

# Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Board Communiqué

Meeting 117 Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2018

---

## **Audit of past approvals – Granville Harbour wind farm**

In 2017 the Board agreed to initiate an annual review of one or more past assessments to examine how the developments have progressed “on the ground” post-approval. The objective is to see whether the assessment process identified and dealt with the key environmental issues adequately and whether the Board’s permit conditions have been effective.

At this meeting the Board received a report on the Granville Harbour wind farm that was assessed in 2013. The main points discussed were the role of post approval management plans and the challenges these pose for regulatory officers and the need to accommodate post-approval modifications to proposals.

## **Special fee remissions**

The Board considered applications for special fee remissions from three companies. Remissions were granted to Tasmania Irrigation in relation to a quarry which had not commenced, JBS Australia in relation to the disused King Island meatworks and a conditional remission to Hardrock Coal Mining P/L in relation to a development that has not yet commenced.

## **Eagle offsets policy for windfarms.**

The Board has assessed a number of windfarms in Tasmania at intervals over the past 15 years. In most cases the Board has applied conditions requiring an offset for eagle mortalities. However, the offset requirements have not necessarily be consistent. While some inconsistencies may be explained by the individual circumstances of each wind farm, there is a case for developing an over-arching policy that will enable a more consistent approach to future wind farm assessments.

The Board discussed the best form of offset to benefit the conservation of eagles in Tasmania, noting that some forms of offset used in the past may now be less effective than first thought, and supported a proposal from EPA Tasmania to develop a policy for offsets with the Policy and Conservation Branch of DPIPWE.

## **Re-making of delegations to incorporate finfish farming**

The Board delegates a number of its functions and powers to the Director and senior managers in EPA Tasmania to ensure that the assessment process is smooth and efficient. Amendments were made to EMPCA in 2017 to transfer the responsibility of regulating the finfish industry to the EPA. The Board had previously reviewed its powers and functions under the amended legislation and at this meeting formally delegated a number of these to the Director. The Board requested that the Director revise the guidelines for exercising delegations to ensure that significant decisions are made by the Board rather than under delegation.

## **Draft Implementation Plan – Abernethy Report**

The Abernethy Report was commissioned by the Board to identify any ways in which the administrative processes and procedures used by or on behalf of the Board during the assessment of

Level 2 activities could be streamlined. The recommendations in the report have been discussed by the Board on several occasions (see previous communiques) and EPA Tasmania was requested to prepare an implementation plan based on these discussions. The Board considered and discussed in detail the draft implementation plan and requested a number of modifications with the final plan to be brought back to the next meeting. The Implementation Plan will be used as a basis for stakeholder consultation. The Board also noted that actions were already underway to implement a number of recommendations

### **Western Australian draft Odour Guidelines**

The Board was invited to comment on the Western Australian Department of Water and Environmental Regulation's draft guidelines for odour management from prescribed premises. The Board briefly discussed the draft guidelines and noted that the use of odour units, as currently required by the Environment Protection Policy (Air), was not favoured. It was agreed that the methodologies set out in the guidelines would provide a useful reference for the revision of the Air EPP and that the Director should respond to the request for comment.

### **Out of Session meetings**

The Board noted the outcomes of two electronic out-of-session meetings to consider ongoing sponsorship of the Community Achievement Awards and the revised policy on post approval natural values surveys.

---