

EPA Communiqué

February 2017

The Board held its 100th meeting in Hobart on Tuesday 14th February 2017.

Assessment of Blackmans Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant Upgrade

The Blackmans Bay Wastewater Treatment Plant is the major treatment plant servicing the urban area of Kingborough. TasWater proposes to upgrade the plant to increase its capacity so that it can handle the increasing population of Kingston, Blackmans Bay and surrounding areas as well as receive sewage from the Margate and Electrona wastewater treatment plants. This will allow these poorly performing plants to be closed.

The Board undertook a site inspection of the proposed plant site which is adjacent to the current plant. The Board noted that the proposal includes features to reduce the risk of odour which has previously affected residents living nearby and uses modern treatment technology which is predicted to produce better quality effluent notwithstanding the higher volume being treated. Treated effluent will be discharged from the existing outfall.

The Board considered the representations that were received and concluded that the majority of the issues raised were planning matters with the exception of odour. The main issues that the Board discussed were:

- Odour controls and predicted odour contours;
- Noise emissions both during construction and operation;
- Possible impacts on flora and fauna;

The Board concluded that the new plant could be conducted in an environmentally sustainable manner provided that the environmental conditions that would be required in any permit issued by the Council are complied with.

Special Fee Remissions

The Board considered applications for special fee remissions from Hualong Pty Ltd in relation to the Comstock Mine, Hard Rock Coal Mining Pty Ltd in relation to its Fingal mine and Venture Minerals in relation to the Riley's Creek Mine.

The Board granted the fee remission to Hard Rock Coal Mining and provided Venture Minerals with the opportunity to make a stronger case for their requested remission that complies with the Board's guidelines. The Board rejected the application by Hualong as it did not meet the Board's guidelines and there are significant outstanding compliance issues at the mine.

Review of the Assessment Process

The Board had previously agreed to undertake a review of its assessment process. The Chair circulated draft terms of reference for the review to members before the meeting. The Board discussed the draft terms of reference and agreed that the review should be focussed on the administrative processes and procedures that are within the Board's control, although any comments on legislative stumbling blocks would be welcome. The discussion covered how the review would be funded and the process for choosing a consultant. At the conclusions of the discussion minor amendments to the draft terms of reference and the way forward were agreed.

Director's Briefing

The Director provided Board members with updates on the regulation of the salmon industry, the Shree Minerals Nelson Bay Mine and a fish meal plant at Triabunna which had been the source of numerous odour complaints.