Notes of Meeting #45 – Algoma Steel Community Liaison Committee

Date: June 6th, 2023

Location: Algoma Steel
Administration Building
Main Conference Room and Teams Meeting

Time: 12:00pm to 2:00pm

CLC Members in Attendance
Fred Post – Algoma Steel
Laura Devoni – Algoma Steel
Chris Galizia – Algoma Steel
Autumn McLean – Algoma Steel
Lori Jalak – Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)
Maggie McAuley – Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie
David Trowbridge – Public
Jillian Marquis – Public
Dan Gabor – Public
Tony Schoahs – Public
Jauvonne Kitto – Garden River First Nation
Steve Carey – Chippewa County Health Dept.
Melissa Francella – Algoma Public Health
Lisa Derickx – St. Mary's River RAP Coordinator

CLC Members not in Attendance
Rick Lalonde – Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks (MECP)
Catherine Taddo – Corporation of the City of Sault Ste. Marie
John Rankin – St. Mary's River RAP Coordinator
Suzanne Lieurance – Chippewa County Health Department
Dennis Gagne – United Steel Workers Local 2251
Wayne Hubbard – United Steel Workers Local 2251

Meeting Notes

1. **Review of the Agenda and Meeting #44 Notes**
   David Trowbridge requested that the meeting minutes be posted in a shorter timeframe. Fred Post agreed and committed to posting the minutes more promptly.

2. **Membership Items and Terms of Reference**
   Jauvonne Kitto was introduced as a new CLC alternate member representing the Garden River First Nation, and Stephanie Seymour will be the primary member.

3. **Cokemaking Emission Performance**
   Fred summarized the methodology of the coke oven emissions monitoring and presented a graphic representation of Algoma's cokemaking performance from the past 12 months showing that Algoma has maintained compliance with all of the Site Specific Standard (SSS) limits. The

MECP has indicated that the 2020 limits will continue to be enforced until the shutdown of the batteries. Since 2017 the average pushing opacity has been decreasing, with 2022 having the best performance since starting the audits in 2015.

Jillian inquired about the actions taken to reduce certain emissions when they approach the 30 day limit. Fred and Chris explained that regular actions are always taken to keep the emissions as low as possible. However, sometimes intervention is needed if the emissions performance approaches the limit, even if it impacts operations.

David asked if there was any way to represent the intensity of the emissions given that some leaks are larger than others. Fred explained that historically there was a system adopted by the MECP and the Canadian Steel Producers Association that ranked leaks based on intensity but only audited once per week. That system was replaced by the current system which was adopted from the USEPA and includes daily monitoring.

David mentioned that there seems to be a high number of dark pushing emissions based on what the public is reporting. Fred explained more recent heightened awareness from the public may make it appear as though that is the case. Chris also explained that Algoma is making a point of reporting more of the visible pushing emissions and this is reflected in the increase on the process upset table.

A stack opacity graph was provided showing the coke stack opacity performance for the past 2.5 years. The graph shows the 30 day rolling average in the number of hours in a day above 20% average opacity. This metric is used to depict the overall performance trends.

Algoma recognizes that stack opacity on all three batteries is the most challenging metric to meet. Fred explained that the company is focused on trying to improve the stack opacity performance. Algoma has an abatement plan with the MECP that is in the process of being revised, with the long term goal of shutting the batteries down when the EAF is fully operational. Some of the initiatives in the plan include thruwall replacements and replacement of the light oil scrubber and pre-heater in the By-Products plant.

There has also been a number experienced employees leaving the Cokemaking operations for other areas of the steel plant as they know that Cokemaking will be shutting down in the near future. This has led to an influx of new employees who are still working to gain that necessary experience. This is compounded by the overall lack of trades people in Sault Ste. Marie that has led to a shortage in maintenance personnel. To correct this, some retires have been brought back to be dedicated supervisory training staff to help Algoma through this challenging period.

Tony Schoahs asked about a potential pattern in the spring and summer stack opacity that would suggest a trend indicating a higher opacity. Fred explained that fluctuations seen on the graphs is more related to specific incidents such as the conveyor fire in the summer/fall of 2022.

Fred also explained that this year's business plan has seen more downtime factored into Algoma's operations for maintenance on the coke oven batteries than there has ever been. As the coke oven batteries age extra maintenance is needed to keep them running effectively during our EAF transition. This also impacts how much coke is produced and how much purchased coke is needed to replace this shortfall in production.

David commented that Algoma is in violation of the published opacity regulations for approximately 18 hours a day and felt that an abatement plan was not enough. Lori explained that the abatement plan is the first step and they have recently started requesting weekly

updates on environmental work performed. The MECP recognizes the challenges Algoma faces and they do have the option to refer Algoma to the Investigative Enforcement Branch (IEB) if they believe that the abatement is not happening. Laura Devoni reiterated that Algoma is committed to eliminating coke production and the associated emissions altogether with the change to EAF steelmaking with an estimated investment of $700 million and is working with the MECP to reduce the emissions during this transition period.

Jillian asked about the recent challenges related to installing the light oil scrubber. Fred explained they were related to having to redirect the gas to the other areas downstream and this was causing the delays.

Jillian also asked about the cokemaking staffing concerns and what actions are being taken to retain the experienced people until the EAF is online. Laura explained that an incentive program is in place to help retain people at the supervisory level, and discussions are ongoing with USW Local 2251 regarding transition plans for hourly personnel.

Jillian also asked if there will be layoffs for these retained people once the EAF is built. Laura explained that while the electric arc facility comes with new job opportunities, there will be an overall net reduction in staffing requirements once the transition is complete. The company is talking with employees and its unions about a number of mitigation opportunities, including retraining.

4. Public Complaints

It was noted there has been an increase in the number of public complaints recently as a few individuals have been providing regular notification of concerns regarding stack opacity.

There has also been an increase in noise complaints. Algoma staff met with local residents to discuss what is being heard and conducted a detailed noise assessment, identifying the source as the Gas Cleaning Plant (pollution control device) which underwent significant investment to reduce noise in 2019. The assessment identified that while the noise measures below the night time limit, the frequency is causing a nuisance. Algoma is actively developing solution to mitigate the noise by replacing the acoustic silencing material in the associated ducts.

5. Community Air Monitoring

Fred recapped to the CLC that Algoma has successfully expanded the Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Program. In consultation with the MECP, the former Patrick Street air monitoring station has been relocated to the Goulias Avenue and Bonney Street area, just inside Algoma's property boundary and two new stations were installed; one at 4th Avenue (David Kyle Park), and another at Cathcart Street. All stations are equipped with new monitoring devices to monitor for total reduced sulphur, sulphur dioxide, particulate matter less than 10 microns and less than 2.5 microns, total suspended particulate, metals, volatile organic carbons, and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons.

All stations have been operational since December 2022 and a new meteorological station was also installed at the Bonney Street location, providing easier access for maintenance.

Laura suggested that a slide could be included in the next CLC deck that explains the reasoning for the change and addition of the new monitoring stations.

David asked if portable air monitoring stations will continue to be used. Lori indicated that there should be another round of mobile monitoring later this year.

Fred explained that new monitoring equipment was included in these new stations to analyze SO2 as there is a new standard coming into force later this year and it is the most stringent in the world. In addition, particulate monitoring equipment has been upgraded to be the most advanced available to measure real time PM10 and PM2.5. These monitors are located in all the stations and update on Algoma's website in real time.

David mentioned that we are currently receiving air quality warnings due to recent forest fires, however earlier this year there were PM10 and PM2.5 reading that were similar to the recent values and this is a public health issue that needs attention. He asked if there was a possibility that Algoma Public Health (APH) could monitor PM10 and PM2.5. Melissa Francella explained that APH had discussions and is currently looking into it, but there is a wait on epidemiology data from Public Health Ontario. Fred mentioned that Algoma is looking at compiling historic monitoring data for APH.

David asked if the Chippewa County Health Department knows of any monitoring for PM10 or PM2.5 locally. Steve Carey said that he is aware that Lake State University has an air monitoring station but is not sure how accurate it is or what the data is used for. David also asked how the authorities would deal with exceedances on a State level for air quality parameters. Steve mentioned that it would be very similar to how the MECP operates.

David asked Fred about the ambient air quality document on the MECP website, stating there is a guideline for PM10 and a PM2.5 guideline from the CCME. However, on Algoma's reporting it mentions there is no guideline for PM2.5. Fred explained that the intent of the footnote was to explain that there was no regulatory standard for PM2.5, just a guideline. He agreed to update the footnotes in the report for greater clarity.

Fred explained that the elevated particulate at the Goulais Avenue monitoring station is directly contributed to road dust from the facility. This spring has been a challenging season with the increased vehicle traffic from the EAF construction, however a broader road dust management plan was under development which is intended to include new road dust suppressant products which are being trialed in a few key areas.

6. Electric Arc Furnace (EAF) Update

Fred reviewed the progress being made with the construction of the EAF facility, and presented the current timeline. Two state-of-the-art electric arc furnaces will replace its existing basic oxygen steelmaking operations and result in the elimination of Cokemaking which will result in a significant reduction in Algoma's environmental footprint. Project statistics were shared along with an estimated breakdown of the current spending.

7. Applications for Environmental Compliance Approvals

Applications for site wide environmental compliance approvals (ECA's) were submitted in March 2022. The ECA for air and noise is based on the planned progressive shutdown of equipment and facilities associated with the transition to EAF steelmaking, and includes the addition of the two new baghouses and a water cooling tower. As part of this application, a new noise abatement action plan has been prepared that will address any potential new noise sources and include the elimination of up to seven existing sources.

Progress on the air approval application is moving well and Algoma is working with the MECP on the details of the air model. The final documentation on noise plans has been submitted, with the EAF's designed to meet the nighttime noise limits.

For the Industrial Sewage Works application, a minor amendment is being sought to add the new recirculating non-contact water treatment facility to the existing sewage works approval.

No new contaminant loading is associated with it. Additionally, over the transition to the full EAF, up to five effluent discharges will be eliminated.

David asked if the water will be drawn from the river. Fred explained that all process water currently comes from the St. Mary's River and will continue in that fashion going forward.

8. Site Specific Standard Requests

An update was provided regarding Algoma's Site Specific Standard applications noting that in March 2022, Algoma submitted a request for amended site-specific standards for benzene, benzo(a)pyrene, and particulate matter that are expiring this year. The new standards will reflect changes to the air emission dispersion model that have resulted in an increase in modelled emissions. The new approvals are intended to bridge the gap as Algoma progressively shuts down equipment and facilities in the transition to electric arc steelmaking.

Algoma also submitted a new Site Specific Standard application for sulphur dioxide (SO2) in order to provide a compliance approach to the new provincial standards coming into force in July 2023. This application includes an action plan to reduce SO2 which reflects the progressive facility shutdown.

The air model updates included a new model version, a more recent meteorological data set and changes to the land use designations around Algoma from urban to rural to more accurately reflect local land use. These led to higher than previously modelled concentrations of these contaminants. The land use change made the biggest impact on the model, as rural land use results in less dispersion compared to an urban designation in the computer model. There have been no changes to the processes.

At this time Algoma has not made a final decision on what direction it will take in regards to a SSS or applying to an Industry Technical Standard which is currently being developed by the MECP. Algoma has applied for SSS's because an Industry Standard does not yet exist.

David asked if there was an update on the technical standard working groups. Fred indicated to his knowledge there have been no new discussions with the MECP. However, there is a new technical standard being developed for EAF's and the legal draft was published in December 2022. Fred indicated that any updates from the MECP will be distributed to the committee.

9. Collaborations

A collaboration with Sault College resulted in the planting of approximately 1,885 trees this past fall on the south side of the wind berm. Further planting will follow planned shoreline stabilization efforts.

Other collaborations with the college include:

- Program development and sponsorship in Mechatronics
- Apprenticeship program development and partnership
- Mechanical and Electrical advisory representation

There has also been a lot of collaboration work with Algoma University, particularly with program development in their Masters program for the sciences.

10. Site Greening and Shoreline Stabilization

Fred explained that approximately 4.1 km of Algoma's shoreline adjacent to the Material Storage and Reprocessing Site and the Main Water Intake will be protected from future erosion via shoreline armouring. Algoma's shoreline stabilization project will support the Site Greening

Initiative by ensuring that the naturalized green buffer strips along the perimeter of the site remain intact and are protected from possible erosion. The shoreline stabilization project consists of a four-year plan to design and implement shoreline protection along the St. Mary's River via the placement of clean rip-rap and armour stone. Approximately 2.6km of the armouring are slated to be completed this year.

The plan for site greening includes the creation of naturalized green buffer strips along the perimeter of the site by introducing new soils, creating seasonal surface water ponding areas, and vegetating with select native plant and tree species.

11. Additional Questions

David asked when the quarterly report of the AAQM would be posted. Fred will look into it.

David mention that the fall report showed 409 TRS exceedances and asked where it was attributed to. Fred explained it was likely from the blast furnace slag pits since they are at ground level and the frequency is high due to the new station location. Fred also noted that the TRS limit was based on a nuisance odour threshold and was not linked to health criteria.

David also asked if the 2022 Community Engagement Report would be posted in June. Fred responded that it will be up by the end of the month.

12. Next Meeting

The next CLC meeting is tentatively scheduled for September 12th, 2023.

The meeting adjourned at 2:00 PM, June 6th, 2023.

Meeting notes prepared by Chris Galizia and Fred Post
June 21th, 2023

Current Members and Alternates

Representation	Primary Member	Alternate
Algoma Steel	Fred Post	Chris Galizia
Ministry of Environment, Conservation and Parks		
	Lori Greco	Rick Lalonde
Public	David Trowbridge	Tony Schoahs
Public	Jillian Marquis	Dan Gabor
SSM Tribe of Chippewa Indians	TBD	
Algoma Public Health	Melissa Francella	
Chippewa County Health Dept.	Steve Carey	Suzanne Lieurance
The City of Sault Ste. Marie	Catherine Taddo	Maggie McAuley
United Steel Workers Local 2251	Wayne Hubbard	Denis Gagne
St. Mary's River RAP Coordinator	Lisa Derickx	John Rankin
Garden River First Nation	Stephanie Seymour	Jauvonne Kitto
Batchewana First Nation	TBD	