

Road Dust Working Group
Meeting Minutes

Date:

13 February 2017 9am – 12pm

Attendees:

Jamie Cox, Wairoa District Council (Convenor of RCAF Special Interest Group-LVR)
Greg Haldane, NZTA
Garry McGraw, Northland Transport Alliance
Glenn Mackie, NZ Forest Owners Association
Karen Parcel, Bay of Plenty Air Quality
Louise Wickham, Emissions Impossible (representing the Ministry of Health)
Steve Murrin, Marlborough Roads
Tom Simonson, Local Government New Zealand
Wayne Newman, Cresmere Consulting (representing the RCAF Research and Guidelines Group)
Wil Pille, Far North District Council

The meeting began at 9 am. Introductions were made and a summary of recent activities leading to the creation of the working group were summarised, with reference to the draft Terms of Reference for the Working Group.

Greg Haldane provided an extensive summary (with slide presentation) of the Golder Associates study entitled NZTA Research Report 590 “Impacts of exposure to dust on unsealed roads”. It was noted that the study was intended to:

1. Characterise the dust and quantify the impacts of dust from unsealed roads on people.
2. Determine the effectiveness and cost of dust mitigation measures.
3. Estimate the costs of the health impacts of dust and estimate the benefits of mitigating the dust.
4. Propose a methodology to support decision-making about mitigation options.

A two-month road dust monitoring campaign was undertaken on a section of Mataraua Road, 10 kilometres southwest of Kaikohe in the Far North District, from February into April 2015.

The monitoring results indicated that potential adverse human health impacts might occur due to the dust discharged from untreated unsealed roads. A comparison of the dust particle concentrations monitored at the untreated and treated sites (using magnesium chloride) showed that the application of a dust suppressant significantly reduced the impact of dust discharged from the road.

Comments/dialogue included:

- The basis for both the health benefits and mitigation costs was discussed and noted to be specific to the situation analysed in the research. Concern was raised as to whether one application per year of dust suppressant was realistic.
- Special attention may need to be paid to school bus routes (for safety and air quality);
- “dust risk matrix” thresholds to obtain mitigation funding are too high;
- At present no government or sector research funding resources are available to pursue further analysis; and
- The study used the HAPINZ model to evaluate the cost of health impacts (which use a different set of cost assumptions from other road safety analyses).

Louise Wickham presented the findings of her review of NZTA’s Research Report 590 and associated General Circular (16/04). The review was prepared for the Northland District Health Board. A summary of the review was provided with an overall conclusion that the NZTA research provides valuable information on particulate matter (PM), but additional policy development was needed by NZTA to improve the basis for funding decisions. Further discussion outlined included:

- Whether the study was sufficient to be used as a basis for national policy.
- The research study’s assessment of other impacts from dust, including road safety and visibility or effects on community amenity or economic productivity;
- The assessment of dust safety impacts under the NZTA Economic Evaluation Manual
- Whether mitigation assessment should consider these other dust impacts (beyond health and safety), and potential implications this might have on assessment and prioritisation
- The requirement for additional/revised guidance for the assessment of road dust effects;
- The requirement for additional economic review for the assessment first-order benefits from reducing road dust;

The Working Group then discussed the summaries of the noted study and analysis at length, and discussed additional points including:

- 1/3 of forest providers are farmers and do not consider themselves part of the forest industry (and not associating themselves with impact or as stakeholders);
- Potential information gaps PM 10 and PM2.5 (fine particulate matter); and
- Stakeholder engagement is critical, including for aggregates, schools and tourism.

A summary of a possible process for moving forward includes creating a document (eg discussion document) outlining work, cost and time required to fill policy and research gaps for dust mitigation. Next steps may include:

1. Invite (again) MBIE, Treasury, MfE, MPI and Tourism;
2. Consider additional studies to more robustly establish road dust effects;
3. Economic analysis of dust costs for the entire country ;
4. Based on the study and an updated economic/business case, the risk matrix should be updated;
5. Review of the current policy and risk matrix; and
6. Support for councils should be provided for assessment, prioritisation and implementation.

Post review of the meeting minutes, the following action items were agreed by the noted owners:

Proposed Action Items:

Task	Owner	Due Date
Set next meeting for the Working Group	Tom Simonson	ASAP
Contact absent stakeholders (noted in #1 above)	Tom Simonson	3 March
Coordinate with NZTA to ensure a Planning and Investment team member attends next meeting	Greg Haldane Wayne Newman Murray Gimblett	17 March
Determine research, if needed, to support a business case for research	Louise Wickham Greg Haldane NZTA P&I rep.	31 March
Action plan for a policy update	Greg Haldane NZTA P&I rep	Next meeting
Evaluation of a draft, updated policy direction based on the business plan and risk matrix	Greg Haldane Jamie Cox Tom Simonson Wayne Newman	Next meeting
Communications plan for NZTA to work with local councils to discuss a policy update	Greg Haldane Tom Simonson Jamie Cox	Next meeting
Identify required elements and work to support a national policy statement – summary of noted activities and potential processes to execute.	Tom Simonson Wayne Newman Louise Wickham ++	TBD

The next meeting was planned for mid-April.