

The EPA Board Communique has been developed to provide information on matters discussed by the Board at its monthly meetings.

Meeting No. 164: 12 July 2005

The Board visited the Fleurieu region on 12 and 13 July to meet with dairy farmers, dairy industry representatives and local government representatives to discuss local environment protection issues. The Fleurieu tour included site visits to:

- a dairy near Myponga to view an effluent management system
- a farm near Myponga to inspect a riparian restoration project
- two landfills (Victor Harbor and Southern Region Waste Disposal Depot) to learn about their operations.

The Board also held its monthly meeting in Victor Harbor.

Debrief on Fleurieu Visit

Board members noted that the visit had been very helpful and provided a good understanding of the EPA's perspective in responding to regional issues.

It was noted that the Adelaide Mount Lofty Ranges Natural Resource Management Board would now be likely to undertake some projects previously overseen by the EPA as an outcome of the recently introduced NRM arrangements in SA.

The meeting with local government representatives from Alexandrina, Victor Harbor and Yankalilla Councils covered issues such as: management of landfills (landfill environment management plans), increased costs of recycling and waste management, landfill criteria, limited life of existing landfills, dredging approvals and bio-solids spreading.

[Note that the meeting with dairy industry representatives took place on the day following the Board meeting. Issues discussed included: the future of the dairy industry in the Fleurieu, establishing a good working relationship with the EPA, funding arrangements for dairy projects and EPA 'obstacles' for dairy farmers.]

Draft Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy

The Board noted progress to develop the Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy and considered the key concepts, process and timeframes to be applied. Drafting instructions will now be developed as the next stage in the process and this will involve close consultation with rural and urban waste management stakeholders.

The proposals will be forwarded to the Board of Zero Waste SA, Waste Management Association, Local Government Waste Committee and Business SA for consultation and comment prior to the commencement of drafting instructions.

Risks and Benefits of Longer-term Licences

The Board of the EPA considered a report presenting risks and benefits associated with the granting of longer-term licences and determined to approve the proposed policy to issue minimum five year licences (as a default position) and allow up to ten year licences on application by licensees.

The Board agreed that risks could be managed by ensuring that any licences issued include conditions that allow triggers for the EPA to amend and/or add to conditions of licence during the term of the licence.

Benefits include reduced administration for the EPA and confirmation of licence continuity for licensees (although this already exists in the legislation, there is a perceived commercial advantage to longer term licences). Licence holders will be notified as early as possible regarding these proposed changes.

Chair's Report

The Chair reported to the Board on the following issues:

- Environment Protection and Heritage Council (EPHC) outcomes - The most recent EPHC meeting included agreement to vary the National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) measure to include Greenhouse Gases, a 65% recycling target set as an outcome of discussions concerning the National Packaging Covenant and to make the National Measure for Product Stewardship the next National Environment Protection Measure.
- Planning session - The Board will conduct its next planning session in November 2005 on Kangaroo Island.

Issues Briefings - Meeting with MPs - 1 March 2005

A summary and briefings were provided to the Board on matters raised by Members of Parliament at their meeting with Board members on 1 March 2005. The Board agreed to distribute the briefings to all Members of Parliament.

Major Projects Facilitation Group, DTEI

Mr Fletcher reported that he is Chair of the Major Projects Facilitation Group in the Department of Transport, Energy and Infrastructure and invited Dr Vogel and Mr Holmes to attend the next meeting for interest and information. To enhance understanding between senior EPA staff and business leaders (particularly of critical issues associated with major projects), Mr Fletcher suggested that a meeting of these groups should also be arranged.

Resignation of Board Member

Ms Bowes notified Board members of her resignation, which will come into effect as of 31 August 2005.