

EPA Board Communiqué

December 2017

The Board's Meeting numbers 111 and 112 were held in Hobart on Tuesday 5 and Monday 18 December 2017, respectively.

The two meetings were held in December to allow the assessment of several Level 2 activities to be completed within statutory timeframes.

Meeting 111

Assessment of King Island Meat Processing, Abattoir and Rendering Works

The Board completed the assessment of an application by King Island Meat Processing to build and operate an abattoir and rendering works at Grassy Rd, Lymwood on King Island. This will be a greenfield development on what is currently grazing land. Ten representations were received in relation to the application.

The key environmental issues considered by the Board were:

- The disposal of liquid wastes. The site is poorly drained and this issue was of concern to a number of the representors. The proposal involves the use of a modern wastewater treatment plant that will treat the wastewater to potable standard. This will allow much of it to be re-used in the factory. There will be no disposal to land. The Board was satisfied with this approach.
- Air quality. Odour risk from the rendering plant and composting operations was a concern for a number of representors. The Board considered the results of the odour modelling and the appropriateness of the meteorological data that was used for this, as raised in representations.
- Natural values. This issue was raised by several representors on the basis that natural values may be affected by wastewater disposal. However, there will be no wastewater disposed of to land.
- Noise. In particular the effects on a proposed home-stay were considered.

The Board also considered a number of comments on draft permit conditions made by the proponent. The Board concluded that the development could be managed in an environmentally acceptable manner provided there was compliance with a range of conditions. The Board requested several amendments to the Assessment Report and permit conditions arising from its discussions and resolved to advise the King Island Council that a permit could be issued subject to the Board's conditions.

Application for a Special Fee Remission by Sattler Pastoral

The Board considered this application in the context of its guidelines for fee remissions. It determined that the application for a fee remission for the 2015/16 year was outside the scope of the guidelines and, therefore, refused it. Further information was required to support the application for 2016/17 fees.

Briefing on Ridley Agriproducts Proposal

This assessment is to be considered at the next Board meeting. The assessment of odour has been difficult and the Board received a preliminary briefing on the issues involved.

Director's Briefing

The Director advised that

- the legislation to transfer the regulation of salmon to the EPA had come into force on the day prior to the meeting.
- The Blue Futures global salmon symposium will be held in Hobart over the next few days. The Director and Board member Colin Buxton will be attending, while Warren Jones will attend the one-day public forum.
- There have been some issues with TasWater and their spill notification process.

Authorisation

The Board authorised the EPA's legal officer to represent it at Appeals.

Other matters

The Board agreed on meeting dates for 2018, a date for its 2018 Strategic Workshop and discussed opportunities for field inspections in the next 6 months. It was agreed that it would be appropriate to inspect a range of salmon farming facilities, the Copping Waste Disposal Site and several mining sites on the west coast.

Meeting 112

Assessment of proposal by Ridley AgriProducts Pty Ltd for an Aqua Feed Mill, Westbury

Ridley proposes to build a factory to produce feed for the aquaculture industry in an industrial estate at Westbury. Before the Board discussed the assessment, the company and its odour consultant provided a presentation to the Board on the proposal, the odour control measures and the experience with the operation of a similar plant in Queensland.

The major issue considered by the Board was the potential impact of odour emissions from the factory. The odour modelling that was undertaken showed that odour was likely to exceed the default limit specified in the Environment Protection

Policy on Air Quality of 2 odour units outside the boundary of the land. Therefore, the Board had to consider whether the emissions were likely to cause an environmental nuisance and whether the proposed method of capturing and treating the odour emissions (a biofilter) represents best practice environmental management.

After a detailed discussion with the Air Specialist including consideration of the odour modelling, and taking account of the EPA's experience with biofilters and the issues raised by the representor, the Board concluded that it was likely that odour could be managed without causing environmental nuisance. The company had submitted an Odour Management Plan for the Board's approval, but the Board considered that it did not deal with contingency measures adequately and did not approve the plan at the meeting.

Other issues considered by the Board included noise and stormwater management. Liquid wastes will be disposed of to sewer. The Board concluded that, overall, the factory could be managed in an environmentally acceptable manner subject to strict conditions to manage odours and the submission of an improved odour management plan. The Board requested a number of amendments to the Assessment Report and permit conditions arising from its discussions and resolved to advise the Meander Valley Council that a permit could be issued subject to the Board's conditions.

Assessment of proposal by Low Head Wind Farm Pty Ltd

This proposal involves the construction of a wind farm comprising ten wind turbines on private land to the east of Low Head as well as a transmission line to George Town. Nine representations were received in relation to the application. The development was declared a controlled action under the Commonwealth's environmental legislation and the assessment was, therefore, carried out in accordance with the bi-lateral agreement between Tasmania and the Commonwealth.

The main issues considered by the Board were:

- The potential impacts on natural values. Several threatened vegetation communities, and threatened species of flora and fauna will potentially be impacted by the development. However, the Board considered that these impacts were relatively small and can be managed through commitments made by the proponent and conditions applied by the Board.
- Noise. Noise was raised as an issue by several of the representors. There are three residences within a kilometre of a turbine. However, noise measurement and modelling showed that the impacts from the windfarm will be within acceptable levels as measured by the most relevant standards. The Board confirmed with the Noise Specialist that the noise measurements and modelling had been carried out properly.

The Board also discussed several other issues raised in representations, including shadow flicker and television signal interference. The Board considered a number of comments from the proponent on a draft set of conditions as well as comments by the Commonwealth Environment Department. The Board concluded that the

windfarm could be developed in an environmentally acceptable manner provided commitments and the Board's conditions are complied with.

Assessment of proposal by Launceston City Council for Organics Processing Facility, Mowbray

The Council proposes to undertake composting as part of its waste management operations at the Launceston Waste Centre. A maximum of 15,000 tonnes of compost will be produced annually.

There were no representations on relation to the application. The main issue considered by the Board was air emissions, and, in particular, the potential for odour impacts on surrounding land. The site is well separated from residences and odour modelling predicts that odour emissions will comply with the limits specified in the Environment Protection Policy (Air Quality) in residential areas. There may occasionally be a small exceedance of 2 odour units at the south-east boundary which adjoins a quarry. However, the Board agreed that this was unlikely to cause a significant nuisance given the low frequency of exceedances and with the area of working some distance from the boundary. The Board also discussed the collection and treatment of leachate which will be handled by the current infrastructure at the Waste Centre and whether settlement of the landfill under the composting site would be an issue.

Overall, the Board concluded that the proposed composting could be undertaken without having significant environmental impacts and resolved to advise the Council that the operation could proceed subject to conditions.

Environmental Auditor Training Course

The Director outlined a proposed auditor training course for EPA regulatory staff and, potentially, local government environmental health officers. The Board discussed whether, in principle, it might agree to part-fund the course from the Environmental Protection Fund.