

INTEGRATED ANALYSIS PTY LTD

# Community Advocate Monthly Report No.2

---

Gerringong upgrade; Princes Highway

**Rowena Lennings**

**July and August , 2012**

Report from the Community Advocate, Gerringong upgrade; Princes Highway project for the period between 1 July and 31 August 2012.

RMS 12.330

|  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. Introduction .....  | 3 |
| 2. Activities and outcomes throughout July-August 2012 .....       | 3 |
| Activities and outcomes:.....                                      | 3 |
| Objective 2. Clarification of role .....                           | 3 |
| Activities and outcomes.....                                       | 4 |
| Objective 3. Develop an informed understanding of community issues |   |
| Objective 4. Issues resolution .....                               | 4 |
| Activities and outcomes.....                                       | 4 |
| 3. Recommendations going forward .....                             | 5 |
| 4. Next report .....   | 5 |

## 1. Introduction

This report is the second of regular monthly reports from the community advocate. A report was not issued at the end of July as the community advocate was on leave between mid July and mid August. This report covers the period between 1 July and 30 August 2012.

## 2. Community Advocate activities and outcomes throughout July-August 2012

### Activities

#### Meetings/briefings:

- Attended 'sod turning' event official commencement of project.
- Addressed August meeting of the South Precinct group (Kiama local government area).
- Met with some landowners whose property is affected by the project.

#### Printed and electronic information materials:

A number of information tools have already been produced in order to widely disseminate contact details and provide a range of ways that people can contact the community advocate.

#### Outcomes:

The project website was updated with a message from the community advocate and the first community advocate report was uploaded onto the site.

The community advocate has canvassed a broad range of community members and has established that approximately one third of local people would prefer to receive paper copies of communication from the community advocate as they do not wish to depend on electronic communication. The monthly meeting of the Southern Precinct will have paper copies of the community advocate's reports on hand for interested persons.

## Objective 2. Clarification of role

The role of the advocate is to provide advice and support where necessary to community members in how best to access project information and the project team.

### **Activities and outcomes**

One of the indirect consequences of raising the public profile of the community advocate has been some confusion regarding the community advocate and the contractor's community liaison manager's role. During July and August 2012 six people contacted the community advocate to raise issues or obtain information in the first instance. In cases where the information could be more directly provided by the contractor's Community Liaison Manager, callers were re-directed to the 1800 number.

A flow chart is being developed to assist the community understand these differing roles and responsibilities. This flow chart will be uploaded when ready.

## **Objective 3. Develop an informed understanding of community issues**

Conversations with community members during this reporting period has been the main vehicle for developing a detailed understanding of the issues, views and desired outcomes of the affected community.

## **Objective 4. Issues resolution**

### **Activities and outcomes:**

#### **1. Concerns over safety of access from individual properties to the upgraded highway and property adjustments.**

To date, four property owners have requested the community advocate look into issues that they believe has not been resolved to their satisfaction. The community advocate has met with the property owners and discussed their concerns with the relevant project team members. In three of these cases the community advocate resolved that no further contribution could be made to the processes currently underway. One matter is ongoing.

## **2. Objection to the noise wall**

The community advocate met with a group of residents whose properties front the noise wall and who are concerned about the visual impact of the wall and are worried it may exacerbate the noise from trains. These concerns have been referred to the contractors, Fulton Hogan who, assisted by their noise consultants, are refining the concept design to ensure the wall will provide the required noise mitigation with the least possible visual impact. Fulton Hogan will provide more information to the community once the noise assessment is complete.

## **3. Recommendations going forward**

### **1. Communication in relation to the property acquisition process**

The community advocate met some affected land owners and asked for their input about their experience and their suggestions regarding improvement to communication activities surrounding the property acquisition process. This discussion focused on identifying strengths and weaknesses of the current process, capturing lessons learnt and identifying areas for improvement. The one area nominated for improvement was the need to avoid alarm, sometimes experienced by property owners, when they are provided with a concept drawing for their input. Some property owners expressed a preference for being offered a preliminary meeting to discuss options and issues prior to receiving a drawn-up proposal. The next step is to discuss this feedback with RMS property and project management officers.

## **4. Next report**

The next report will cover activities and outcomes for September 2012. It will be uploaded onto the RMS project website about mid October 2012.