



# BROOKLYN COMMUNITY REPRESENTATIVE GROUP

*OUR PURPOSE: To provide an update on progress towards resolution of dust, noise and odour issues.*

## NOVEMBER 2016 MEETING SNAPSHOTS

**We were fortunate to have Hon Wade Noonan MP (Member for Williamstown) and Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP (Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change and Minister for Suburban Development) at the meeting to hear concerns from the community regarding Brooklyn.**



### Community Input

Three members of the community provided first-hand accounts of the continued impacts from noise, dust and odour were having on those who live and work in the Brooklyn area.

**Carmen Largaiolli** is a second-generation local resident whose family has lived in the area for over 60 years. Her reflections and insights were in summary:

- Disappointment that some businesses have been reluctant partners, while others blatantly disregard the law.
- The burden of proof has been an overwhelming hurdle, for both the community and authorities, and progress has been slowed by litigation and lengthy court cases.
- Community health and wellbeing has not been given sufficient focus and planning legislation is given priority (a good example of this is existing use rights and the protection this provides to polluters).
- The pollution is still ever-present – dust, odour and noise and the community is exhausted - many can't be bothered reporting issues to the authorities any longer.



**Brian Long**, local resident, conducted a survey within the residential area in Brooklyn. He randomly selected sixteen homes and (in summary) learned:

- All the residents are affected by the dust and odours.
- All are disillusioned with the progress and believe that more should be done.
- All believe that the blame lies with the responsible authorities – EPA, councils and State government should be doing more to support the community and improve the amenity of the area.
- Everyone would like to see the businesses comply with modern day standards and conditions – or simply get out. These conditions should be enforced.

### Brooklyn & surrounding suburbs Oct 2016



**Heather Humphreys** has lived opposite the stockpiles in Brooklyn for twelve years and spoke of the impacts that dust is having on her personally. In summary:

- Health impacts particularly respiratory from the dust from September to November.
- Lifestyle impacts as residents should stay inside and keep windows closed from dust and odour.
- Damage to houses, windows and cars from dust which damages the duco on cars, ruins guttering and increases need to clean to protect assets from dust damage.
- Noise, vibrations, dust and fumes beginning at 3am from surrounding truck depots beginning their daily runs, and noise from trucks speeding along Geelong Rd, doing U turns and changing gears.
- Noise and odour from cattle fidgeting all night in trucks parked in residential areas.
- There is some improvement in air quality – we no longer get a sooty film over (e.g.) water bowls left outside.

**Minister Noonan** acknowledged that there is still a lot more work to do in Brooklyn. However, he said that it is also important to recognise the improvements that have been achieved since 2008. In 2011, the State Government recognised the EPA Victoria report that stated that 23% of the dust was coming from unsealed roads – particularly Jones Rd and Bunting Rd. This was addressed with the \$1.85M of State funding and \$750,000 of Brimbank CC funding to seal those roads. If there is a way to change the existing use rights issue, then we should try to fix it.

The evidence supports that improvements in conditions have been made, and there is an ongoing commitment from EPA, State Government and local councils to continue to address the issues in Brooklyn.

In closing Minister Noonan thanked the enormous contributions from the community members who are the champions of this change process. Their resolve and ongoing commitment to future generations is outstanding.

**Minister D'Ambrosio** thanked all the presenters for bringing these issues to her attention. She acknowledged the big gulf in trust that the community has with the government agencies despite the significant change. This change has come from the significant community drive.

The community's anger, frustration and anxiety is understandable and the continued concerns are why BCRG is still well attended. It is acknowledged that EPA is working under laws that are no longer fit for purpose, no longer meet community expectations and that they are under resourced. The review of the EPA Act will help address these issues.



Daniel Hunt, Manager, Metro gave an update on odour, dust, and air quality monitoring for Brooklyn.

## Actions on Odour

- One returning source: **JBS Australia** – Main odour sources confirmed by EPA officers are from cattle pen management. A new notice will be issued to have JBS explore options for odour management
- Two new sources:
  - **Western Land Reclamation** - source of odour hotspots in the waste mass (linked to general lack of rehabilitation), notices to be issued to address this issue.
  - **Alleged** new fertiliser source - previously had notices for stormwater management but EPA has identified a recent rise in reports of fertilizer odour in West Footscray.
- Works are continuing at **Australian Tallow Producers** in a major upgrade of their premises.

## Air Quality Update

- One exceedence so far this financial year occurred on Sunday (which is unusual) 9 October. It was a result of an extreme weather event where wind speeds reached up to 100 km across Melbourne. This is the only exceedence since May.
- Rolling annual average is 9 exceedences, the lowest in a 12-month period since monitoring began in 2009.

### Community Concerns

While the current monitoring station at Brooklyn Reserve has provided good results, there are residents closer to the industrial area whose experience does not reflect the reports from the monitoring station as they are presented at BCRG.

EPA acknowledged that there may be opportunities to explore new monitoring options and urged the community to approach EPA Victoria to discuss other options for dust monitoring closer to the industrial precinct.

## Air Quality Actions

- EPA dust operation in August 2016: Surveillance and inspection of dust controls of industrial sites in the precinct.
- Targeted inspections of 4 major sites: Chalmers (Francis Street), Hanson (Jones Road), Western Land Reclamation, Sims Metal Management (McDonald Rd)

16 Notices are currently in force for dust issues in Brooklyn.



## 2016 Summary

EPA conducted 75 **inspections** in Brooklyn in 2016 including;

- Pollution Response: 18 Incidents, including dust, odour, fires, water and dumping
- Fire Sites Campaign: 14 inspections focussing on high risk fire sites (stockpiles and waste management)
- Odour Surveillance Campaign: 23 odour surveillance rounds focussing on identifying current odour sources in Brooklyn
- Dust inspections campaign: 12 inspections of dust sites including 3 surveillance operations

(EPA conducted approx. 1800 - 1900 inspections in the whole of Victoria)

- Two **Official Warnings** for dust related issues
- Two **Penalty Infringement Notices**: One related to odour and one related to dust
- Investigation current for a further odour event.

EPA issued 16 **Pollution Abatement Notices** in Brooklyn in 2016 including 5 New Dust Notices, 3 New Odour Notices, 4 Relating to liquid containment, 4 Related solid waste management on fire sites

## Collaboration with Council

- EPA continues to meet every 6 weeks with Brimbank to coordinate our compliance efforts.
- EPA provided technical advice for new planning controls on 3 high risk sites in Brooklyn, Sunshine Groupe, Delta and City Circle who are progressing with upgrading their sites.
- Conducted the high-risk fire sites campaigns with Council and Metropolitan Fire Brigade.
- EPA is planning a further operation in 2017 focussing on the high-risk dust sites on Bunting Road.

***EPA continues to urge everyone to call in any odour reports to make sure EPA has all the information needed to track odours and follow through with enforcement.***



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**BCRG Community Forums for 2017: Wednesday 8 March, 26 July and 15 November.**

***Attendance by open invitation; contact [eo.bcr@gmail.com](mailto:eo.bcr@gmail.com)***

**See the meeting notes at <http://www.brooklynip.com.au/bcrg-meeting-notes> for a full account of discussions at the meeting.**

