



Environment Protection Authority – HRSTS Minutes

Today's Meeting Date:	Tuesday 21 May 2019	Next meeting date:	Tuesday 15 October 2019
Meeting location:	Hunter Valley Operations, Singleton (HVO)	Last Meeting Date:	15 October 2018
Meeting opened at:	10:00am	Meeting closed at:	1:15pm
Convenor	Mitchell Bennet EPA	Minute Taker:	Emily Ingram
Present:	Dr WEJ Paradise - CHAIR Andrew Speechly – Discharge Licence Holder - Hunter Valley Operations Gary Mulhearn - Discharge Licence Holder -YanCoal Australia Peter Jaeger - Discharge Licence Holder -Wambo Coal Christopher Rooney - Discharge Licence Holder - AGL Macquarie Ken Bray – Irrigators Representative - Hunter Valley Water Users Association Forugh Dorani - NSW Department of Industry, Land and Water Division Mitchell Bennett – Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Bill George – EPA Emily Ingram - EPA Sri Sritharan – WaterNSW Martin Pendergrast – WaterNSW		
Apologies:	Robyn Parker - Hunter River Catchment Committee Representative Michael Clarke - Environmental Representative		

No	Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible	Completion Date
1 and 2	Welcome	Following a safety induction, the chair acknowledged the traditional owners of the site and welcomed the committee.		
3	Review of minutes and matters arising from the last meeting held 15 October 2018	The minutes were adopted with no changes.	Chair	21.05.19
3.1	Action 1	HRSTS Draft Annual Performance Report 2017-2018 is to clearly explain what happened in the recorded spikes – to manage any perceived concerns and provide clear education on events recorded.	EPA & WaterNSW	Complete
3.2	Action 2	HRSTS Draft Annual Performance Report 2017-2018: The report is to have an additional graph that explains what has occurred over the past five years.	EPA	This will be added to future reports
3.3	Action 3	HRSTS Draft Financial Expenditure Report 2017-2018: Auction income should be included in the report as Income.	EPA	This will be included in future reports
3.4	Action 4	WaterNSW and river registers: A full presentation of this will be delivered next meeting with extra technical gear to be compatible with Singleton Library resources.	WaterNSW	See agenda item 8.0
3.5	Action 5	WaterNSW and river registers: Andrew Speechly to present next meeting from an industry discharger perspective.	Andrew Speechly	See agenda item 8.0
3.6	Action 6	Online training for traders – storyboard options: To be detailed out of session	Emily Ingram	Complete 22.03.19
3.7	Action 7	Deputy Nomination forms to be sent to all members.	Emily Ingram	Complete

Agenda Item	Main Discussion Points	Actions	Status
<p>4.0 Finalisation of the Licence variations for the Telemetry and Volume Discharge Limit conditions</p>	<p>Mr George advised that all but two licences had been updated with revised telemetry and daily discharge limit conditions. Participants advised that for some, the daily limit will make no difference to their procedures, but for others it may be challenging to comply with. The EPA will monitor the impact of these changes during the next discharge event. This may not be for some time, given the ongoing dry conditions in the Hunter Valley.</p>		
<p>5.0 Negotiations between WaterNSW and EPA on the Service Agreement</p>	<p>Mr George advised that the EPA is currently reviewing the Service Level Agreement between the EPA and WaterNSW. He advised that one proposed change was to consolidate all the timeframes for the provision of services into one table. The EPA invited any input from the participants on the adequacy of the services currently being provided under the agreement.</p>	<p>Action 1: EPA send the Service Level Agreement to all participants inviting their feedback.</p>	
<p>6.0 Earlier notification of potential opportunities to discharge using weather forecasting</p>	<p>Mr George advised that following discussion with WaterNSW, it had been agreed that weather forecasts by the Bureau of Meterology provide participants with early warning of possible discharge events.</p> <p>WaterNSW advised that it already uses real-time stream flow data to predict discharge events. Mr Bray noted that there are many variables that influence the amount of runoff following a rainfall event, making this is difficult to accurately predict. WaterNSW advised that more gauges may improve prediction accuracy, but would not result in earlier notifications. Mr Speechly suggested improved education of participants about how discharge events are predicted.</p>		

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<p>7.0 HRSTS Draft Budget for 2019/20</p>	<p>Mr George presented the draft budget for 2019/20. Total costs are expected to be \$920,018 including \$712,408 for the monitoring, flow modelling and notification services provided by WaterNSW, \$160,410 for EPA costs, \$3,200 for meeting/publishing costs, \$4,000 to host the 2020 credit auction. \$40,000 would be needed to update the credit register. This item had been included in the 2018/19 budget but had not been spent.</p> <p>Mr Jaeger noted that new users found the credit register difficult to use.</p> <p>In response to a question from Mr Paradice, Mr Bennett advised that HRSTS funds could be carried over from one financial year to the next.</p> <p>Mr Paradice asked that in future, budget presentation include pervious years for comparison.</p> <p>Mr Speechly asked whether the \$40 000 underspend from last year’s budget should have been carried over into this budget.</p> <p>Mr Paradice stressed the need for transparency in the presentation of financial information to ensure that participants can be confident that they are receiving good value.</p>	<p>Action 2: EPA to check whether \$40 000 should have been carried over from last year.</p> <p>Action 3: Endorse the revised budget for 19/20 once the \$40 000 carry over has been clarified.</p>	

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<p>8.0 Mock discharge event involving the Services Coordinator and the participant.</p>	<p>Mr Pendergrast demonstrated the process followed when rainfall triggers a discharge event:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • early notification may be emailed to participants; • observed rainfall data is entered into a spreadsheet; • flow data is downloaded into a model that generates flow predictions; • the flow recession characteristics are adjusted based on the operator’s assessment of weather forecasts. <p>Slow internet connection prevented any further demonstration of the discharge event calculation process.</p> <p>Mr Speechly explained that the site conducts a monthly water inventory to determine its need to discharge. Once a river register is received from WaterNSW, HVO:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • checks the discharge point and carry out pre-release water quality sampling; • uses a checklist to check details of the river register; • calculates how much water it can release allowing a safety margin; • checks that the maximum discharge rate specified in the licence will not be exceeded; • transfers the data to the automated control system which opens the discharge point valve. <p>The discharge is continuously monitored and the control system modifies the release rate if the conductivity varies during the discharge.</p>	<p>Action 4: Mr Pendergrast to complete this demonstration at the next meeting.</p>	
<p>9.0 General Business</p>	<p>Mr Bennett advised that Ms Ingram would be leaving the EPA and hence would no longer provide the Secretariat for the Committee. He thanked her for her contribution and wished her well for her new position.</p> <p>Mr Bennett advised that Mr George would be moving to another area within EPA and would no longer be involved with the HRSTS. The Committee thanked him for his contribution and wished him well for his new position.</p>	<p>Action 5: Mr Dorani to update the committee on government structural changes related to water resource management</p>	

	Mr Dorani advised that there are new structural changes within his department and he will update the participants on these at the next meeting.		
10.0 Field inspection of HVO HRSTS discharge point followed by light refreshments	The committee inspected HVO's Lake James discharge point.		
	Next Meeting: Tuesday 15 October 2019 Bayswater Power station		