher than normal. The complaints have been mainly from the local Amberley area, and range in times between 0900h to around midnight. There has been some night flying recently for pilot requalification, which may have prompted some of the complaints. There have been 25 complaints about C-17s, 12 about the F/A-18s, and nine about general aircraft.

22. The contact number for noise complaints is AMB ABCP, on 07 5361 2888. The contact number for the front gate is 07 5361 2174. The general Defence line (switchboard) is 1300 333 362.

ITEM 9: AGENDA ITEMS RAISED

23. Mr Behm advised that he has observed severe damage to the perimeter fence caused by kangaroos, and he has observed the gate to be open a few times instead of closed and locked.

Action Item: Mr Davies is to contact EMOS to follow this up.

24. Mr E Dawson has agreed to lay a wreath with WGCDR Thompson on behalf of the Amberley Consultative Working Group at the RAAF Amberley Dawn Service on ANZAC Day.

ITEM 10: COMMUNITY FEEDBACK

25. Mr Dainer reiterated Mr Hatchman's suggestion that locals could be notified of any major base activities or flying operations via a notice in the local newspaper, so that local community groups can disseminate to their members as required.

26. Willowbank Area Group (WAG) request base support for their campaign to halt the proposed landfilling at the Ebenezer and Jeebropilly sites. Mr Dainer advised the following information and new developments regarding this:
- a. The proponents have submitted their development applications to the Council, the decision maker is the Interim Administrator Mr Greg Chemello. It has been proposed that the number of dump trucks be increased to 780 per day, which equates to about one truck per minute (in a 12 hour period) transiting through the base intersection. WAG seek base support, from the perspective of the major disturbance to the traffic flow to and from the base, and the impact on the residents living in close proximity to the base.
 - b. A major waste disposal company have bought the Ebenezer mining site on Coopers Road, however they have advised that they have no immediate plans to do anything at this stage. Mining operations at Ebenezer ceased a few years ago, however the voids are filled with water and contaminants, and the voids themselves are unstable and unsafe.
 - c. The Jeebropilly mines are still operating, however they are supposed to be in rehabilitation (wind down) phase. They have been consulting with the community since 2017 regarding their shutdown schedule which would see mining cease in 2019. However, as they have not yet received approval to commence mining at Acland stage 3 (near Oakey), they are still receiving product from the Willowbank Area mines. At the same time as New Hope Coal were discussing the rehabilitation of the mine sites with Willowbank Area residents, they were also in negotiations to sell the land with the view of it becoming landfill. There is also the issue of the dewatering process so they can reclaim valuable finds at the bottom of the voids.
 - d. The mining operators have an environmental authority over their approval to operate, and they are bound by certain conditions applying to the ceasing of mining operations. This is overseen by the Department of Environmental Science. The proponents are proposing to amend these authorities, to allow them to use the voids as landfill rather than rehabilitate them.
27. In light of the major traffic accident on 6 Mar 19 which saw the flow of traffic to the base backed up significantly more than usual, WAG continue to make their case for the highway to be upgraded, and appreciate the support of Defence in making this happen.
28. There is a historical marker post at the former Amberley School which WAG are seeking to preserve. The photograph was handed to Mr Davies.
29. WAG will be attending a Community Meeting with the Administrator Mr Chemello within the next few weeks and will raise all of the above concerns.
30. Mr E Dawson was recently a part of an Exercise. He stated that he was impressed by the exceptional professionalism of all the people and units involved, in particular 23SQN, and that it was a great credit to the Defence Force as a whole.
31. Ms Ashton stated that she observed that the rerouting of the traffic on the Heritage Centre Open Day was well arranged and handled. She also thanks Defence for the hay baling operation.

ITEM 11: OTHER BUSINESS

32. Nil

ITEM 12: NEXT MEETING

33. The next meeting for the ACWG will be held at 23SQN Headquarters Spurgeon Room on 11 Jun 19.

34. The meeting was officially closed at 1820h.

M Thompson
WGCDR
Chairperson

May 19

M Davies
MR
Base Manager

May 19