

EPA Board Communiqué

October 2018

The Board's Meeting number 121 was held on Tuesday 2nd September 2018.

Savage River Rehabilitation Program (SRRP)

The Board reviewed the key activities and financial statement for the SRRP for the financial year 2017-18 and considered the projected budget for 2018-19. The Board noted that the budget for 2017-18 had been underspent as staffing throughout the year had been lower than anticipated. The main items in the budget for 2018-19, other than staffing, are ongoing monitoring, completion of a toxicity assessment project, funding for a University of Tasmania study on the feasibility of extracting cobalt from Crown-owned tailings, and a bioassessment of Savage River and its tributaries. The Board approved expenditure of up to \$490,000 from the Environment Protection Fund during 2018-19.

Review of Policy Register

The Board maintains a register of policies that form a framework for its decision-making, and conducts an annual review of the register to ensure its currency and track new policy development. The policy register is available on the EPA website. The Board noted and approved minor amendments to the register.

Assessment of Port Latta Wind Farm, Neckon Pty Ltd.

The Board completed its assessment of a proposal by Neckon Pty Ltd to establish a relatively small (7 turbines) windfarm south of Port Latta in north-west Tasmania. The main issues considered by the Board were noise and the potential impact on several species of birds. Thirteen public representations on the application were received and taken into account by the Board.

There are several individual houses and two small settlements between 1 and 1.2km of the nearest turbine. However conservative modelling predicted that noise from the windfarm will comply with the EPA's recommended standard for windfarm noise (NZS6808:2010) at all sensitive receptors. The Board also considered the potential impact of infrasound which had been raised in representations. Windfarms are known to impact birds and, in particular, birds-of-prey. While the Board acknowledged a potential risk to wedge-tailed eagles and white-bellied sea eagles which have been observed on the site the overall risk to these species was considered low. The Board also reviewed the potential impact of the windfarm on several other species of birds, including those raised in representations.

The Board concluded that the proposed development could be managed in an environmentally acceptable manner provided that the Board's conditions were complied with. The Board resolved to notify the Circular Head Council that, from an environmental perspective, the proposal could proceed subject to conditions.

Consultation Plan and External Consultation Paper for Review of Assessment Process.

The Board considered and approved the consultation plan and associated paper which had been updated to take into account the Board's comments at the September meeting. The consultation plan is to be implemented immediately with the objective of having consultation completed by the end of 2018.

Other matters

The Board received its regular briefings on the assessments in progress, delegations exercised, media releases and an update on current issues from the Director.