

Hazelwood Study Contract Steering Committee

Wednesday 25 March 2015, 11.30am

Room 15.01, Department of Health & Human Services

Attendees from Monash: Prof Judi Walker; Prof Michael Abramson; Ms Gillian Ormond.
Attendees from DHHS: Mr Stephen Pellissier; Dr Andrew Neil.

Apologies: Prof Michael Ackland (Acting Chief Health Officer, DHHS); Mr Graeme Gillespie (Director, Health Protection, DHHS) and Mr Alexander McLeod (DHHS).

1. Welcome

- SP welcomed all attendees, noted apologies and informed the Committee that Prof Ackland would be attending the Community Advisory Committee meeting on 1 April 2015.
- JW offered to brief Prof Ackland before that meeting to inform him about proposals to pre-test the draft survey and to brief him on Community Advisory Committee membership.

ACTION: SP to discuss this offer of a briefing with Prof Ackland and respond to JW.

OUTCOME: Prof Ackland has indicated this briefing would be helpful. Please liaise with Prof Ackland's EA (Sherine Azoor) on [REDACTED]

2. Staffing

- GO has commenced as Monash's Study project manager.
- Monash has also employed a recruitment coordinator (David O'Keefe), who will attend the next meeting of the Community Advisory Committee.
- Other positions: Research officer (linkage and ethics), Data Manager and Statistician, in recruitment process.

3. Budget

- GO will be responsible for keeping track of expenses. SP noted that he has spoken with DHHS Health Protection Branch financial officer, who has asked that Monash provide the next milestone (interim report) well before the end of the financial year to allow milestone payment this financial year. JW indicated that Monash would endeavour to meet this request.

ACTION: SP to determine when report is required to ensure DHHS processes can be conducted to ensure payment in the 2014-15 financial year, and what format the report should be provided.

- Capital equipment – one study group has indicated a need for an ultrasound machine, valued at approximately \$100,000. SP noted that DHHS would prefer, wherever possible, to process invoices this financial year.

ACTION: GO to provide this (and other invoices, where possible) as soon as possible to DHHS.

4. Ethics approvals and applications

- Two approvals obtained – for child study and older persons study - therefore have two out of three ethics approvals; ethics application for adult survey has been submitted.

5. Community engagement

- JW noted that significant progress has been made on making contact with community groups in Morwell – study staff are meeting two to three organisations each week. An engagement register has been developed to keep track of meetings with various community organisations and help ensure consistency of message across these organisations.
- JW also briefing local politicians, so that they are prepared and able to provide appropriate information about the study should they receive information requests from constituents.
- JW has also met with Latrobe City Council as a new CEO has recently been appointed. JW plans to brief this council on a three monthly basis.
- Also meeting a range of other clubs, including many sporting clubs, as some of these – such as the Bowls club - is located right next to the mine.

6. Communications

- Links have been established between Monash and DHHS media units, and these links are vital to ensuring consistency of messages from the two organisations.
- JW reported that a number of articles about the study are appearing in various media and a book about the mine fire is about to be published. Monash's standard response to media and other publications, if asked, is: the study is a long-term study and any information, such as claims in media articles and books, will be reviewed and assessed by the study team.
- Study website: GO noted that an interim website has been launched, with a definitive website currently being developed. It will have its own identity - separate from Monash. Currently working on a logo which will be incorporated into all communication materials and the website.

7. Adult Survey

- To be launched in the near future. An explanatory letter will be sent to entire community of Morwell and another community (the comparison community, discussed in section 8 below).
- Most data collection will be done by Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) - similar to DHHS health surveillance surveys. Monash requires that this CATI research be put out to tender - currently being done.
- CATI researchers need community members to develop an exposure diary from the time of the mine fire. Researchers are cataloguing key events from that time to act as triggers to help community members recall where they were and how they were feeling at various times during the event.
- Study team will also collect smoking data as this would be a significant confounder, as flagged by Tim Owen (DHHS, Gippsland).
- MA noted that a recently published article in *Environmental Health Perspectives* links exposure to bush fire smoke and out-of-hospital cardiac arrests. The study team need access to Ambulance Victoria data from the time of the mine fire. This will assist determine if a relationship exists between smoke fire in Morwell and increased risk of cardiac arrest (see also next dot point).

- Study team are currently developing consent forms with a number of health organisations (Ambulance Victoria, Medicare and the Victorian Cancer Registry) which will be provided to community members so that the study team can access personal health data from the time of the mine fire from these organisations.
- Record Linkage. Study team do not yet have authority to link with the Victorian Admitted Episodes Dataset or the Victorian Emergency database. Working with Ying Chen (DHHS Health Intelligence Unit - HIU) to develop the required consent form.

ACTION: SP to flag this with HIU in an effort to hasten the approval of the draft consent form.

8. Comparison community

- MA reported that the study team have subcontracted the Commonwealth Scientific & Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) to conduct air pollution modelling for the Gippsland region from the time of the mine fire. This will identify the area of dispersion of the mine fire smoke plume in Gippsland. By establishing the area of the plume, comparable communities can be identified that were not exposed to smoke. From this, it is hoped that the researchers can select a single comparison community that has similar demographics to Morwell, yet was not impacted by smoke. Depending on the outcome of the CSIRO modelling, the study team may have to select a minimally exposed community, or a community from outside the valley, to act as the comparison. JW noted that the community group Voices of the Valley have called for the entire valley to be investigated by this study - not just Morwell.

9. Confidentiality

- JW and MA noted the importance of both Monash and DHHS and all subcontracted organisations to maintain research confidentiality throughout the study period, given the personal medical data and other sensitive information being gathered. SP agreed with this.

10. Other milestones

- Community Advisory Committee, Clinical Reference Group and Scientific Reference Group have been established.

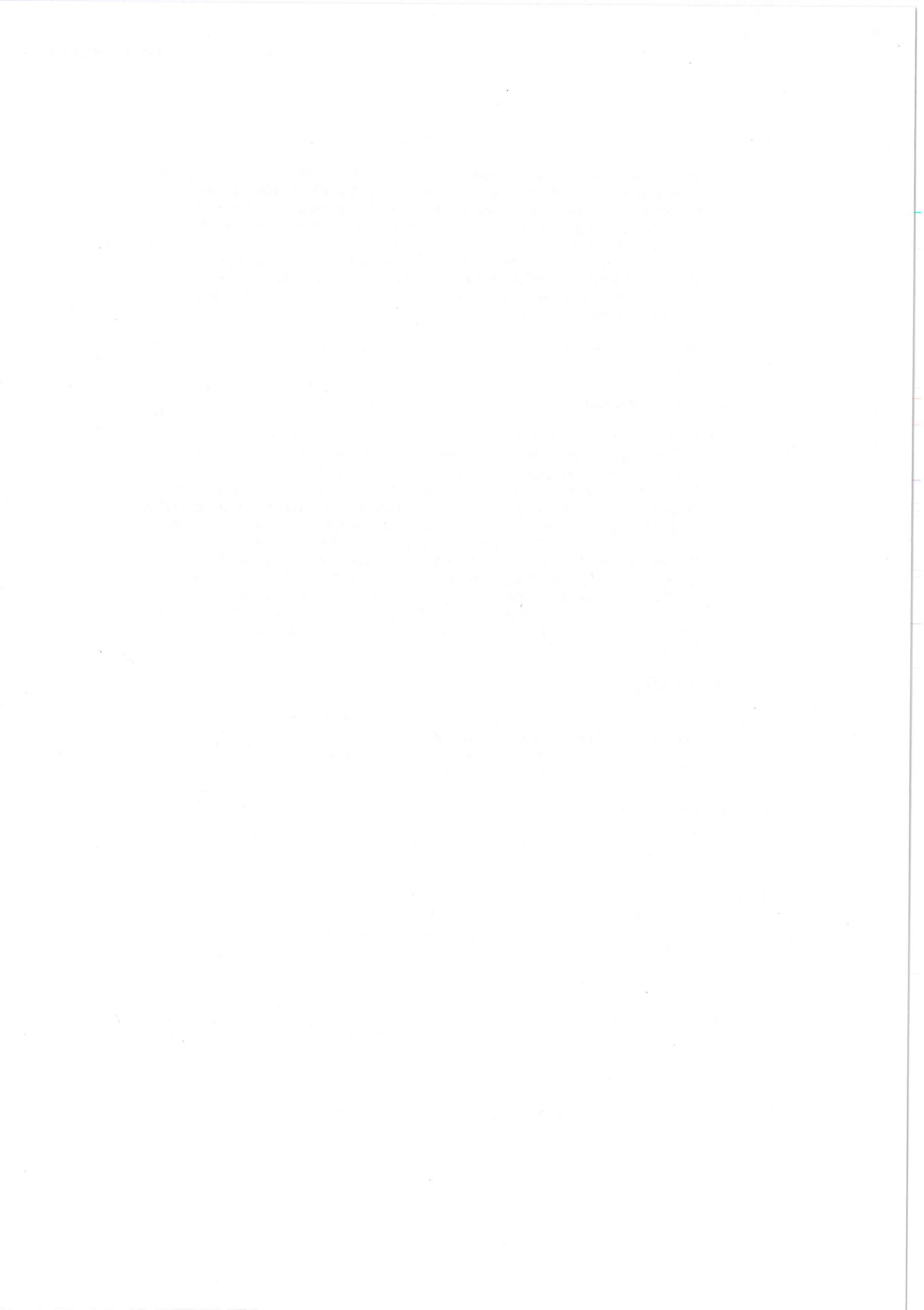
11. Next meeting

- Tuesday 28 April, 11.30am. MA requested that this be rescheduled to an 11am start.

ACTION: SP to consult with Prof Ackland's EA and inform the Steering Group.

OUTCOME: Prof Ackland unable to reschedule to 11am. Next meeting to remain scheduled for 11.30am. Venue details to be forwarded by Alexander McLeod (DHHS).

Meeting closed at 12.15pm.



Hazelwood Study Contract Steering Committee

Minutes

Time and date	11:30 AM – 12:30 PM , Tuesday, 28 April 2015
Chairperson	Professor Michael Ackland
Location	[REDACTED]
Attendees	<p>Department of Health & Human Services Prof Michael Ackland Ms Linda Cristine Ms Nicola Stephens Dr Vikki Lynch A/Prof Zahid Ansari Mr Alexander McLeod Ms Lily Wong (Minutes)</p> <p>Monash University Prof Michael Abramson Prof Judi Walker Ms Gillian Ormond</p>
Tabled papers	

1.	Welcome & introductions
<p>Professor Ackland welcomed all to the Hazelwood Contract Steering Committee (<i>the Steering Committee</i>) & facilitated introductions.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the extreme complexity and technical nature of the longitudinal study.</p> <p>Professor Ackland identified priority issues for discussion at today's meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance –science for study • Twenty year program – Variables <p>Governance</p> <p>In response, Professor Michael Abramson advised that in addition to the Steering Committee, the current governance structure is made up of a further three advisory committees:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Community Advisory Committee</i>, this group includes representatives from DHHS and community members, chaired by Professor Judi Walker. • <i>Scientific Reference Group</i>, this group provides technical oversight of the study and is chaired by Professor Abramson. • <i>Clinical Reference Group</i>, this group aims to ensure local clinicians are appropriately represented membership includes representatives from the Latrobe Regional Hospital and two local GPs , chaired by Dr Joseph Tam,. <p>Professor Ackland noted there are no representatives from DHHS on the Scientific Reference Group. The Steering Committee agreed that a senior technical expert from DHHS will be nominated to attend future Scientific Reference Group meetings.</p>	

Action: Professor Ackland to nominate appropriate DHHS representative for the Scientific Reference Group.

Twenty year program – Variables

Professor Ackland noted that the longitudinal study may be affected by a number of variables:

- Transient cohort, residents moving in to and out of the area
- Changes in Government, policy and political priorities
- Community perception of health impacts from fire may be affected by life events.

In response to concerns about a transient cohort, Professor Abramson clarified that Monash's sampling frame is residents present at time of fire. Monash will use electoral rolls to identify movements in population. Australian Electoral Commission rolls may be used in lieu of an appropriate process with the Victorian Electoral Commission.

The Steering Committee agreed in order for the study to be sustainable through administrative (government) changes there is a need for strong methodological framework. DHHS asked for reassurance as to how the cohort will be managed from a methodological point of view.

In response, Professor Abramson advised that there have been issues to date with the timeliness of responses from the department's Data Linkage Unit. Monash has had issues accessing data from the Data Linkage Unit. Professor Abramson advised a meeting is scheduled for next week.

Nicola Stephens may be able to assist with facilitating meetings and improving communication paths with the Data Linkage Unit.

Monash plan to have five data linkages in place:

- Hospital admissions data
- Mortality rates
- Ambulance Victoria data, including air pollution and out of hospital cardiac arrests.
- Victorian Cancer Registry
- Medicare data to be obtained through the Commonwealth - use of medical services and pharmaceutical benefits scheme.

The Monash Ethics Committee have not raised issues with planned data linkages as yet.

Action	Professor Ackland to nominate appropriate DHHS representative for the Scientific Reference Group.
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2. Update - Monash University

Monash have submitted a monthly report. Professor Abramson anticipates Monash will have clearer view of their budgetary position following a meeting with their finance area.

Ms Gillian Ormond informed the Steering Committee there has been a slight delay on the website going live due to logo issues. However the study logo has now been produced and agreed to by community groups. It is expected that branding and design will be finalised soon and the website will go live shortly after.

The Steering Committee agreed that communications systems that are considerate to the needs of the department and Monash is required.

The Steering Committee noted that the first deliverable in the study contract included a media strategy.

A media protocol is being finalised and a Monash media consultant is working closely with Bram Alexander, to ensure a "no surprises" approach. Bram and the Monash media consultant will continue to work together.

Action: Media protocol will be provided to DHHS once finalised by Monash.

Monash provided an update on their list of accomplishments.

Adult Survey

It was noted that ethics approval for the adult health survey has been submitted to the Monash Ethics Committee and it is

anticipated approval will be granted in the near future.

Monash advised there have been a number of delays to adult survey as there is no plume modelling available for brown coal emissions and particle modelling. A similar area would need to be identified to conduct plume modelling. However a demographer has established that there is no other area that has a similar demographic (socioeconomic) to Morwell.

Professor Abramson advised that in the absence of funding the CSIRO has made conservative assumptions about brown coal emissions. The CSIRO have also allowed for existing background levels of PM2.5 within the area, and smoke within the area from other fires at the time.

Professor Abramson also advised that Monash will aim to alleviate burden of multiple surveys for parents of young children. A retreat has been organised for groups working on the surveys. Think tanks are to take place with key local community members next week to discuss recruitment strategies.

The Steering Committee discussed that no preliminary piloting or pretesting of the survey has occurred. Monash advised that piloting is not able to occur until ethics approval has been granted. Monash will provide the CHO with a draft table from test analysis once ethics approval has been granted and piloting has occurred.

Action	A media protocol to be provided to DHHS once finalised by Monash.
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3. Outstanding Issues / Actions

Alexander McLeod advised the department is yet to receive the signed contract variation from Monash.

Action	Monash to follow up on outstanding contract variation.
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4. Next Steps

DHHS to provide feedback on interim report, it was noted some issues were already raised today regarding the methodological & analytical framework of the study.

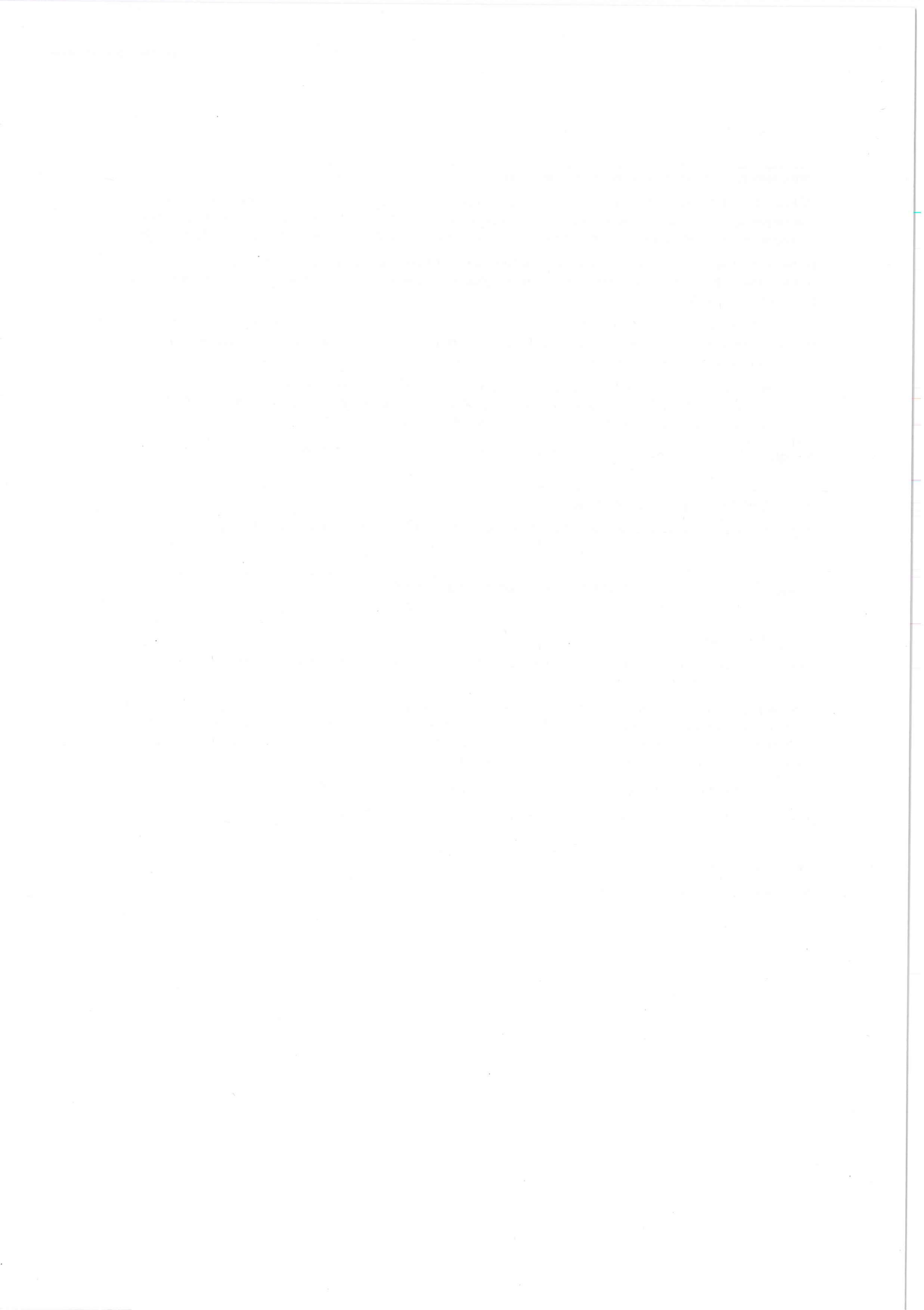
The Steering Committee discussed the need for sustainability strategies for the study, including management strategies for perception of impacts on health and SWOT planning. The Steering Committee agreed that the initial risk analysis undertaken should be revisited and added to interim report. DHHS recommended the risk analysis consider succession planning for leadership over the life of study in a longitudinal environment.

It was agreed that Bram Alexander will be invited to attend the next Steering Committee.

The Steering Committee noted the next deliverable is the Older Persons Policy, due on 15 May 2015.

5. Next meeting

Meeting scheduled for Tuesday, 26 May 2015



Hazelwood Study Contact Steering Committee

Minutes

Time and date	10:00 AM – 11:00AM Tuesday 26 May 2015
Chairperson	Professor Michael Ackland
Location	[REDACTED]
Attendees	<p>Department of Health & Human Services</p> <p>Prof Michael Ackland Mr Graeme Gillespie Dr Danny Csutoros Ms Nicola Stephens Ms Sandra Falconer Ms Vikki Lynch Mr Alexander McLeod Ms Veronica Marks (Minutes)</p> <p>Monash University</p> <p>Prof Michael Abramson Prof Judi Walker Ms Gillian Ormond</p>
Apologies	Professor Zahid Ansari
Purpose	
Tabled papers	

1.	Welcome & Introductions	Prof Michael Ackland
Summary	Professor Michael Ackland welcomed all to the Hazelwood Contract Steering Committee & facilitated introductions.	
Action		
Person responsible		Deadline
Action		
Person responsible		Deadline

2.	Update – Monash University	
Summary	<p data-bbox="427 353 528 383">Website</p> <p data-bbox="427 405 1225 434">There have been some minor delays in relation to the website going live.</p> <ul data-bbox="475 454 1206 528" style="list-style-type: none"> • The review of website content has led to some minor changes. • It is expected that the website will be live by next week. <p data-bbox="427 548 647 577">Human Resources</p> <ul data-bbox="475 598 1278 672" style="list-style-type: none"> • All recruitment activity by Monash has been completed. • Monash are hosting a cohort stream retreat to coordinate recruitment. <p data-bbox="427 692 675 721">Aging Policy Review</p> <ul data-bbox="475 741 1386 815" style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of the Ageing Policy Review (milestone 6) has been submitted. Monash is currently preparing a response to some minor comments provided by DHHS. <p data-bbox="427 835 580 864">Adult Survey</p> <ul data-bbox="475 884 1321 1016" style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethics approval has been received for the adult survey. • The DHHS data linkage team has met with Monash and had a productive conversation about how to progress with hospital data sharing and departmental requirements. <p data-bbox="427 1037 1321 1066">Action: Monash University to sign off on the document once it has been finalised.</p> <p data-bbox="427 1086 715 1115">Comparison Community</p> <ul data-bbox="475 1135 1374 1720" style="list-style-type: none"> • Monash advised that Sale was chosen as the comparison community and CSIRO will undertake air quality modelling in the area. • It was also determined that a representative from Sale will be present at the upcoming Community Advisory Committee (CAC) meetings. The next CAC meeting is on 19 June 2015. • Vikki Lynch sought clarification from Monash on how the comparison community of Sale was selected. For example, due to the fires/smoke in other surrounding areas occurring at a similar timeframe. • Monash advised that parts of Sale have a similar socio demographic profile to Morwell noting that there is no other town in the Latrobe Valley as disadvantaged as Morwell. Although it is not a perfect match, inconsistencies can be accommodated by with further analysis and subsequent adjustments. • Monash also advised that because there were no available measurements of air pollution, analysis of particulate pollution will be undertaken using satellite data. This will be gathered from Sale and the surrounding areas within this similar timeframe. <p data-bbox="427 1740 1366 1904">Dr Danny Csutoros questioned whether electing Sale as the comparison community will have benefits for the people of Sale. This was specifically in relation to gathering health intelligence of the broader community. Professor Abramson advised that it will be extremely beneficial for the community, especially in relation to lifestyle risk factors for morbidity, mortality. I.e. cardiovascular disease and cancer.</p> <p data-bbox="427 1924 1278 1953">Child Health and Development Stream Ethics application has been submitted.</p> <p data-bbox="427 1973 1366 2031">David O’Keefe (Monash recruitment manager) has been doing some work around the adult survey consent forms and discussing wording of the questionnaire with members</p>	

of the community advisory committee.

There is continued work on the finalisation of key messages to accompany the media protocol for the study. Rachael Fergusson has been working with Bram Alexander from DHHS in the preparation of these.

Dates for the Community Advisory Committee have been finalised for 2015.

The annual Community briefing will be held in July.

Graeme Gillespie sought clarification from Monash on when results in relation to the study might be released. Judi Walker advised that:

- Meaningful results will not be available until 2016.
- Review of impacts of fire on older people is a short program of work and something tangible can be fed back to the community over the next few weeks. However the final report will not be completed until May 2016.
- Psych study planning is well underway, and testing is planned in Term 3.
- Child Development study is already underway.
- Monash will discuss early findings at the Department of Health & Human Services in Steering Committee meetings, and then these will be tested with the Community Advisory Committee before any final publications are released.

Hazelwood Inquiry Media Event

Judi Walker provided an update in relation to the Inquiry media event that took place this morning in Morwell.

- 40 – 50 invited people attended.
- The Terms of reference was not provided to those in attendance
- The Ministers' advised that there will be three reports to come out of the Inquiry and will be due next year. These are:
 - 31 August – Anglesea Mine
 - 2 December – Review of Mortality death data
 - March – Rehabilitation of the Valley.
- There were also announcements of the following Health Investments:
 - Mine Health Clinic is operational in Morwell.
 - Lung Health Clinic is in discussion.
- Funding provided to Monash University in order to assist with the long term health study.
- Commencement of a new dialog, community involvement and informal responses and briefing held within the community.
- Wider scope of the Inquiry was clear.

Action			
Person responsible		Deadline	
Action			
Person responsible		Deadline	

3.	Outstanding Issues / Actions		
Summary	<p>Action 1. – Professor Ackland to nominate appropriate DHHS representative for the Monash Scientific Reference Group.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advised that upon reflection, he does not wish to nominate a DHHS representative for the Monash Scientific Reference Group as he believes it would not add any value to the expertise already provided by Monash University and its stakeholders. • Complete <p>Action 2. – A Media Protocol to be provided to DHHS once finalised by Monash.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Still being circulated and awaiting comments. • In Progress <p>Action 3. – Monash to follow up on outstanding contract variation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete 		
4.	Other Business		
Summary	<p>Discussion – Invoices</p> <p>Contract variation may need to be completed for certain pieces of equipment, as some of the purchases may take place after the October 30 cut-off date.</p> <p>Action: Alex to look at the contract and procedure/policy and determine if it is based on a year by year or dollar value per year.</p>		
Action	Look into the contract and procedure/policy and determine if it is based on a year by year or dollar value per year.		
Person responsible	Alexander McLeod	Deadline	24 June 2015
5.	Next Meeting		
Meeting scheduled for Wednesday, 24 June 2015			



VICTORIA POLICE

Commissions & Inquiries
Legal Services

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Telephone [Redacted]
Facsimile [Redacted]
www.police.vic.gov.au

16 June 2015

Hazelwood Health Study - Project Management Group
Faculty of Medicine, Nursing and Health Sciences

[Redacted]
[Redacted]
[Redacted]

Sent via email: [Redacted]

Dear Ms Ormond

The Hazelwood Mine Fire Health Study

Thankyou for your previous correspondence in regards to the Hazelwood Mine Fire Health Study. As identified the original terms of reference set by the former government did not specifically include Victoria Police or any of the Victorian State Emergency Services.

In light of this we are encouraged to hear that your team are working on methods to include the people who were working in Morwell at the time of the fire. As a result of this we would respectfully request that the staff of the Morwell Police Station and the Victoria Police members who were working in the area at the time of the fire be given the opportunity to take part in the study.

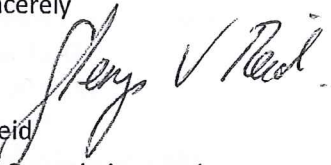
The Morwell Police Station is situated approximately 750 metres from the site of the Hazelwood Mine Fire and was directly subject to the adverse atmospheric conditions in the area for the duration of the fire. The police station comprises of approximately 150 staff and our Division would be happy to assist in facilitating any avenues of communication required by your team.

It is of the utmost importance for Victoria Police to identify any long-term health effects to staff as a result of the Hazelwood Mine Fire and our Medical Services Unit has advised us that due to the complexity of a study of this nature it would not be viable for Victoria Police to do a comparative internal investigation.

In conjunction with our Health Safety & Deployment Division and Medical Services Unit we would request to meet with you and your team to discuss what requirements you would have and what assistance we could provide to you to see the inclusion of Victoria Police staff in the study.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you require assistance on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Glenys Reid
Director, Commissions and Inquiries Division
Legal Services Department
Victoria Police

Cc:

Acting Deputy Commissioner, Specialist Operations
Director, Legal Services
Office Of The Chief Commissioner
Director, Health, Safety & Deployment Division
Senior Medical Officer, Medical Services