



# ROYAL AUSTRALIAN AIR FORCE

No 23 (City of Brisbane) Squadron

## Minutes of Meeting

23SQN/BP1214789

### MINUTES OF THE 39<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE AMBERLEY CONSULTATIVE WORKING GROUP (ACWG), HELD AT RAAF BASE AMBERLEY, 23 SQUADRON ON 27 NOV 18

#### Attendees:

WGCDR M Thompson	RAAF AMB ABXO	Chairperson
SQNLDR D Nott	RES Community Engagement Officer	
Mr M Davies	RAAF AMB BM	
Ms L Wapler	PFAS Investigation & Management Branch	
Ms V Glyde	PFAS Investigation & Management Branch	
Mr J Madden, MP	Member for Ipswich West	
Mr J Krause, MP	Member for Scenic Rim	
Ms C Parsons	Representing The Hon S Neumann, MP - Federal	
	Member for Blair	
Mr G Hatchman	Willowbank Area Group - President	
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	
Mr P Conroy	Local Resident	
Mrs R Conroy	Local Resident	
Mr M Goddard	Local Resident	
Mr E Dawson	Dawson's Technical Services	
Mrs G Ashton	Local Resident	
LACW S McKnoulty	23SQN ABCP	Meeting Secretary

#### Apologies:

The Hon S Neumann, MP	Federal Member for Blair
Ms J Howard, MP	Member for Ipswich
Mr G McLay	West Moreton Anglican College
Mrs L Ashton-Stewart	Local Resident

#### ITEM 1: OPENING

1. The ACWG meeting opened at 1709 h. WGCDR Mark Thompson welcomed all present.
2. WGCDR Thompson provided a brief summary of his experiences in the Defence Force. He fully supports the ACWG Committee and is very happy to be in attendance today.
3. Mr Mark Davies provided a brief summary of his experiences as a BSM in Cairns and his current position as BM at RAAF Base Amberley.

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

4. WGCDR Thompson carried out a review of apologies received as detailed in the meeting agenda. The Interim Administrator for Ipswich City Council advised they are doing a re-evaluation and their recommendations are that they are going to withdraw as members of the ACWG Committee in the interim until the elections in 2020. Depending on the outcome of the election they may re-join the Committee.
5. Ms Glenys Ashton advised of Mrs L Ashton-Stewart's apologies.

## **ITEM 4: CONFIRMATION OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING'S MINUTES**

6. All attendees acknowledged that they had received and read the previous meeting's minutes.
7. WGCDR Thompson advised that the "For Action" from the previous meeting - "the previous CO WGCDR Dyke to review the original Terms of Reference" - has not been actioned and WGCDR Thompson has put it on his list to do.
8. Mr George Hatchman asked if permission had been actioned for Cr Pahlke of Division 10 to join this committee.
9. WGCDR Thompson advised he would raise this request for Cr Pahlke with Amberley Senior Australian Defence Force Officer (SADFO).

## **ITEM 5: PFAS INVESTIGATION PROJECT – PROGRESS UPDATE**

10. The PFAS team have been very busy since the previous update in Aug 18, preparing the Detailed Site Investigation Report which was publicly released on 14 Nov 18 at the Community Information Session.
11. Preliminary findings for the Human Health Risk Assessment were presented at the Community Information Session to inform the local residents. The full Human Health Risk Assessment Report will be released in 2019.
12. The Community Information Session went really well, with approximately 30 members of the community attending. Members of the Queensland Government and Ipswich City Council representatives were there to support and assist with questions. Feedback given was that the Session was informative and people felt their questions were answered. The ABC interviewed the Defence spokesperson, Mr Chris Birrer.
13. Defence responded to a Fairfax Media query, a list of 10 questions. The resulting Brisbane Times article on 26 Nov 18 was not quite an accurate reflection of the information provided. The full Defence media response is available on the Defence PFAS website under the media section.
14. The Detailed Site Investigation (DSI) report is available on the Defence PFAS Amberley Investigation website as a downloadable PDF, as is the DSI fact sheet distributed at today's meeting.

15. The DSI fact sheet outlines key findings, eg. Warrill Creek and the Bremer River are impacted with PFAS downstream but not upstream. Ground water concentration levels are lower than surface water. PFAS concentrations in soil are highest to the East and to the South of the Base. Water use surveys have not found anyone drinking surface water or ground water. The community surrounding the PFAS investigation site are either consuming rainwater or mains water, which forms part of the risk assessment.

16. The Human Health Risk Assessment fact sheet includes a map denoting areas around the Base identified in terms of exposure, and a table clarifies preliminary findings associated with each area. Some exposure findings around Amberley include direct contact with sediment, surface and ground water and soil have been found to be low and acceptable. Fruit and vegetable consumption is low and acceptable in all areas. For the Bremer River and Warrill Creek, advice given earlier this year by Queensland Health to avoid consumption of fish caught in the waterways remains in place. More sampling is being done on edible fish and the Queensland Government will analyse that data to decide whether that advice should change. Some areas around the base are advised to limit consumption of eggs from homegrown chickens to one egg a day, and to not eat the homegrown chickens. It is important to understand, as there is no proven health impact about consumption of PFAS, all of the above is precautionary advice at this stage.

17. Mr Conroy asked if any more results have been found from testing of water tanks and the roofs of carports (that rainwater in the tank is captured from). Ms Wapler advised these tests are still ongoing, results have come in and the team are currently analysing the results. The recommendation provided (to the owners of the tanks) not to drink the tank water remains in place until the analysis is complete. The rainwater tank issue is unusual for only one particular property and it is not a common finding in any other rainwater tanks.

18. Mr Hatchman advised his rainwater tanks supporting his reticulated water are colour bond, lined with a polyurethane. He wondered if that could generate PFAS. Ms Wapler advised it could be a combination of factors, including dust, sediments, or an additive that was added to the water.

19. Mr Behm asked if you cannot eat the eggs from the chickens, can you eat the chickens. Ms Wapler advised it would be a similar scenario as chickens and eggs have shown signs of PFAS.

20. Mr Hooper advised that the eggs are worse than the chickens due to the chickens excreting the PFAS in six weeks, mainly in the yolks of the eggs. Mr Hooper advised he has just read the 2017 AMA recommendations on PFAS about children and the report states that doing blood tests on children is not viable as it tells you they have been in contact with PFAS and nothing else. The advice given for conducting blood tests on children is that they would have to be seen by a GP or Clinic that are aware of the implications of PFAS and then the children would still have to be tested yearly up to the age of nine, and then there would be testings done on their thyroid and cholesterol levels. Ms Wapler confirmed what Mr Hooper said about the fact that at this stage there is no diagnostic capability associated with PFAS.

21. Mr Behm asked what CSR stands for in the report? Mr Behm also advised the maps do not address the Golf Links area, which he says was irrigated with Warrill Creek water 24/7, and black soil was carted away, which is not mentioned. Ms Glyde advised CSR is a Queensland Government register, which stands for Contaminated Site Register, and she would follow up with why the Golf Links area was not addressed.

22. Mrs Conroy asked about the second hand gravel that's used at their place and around the corner from the base, and the carpark that was dug up and taken to the base. Will this be tested as it was the first of the area that has been removed and is it possible to get PFAS from

the dust that was made with the removal? Ms Glyde advised as that is a redevelopment activity on the base, she is not aware of the detail, but could follow up with the Capital Facilities and Infrastructure (CFI) representative for an answer.

23. Mr Madden queried the testing of humans and whether that was part of the investigation. Ms Glyde advised Defence has participated with the Department of Health for voluntary blood testing for people in Tindal, Williamtown and Oakey, only because of the higher incidence of people drinking contaminated water that is the main pathway for exposure. In Amberley, as the finding indicate that no one is consuming contaminated water, there has been no identified need to proceed with the option of blood testing. Mr Madden asked if blood tests would test the hypothesis, as that is all it is. Ms Glyde advised that people can ask their own GP for a blood test as per current Queensland Health advice, however there is no diagnostic ability for GPs for any levels of PFAS found in the blood. There is only the ability to track the measurements at a point in time.

24. Defence share all data with the Queensland Government. If Queensland Health identify a need to undertake further testing of any kind, then Defence will assist with that testing. All advice given on PFAS currently is precautionary as there are still no proven health effects from consuming PFAS.

25. Ms Ashton asked the status of the testing of people near other bases and what results have they found? Ms Wapler advised that the Australian University is undertaking an epidemiological study and a report released closer to the end of the year with the results so far.

26. The Defence PFAS website has links to all 29 investigation sites Australia wide, so people can go there to read fact sheets, reports, and results for selected sites of interest.

27. Mr Hooper advised that the results from around the world done so far, there are no known birth defects in rats, mice and rabbits. There have been some abnormalities detected in the animals but that is above the average consumption of PFAS. There have been findings in humans where it affects both testosterone and oestrogen, where it does not affect fertility but delays fertility. It also increases cholesterol and it does affect the thyroid. It has also been found that it is associated with low birth rates. These results were published at the end of 2017. These results are based on systematic results from continual testing on people affected by PFAS.

28. Ms Wapler advised a Commonwealth Government Health Task Force report released in April 2018, is publicly available on the web. The report summarises studies from around the world, regarding effects on people with PFAS levels in their blood. Mr Hatchman asked if there are reports of health deterioration of people in the other bases that have higher saturation levels, and if this information being correlated with results of findings in Amberley? Ms Glyde advised she is unaware of deterioration of health in people associated with the PFAS investigations, but notes Defence acknowledges that stress and anxiety are common from the uncertainties of potential of health effects. Counselling is being provided for these residents. The aim of these investigations is for Defence to find out what and where the source of PFAS is on their properties, how it is moving off the base, and where to. Then the risk assessments determine who or what might be exposed to the PFAS. Then Defence take action to manage the sources in soil and water, aiming to prevent further PFAS migrating off the bases.

29. Ongoing monitoring of the water and soil for the following five, ten or fifty years will measure the effectiveness of those management actions, until the PFAS migration has reduced.

30. Mr Hatchman asked how the Amberley Book is going, Ms Glyde advised it is progressing and she has seen proofs of the cover and the page layout. It is a Heritage Values book that Ms Glyde has been involved with over the past two years and hopefully it will be released before Christmas. Note, this book is not connected in any way to the PFAS investigation.

31. **For Action:** The PFAS Team will follow up on queries regarding a carport roof flowing into a rain water tank, the movement of soil and gravel near the runway, and why the Golf Links area was not included as an affected area in the investigation.

## **ITEM 6: BUSINESS ARISING FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

### **Carry-over of Review of original ACWG Terms of Reference**

32. WGCdr Thompson advised the carry-over of Review of original ACWG Terms of Reference has already been discussed at the beginning of the meeting. WGCdr Thompson will now hand over to Mr Davies to talk about the spraying of weeds.

### **Spraying of Weeds**

33. Mr Behm was asked to provide the background of his queries in relation to the spraying of the weeds. Mr Behm advised that after the last meeting a contractor came along the gravel road spraying along the road. He was unsure what the contractor was spraying for as he was spraying the gravel. This was done by a ute with a blue tank on the back with no insignia on it on a Monday. Then on the Tuesday, Defence contractors went around the fences which is understandable, but it rained in the afternoon which would have washed all the spray away and then on Wednesday the contractors came around and mowed the lot. This area has been a problem since the gravel track was laid. Mr Behm is unsure how many times he has rung the Base Command Post to report the people that are racing down the gravel track in the afternoons and nights and blowing the dust all over their properties, and on the findings it does state that PFAS is spread by dust. When Mr Behm rang the Command Post the Duty Member answered who was very vacant and wouldn't give his name to Mr Behm except that he was the Duty Member. Twenty minutes later the same car was racing along the gravel road again. Signs are put up, but obviously these people cannot read, and it is worse on Saturday and Sundays. It is the Defence Security Police not MSS that are the problem racing down the road continuously.

34. Ms Ashton followed up Mr Behm's complaints about the weeds, as the fire weeds and the Mother of Millions are the two toxic weeds to the cattle. Ms Ashton hand picks the fire weed herself, but it is also on the Defence side. The original Mother of Millions weed problem originated from the Defence side and has not been able to get rid of them for the last twenty or so years. In the winter it dies off, but as soon as it rains it just comes up in the thousands. Ms Ashton would appreciate if Defence can get on top of this.

35. SQNLDR Nott advised that this was discussed about a year ago in the Community Sessions and the spreading of the weeds is causing a lot of concern which has come up on numerous occasions and has been raised. Mr Davies has spoken to the Spotless Environment officer to get an understanding of how they rotate, as it is a contract, and will ask the Spotless Environment officer to be more vigilant and take notice of the cyclic season of the specific weeds mentioned, and if spraying is going to occur, do not mow the next day, allow for the spray to kill the weeds prior to mowing.

36. Mrs Conroy advised it is worse since Spotless took over from SERCO. SERCO was a much better contractor and they did things differently but efficiently. SQNLDR Nott advised there are many issues with these contractual arrangements with the bigger firms as discussed which is quite challenging for Mr Davies and others to manage.

37. Mr Behm added that the biggest carrier of the weeds are the kangaroos. When they climb under the fence, they shake all the seeds off and hence it spreads further. Mr Davies agreed and advised they are currently undertaking an assessment on management of the kangaroos and the weeds.

38. Mr Behm and Mrs Conroy added that there has been a lot of shooting going on lately, and as it is Defence land they are stuck with who to complain to. When they ring Defence, Defence say it is not their problem, and there is no point ringing the Police as they will then say it is Defence land. It is a catch 22, but the shooting needs to stop. The members of the community used to be given direct phone numbers they could ring years ago, but now all they can ring is the ABCP which is after hours and they get a Duty Member. The residents would like if possible to get a point of contact that they were told they were going to get a few meetings ago, and it still hasn't happened. WGCDR Thompson advised that he is more than happy to give them his business card so they can call him with any issues.

39. **Recommendation.** Mr Behm recommended that Defence let the gravel road be left to grow grass over it again, hence it will stop the contractors racing up and down there spreading the dust and flicking the stones into their properties.

40. **Action.** Mr Davies to speak to the Spotless Environmental officers with regards to the contractual issues and being vigilant with the cyclic season of the weeds, and to let the weeds die after spraying before mowing.

### **Hay Baling**

41. Mr Davies acknowledged and thanked everyone for his or her patience with the hay baling. This was an issue before WGCDR Thompson and Mr Davies started in their positions on the Base. Unfortunately, the hay baling has been a long process due to Defence's engagement with Bio Security Queensland on the weed issue and the legal side of things where Defence has been waiting to hear back from the Defence Legal Team in regards to licensing.

42. There was an advertisement in Saturday's paper calling for interested parties to cut and bale the hay in certain areas along the Cunningham Highway. The tender closes at close of business on 29 Nov 18. Mr Davies will be contacting the interested parties, and alongside representatives from JLL and Defence's Environmental Team, there will be a meeting on 3 Dec 18. The focus of the meeting is to draw interested parties to the conditions of the license, which will be issued for a short term of twenty-eight days. The people who are interested in the licenses are to demonstrate, that as part of the licensing conditions placed on Defence from Bio Security Queensland, they are required to follow the in-depth process to prevent the spreading of the weeds.

### **Fire Warning Signs and Dennis Street Sign**

43. Mr Davies added that the fire warning signs are in place on Dennis Street and at the front gate. Mr Behm advised that the fire warning sign at the back gate keeps falling back to the green when it is supposed to be in the red. Mr Davies advised he will speak to the contractors about checking for a loose nut and bolt, which may be the cause of it not staying in place.

## **ITEM 7: AMBERLEY BASE UPDATE**

### **Base Works**

44. WGCDR Thompson advised that the redevelopment works are continuing, expected time for the majority of works to be completed by the 2019-20 timeframe. The focus for 2019 will be the airfield with the new inground fuel line being installed at the central apron and the new C27 Spartan Apron for 35SQN.

45. 35SQN's arrival has been delayed. They were due to arrive Nov/Dec 18 but are now not arriving until Jan 19. There is already one Spartan here and there are nine due to arrive early Jan 19. With the arrival of 35SQN there will be two hundred extra personnel attached to the Squadron.

46. Mr Conroy asked if the Tower was operational as yet. WGCDR Thompson advised that the Tower is a joint services project with Air Services Australia and is now estimated to be completed by 2023.

47. Mr Davies advised that the base is now at a critical point where the investment in the infrastructure will reach its own cyclic arrangements where there will always be redevelopments here of a significant size. The works that have been completed so far have increased the personnel on the Base, which has cascading effects.

48. Mr Hatchman brought an original letter from the 1990s advising that RAAF Amberley will become the super base and it has happened.

49. WGCDR Thompson advised that at this stage there are approximately six thousand personnel on base and at least nine thousand people come through the gates each day.

## **ITEM 8: NOISE COMPLAINTS**

50. WGCDR Thompson advised there have been a total of 23 noise complaints since the last ACWG meeting, four complaints were received from the same person and a few of them were in regards to Riverfire. There was a positive one that advised three jets flying over Kingaroy was awesome.

51. Mr Hooper advised that the C-17s flying overhead now are involved in relief of major events overseas and is a big thing to a lot of people. The C-17s are providing a great service.

52. SQNLDR Nott advised that the new RAAF Amberley brochure is being revised for 2019 and the photo that was chosen was that of a C-17, with aids to take overseas.

53. Mr Dainer advised that the parachuting exercise the C-17s were involved in recently was a major fundraiser for Legacy.

## **ITEM 9: AGENDA ITEMS RAISED**

### **Willowbank Landfill Proposals**

54. Mr Dainer requested that everyone look at the centrefold in the PFAS document, where the exposed dirt is shown, this is the Jeebropilly Mine Site. Lantrak (a waste disposal company) has recently lodged an application to fill that hole with 30 million tonnes of rubbish at a rate of one million tonnes each year for the next thirty years. The local residents at

Willowbank are located approximately seven hundred and fifty metres from the boundary of the mine site. The residents have been given until 10 Dec 18 to log their submissions with the Ipswich City Council to object to the application. If the application is approved this will stigmatise Willowbank. Lantrak have estimated in their application that there will be an additional 180 (360 both ways) dump trucks per day moving through the current RAAF Amberley intersection which works out to one dump truck every three minutes and will have a major impact on personnel getting onto base as well as affecting the local residents. Mr Dainer was surprised to hear that the Base had already signed off on this application as they don't have any objections to this happening, which has surprised the local residents.

55. Mr Dainer would appreciate if the Defence could give clarity as to having no objections to this application. As previously mentioned the impact it will have to the local residents and the Base will be significant.

56. Mr Dainer asked Mr Davies if he could conduct some investigations into who signed off on behalf of the Base.

57. Mr Hatchman added that there is no proposal to use Acland voids near Oakey as a dump site by utilising the empty coal wagons returning from the Port of Brisbane, to carry waste for disposal to Acland as the existing PFAS problem in that area has already caused the Government embarrassment through legacy contamination. Using Willowbank voids for a waste dump could possibly expose Amberley to similar contamination through leeching from the proposed dump site.

58. Mr Hatchman advised that when the first explorers came, the road that goes past 23SQN was called Toowoomba Road and the rains and the peripherals used to wash down into mine sites as the area used to be swampland. Back in 1940-41 this area was filled up with three to four metres to elevate it above flood level. Mr Hatchman advised the reason he is mentioning the history of the Base is that the Jeebropilly Site occupies the north eastern side of the water reserve and when it rains the water flows through the Base. The whole area was undermined, and if rubbish is put there, any water penetrating from the mine site is going to find its way into the creek system. In fifty to one hundred years from now, if the dump site goes ahead there may be the same situation then as there is now with the PFAS contaminations. No one can be sure of what undertakings the future is going to bring.

### **Co-Naming of Southern Amberley Road as an Avenue of Honour**

59. Mr Dainer added on a lighter note that he is a member of the Joint Ipswich ANZAC Memorial Committee and at 1000h on 13 Dec 18 there will be an event at the main gate to co-name the Southern Amberley Road as an Avenue of Honour. This has been a joint project with the Ipswich City Council, the State Government and the Base. The Chaplains will conduct a short dedication ceremony and the local residents and ex-service communities have been invited to attend. The Commanding Officer will also be speaking at this ceremony, and everyone here is invited to attend this event with a morning tea at the Amberley Bowls Club. The Queensland Times has also been advised.

### **Water Quality Testing Results for Warrill Creek and Bremer River**

60. Mr Behm advised that the PFAS meeting he attended that was held by Mr Matt Clarke, that there was ongoing testing of the Warrill Creek, but none of these results have been shown in the Minutes as per Mr Behm's request. Mr Behm advised that the results of the Bremer River tests are shown in the Minutes but why isn't Warrill Creek? Warrill Creek is also one of the main waterways in the vicinity of the Base, and Mr Behm requested again if the results of Warrill Creek please be input into the Minutes.

61. Mr Davies advised he will chase up the reasoning as to why the testings of Warrill Creek aren't in the Minutes as per Mr Behm's request.

### **Buffer Zone – the Fire Risk around the Base**

62. Mr Behm asked if there is anything being done about the hay being cut and baled around the buffer zone at the Three Mile Bridge? Mr Behm is concerned that if there were a fire, by the time the RAAF Fire Services attended, the fire would already be spreading to an extent where it would reach the properties, especially if there are strong winds. Mr Behm's other concern if there was to be a fire over the weekend, the back gates shut at 1900h Saturday nights and don't reopen again until 0500h on Monday morning, which would hinder the Fire Services getting to the fire.

63. Mr Davies advised that they have just completed their Annual Bush Fire Management plan for the area and have a couple of items still that are to be finalised by Spotless as they are contracted to manage the cutting of the grass.

64. Mr Davies advised that Defence has had to complete a risk assessment on all of the areas. The reason they came up with the area they did is that it provided the best options on a range of issues, including security, environmental management, safety and the geography of the land.

### **Block 157 Gates**

65. Mrs Conroy asked if Block 157 next to her property could please have the gates shut and locked to avoid unauthorised entry of people. The gates used to be locked, but are now no longer locked and there have been no chains on the gate for the last three months.

### **Heritage Museum Traffic**

66. Mrs Ashton advised that the last two times that the Heritage Centre was opened to the public it caused massive traffic congestion all the way back to the OZ Fuel Station. This is dangerous and Mrs Ashton has trouble trying to get in and out of her property. Whilst the traffic is at a halt and waiting to move, there are the impatient cars and also trucks including trucks identified as having "Explosive Ordnance on board" that are flying up the other side of Southern Amberley Road into oncoming traffic. Mrs Ashton loves the Heritage Centre and all the work the personnel do there, and appreciates that the visitors have to be signed in, but is it possible to utilise the two carparks that are either side of the barrier and the paddock to do the license checks to get the traffic off the Highway? Also could the other gates be utilised to minimise the traffic?

67. Mr Davies advised there will be a meeting next week to look at other avenues with the Local Police Inspector, looking at utilising the back gate. Unfortunately it is a difficult situation to manage as the RAAF does not control the road systems and are looking at a couple of options to minimise the traffic. At this stage there are plans for redevelopments involving the Heritage Centre but that won't be in effect for at least five to six years. Mr Davies appreciates this will be an ongoing agenda and the residents will be briefed at each meeting of the developments.

68. Mr Hatchman advised that back in the 1990s when they were preparing to open the Heritage Centre to the public, they were actually looking at the Amberley Homestead site, but this is now the land that Jeebropilly wish to make into landfill.

### **Discussion about hay for drought-stricken local farmers**

69. Mrs Ashton has a question arising from who the recipients will be from the cutting and baling of the hay on Defence property. Mrs Ashton said it is really disheartening for the local graziers whilst the drought is on at the moment, as the cattle look across at the Commonwealth land where there is feed for them and they are unable to utilise it for agistments. When Mrs Ashton originally brought up this agenda item, it was to see how they could lower the risk of fire, cost saving to Defence for maintaining the land. Mrs Ashton stressed that all neighbours were very forgiving and accommodating to the Base and thought that Defence would gift them the hay and it hasn't turned out that way. Mrs Ashton indicated that farmers are having difficulties feeding their animals due to drought conditions, and said how disappointed she is with the environmental decision that Defence still has not come up with in terms of making a decision within the last three months. Mrs Ashton believes that biosecurity rulings that have come through on the spread of weeds is disappointing as they have the same weeds that are on Defence land, and in all honesty she thought that Defence would support all of their local neighbours. There would also be no biosecurity rulings involved with transferring the hay over the fence to the local neighbours due to having the same weeds as what it would be shipping it out elsewhere. Mrs Ashton added that she realises these decisions have come from the previous Chair people, but just would like some answers.

70. Mr Davies advised they will be focusing on the recipients in the drought affected areas. There has been similar incidences used for Defence land in the last couple of months. In the event of the interested groups not agreeing on who should be able to cut and bale the hay based on the highest needs and based on a ballot system for the recipients, what Defence endeavours to do is to engage with the interested parties and the framework around that. These are the conditions for the interested people. Defence would seek advice from the group on how they think the best way is to disseminate the cutting and baling of the hay. The decision is to be one of fair and equal distribution and the advice from the property people and as to why Defence has put a licensing document in place is from Defence Legal. Hopefully by Monday there will be more clarity from the meeting as to what the arrangements will be. There was an advertisement placed seeking persons of interest for the hay baling, that Mr Davies will be in contact with. It was also the Minister for Defence that signed off on these instructions as there are a lot of procedures and protocols that have to be met.

71. SQNLDR Nott suggested a copy of the advertisement be distributed to the residents in this meeting and Lyn can send the PDF out to the residents. SQNLDR Nott understands that where Mrs Ashton is new to all of these requests and understands why Mrs Ashton is asking these questions and why she is concerned that the residents haven't been kept in the loop from the former Chair people. SQNLDR Nott advised that in the last meeting Mrs Ashton raised the question of the potential of the hay baling going to the local farmers to help them, who benefits from the hay cutting and baling, and the residents in the previous minutes were told that they would be kept up to date of Defence's decision. Unfortunately there was a lot of formal processes and procedures and WGCDCR Thompson and Mr Davies are fresh to all of this. SQNLDR Nott also added that perception is a reality, and if Defence are perceived as giving to one and not the other, it is not a good outcome. SQNLDR Nott advised she will work with Mr Davies and get back to the attendees of the meeting.

72. Mr Behm asked with regards to Defence having its own Redevelopment Officer. Why can't these decisions go through him to keep it in house?

73. Mr Davies advised Mr Behm that the question is good and the issue around any of these decisions is that Defence is seen as acting fair and impartial and whatever benefit people may get is under a legal frame, hence the requirement to issue a license. If something goes wrong it could reflect very badly on Defence and Defence is indemnified if there is an accident or something goes wrong.

### **ITEM 11: OTHER BUSINESS**

74. Mr Hatchman advised when the base removed the kangaroos some time ago some of them migrated to Hansen's Farm and the Willowbank area. The question was asked of the local council if they could put up a kangaroo sign in the area, but they advised they did not recognise it as a kangaroo area. Mr Hatchman asked if at all possible, could Defence put a word into the Council advising of the kangaroo population in the area.

75. Mr Davies advised they are currently working with the environmental contractors in how to manage the kangaroo population and are looking at ways to better manage it. This is a major industry and there are plenty of agencies involved with this, which is highly regulated and highly controlled. For example, in the case of moving a native vertebrae animal from the Base, it has to go before a Parliamentary Committee.

76. Mr Hatchman advised that all the work he has done for the community through Defence has been honoured by naming a Bush Reserve after him and also given a commentary of the contingency of his work with Defence and community work.

77. Mr Krause added that the lobbying for funding from the State Government for the Cunningham Highway continues.

78. Mr Behm wished everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

79. WGCDCR Thompson advised that he will be at the next meeting in three months time and wished everyone a very Merry Christmas.

### **ITEM 12: NEXT MEETING**

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

81. The meeting was officially closed at 1903h.

**M Thompson**  
WGCDCR  
Chairperson

Feb 19

**M Davies**  
MR  
Base Manager

Feb 19