

EPA Board Communiqué

October 2020

Regular Meeting 142, Tuesday 6 October



Responsibility for approval of policy documents

Both the Board and the Director have responsibilities under the Act that influence which is the most appropriate authority to sign off on policy documents for the EPA. The Board discussed and approved guiding principles as to whether the Board or the Director should sign off on policy documents. In essence, unless the document is created under a statutory head of power, the Board will sign off and “own” policy documents that relate to assessments or the siting of Level 2 activities.

Audit of past approvals

The Board has a standing action item to review, at least once a year, one or more Level 2 activities that it approved in recent years and which are currently operating. The purpose is to verify the assessment and the conditions applied and see if there are any pointers to improve future assessments. The Regulatory Officer for Ridley Agriproducts Aquafeed Mill and the Biomar Aquaculture Feed Manufacturing Facility briefed the Board on the construction and operation of these facilities. Several suggestions were made for changes to standard permit conditions. Odour was a significant issue for the assessment of both facilities and the Board was particularly interested on how each plant is performing in this regard.

The Board noted the information provided and requested that the suggested changes to standard conditions be referred back to the EPA Standard Conditions Working Group.

Special Fee Remission

The Board reviewed the additional information provided in relation to a request for a special fee remission from Jenkins Hire Pty Ltd and resolved to refuse the application as it did not meet the Board’s Guidelines.

Roll over of funding

The Board approved a request from Kids4Kids to roll over funding for its 2020 conference for a year as the conference could not be held due to Covid-19.

Atmospheric Dispersion Modelling Guidelines.

Atmospheric Dispersion modelling is sometimes required to support the assessment of Level 2 activities. The Board reviewed and approved guidelines for consultants on how modelling should be carried out to meet the Board’s requirements. The Board noted that while there had not been specific consultation on the guidelines, they had been in use for some time and there had been no significant issues raised by consultants.

Assessment – D N Hughes, Western Junction Quarry Expansion

The application is to intensify and expand towards the Launceston Airport an existing large quarry at Western Junction. The major issues identified in the Assessment Report were:

- noise
- blasting impacts, and
- air emissions.

There were four representations made in relation to the proposal raising issues including past dust emissions, potential effects on aviation and possible impacts on TasWater Infrastructure. The Board:

- considered the issues raised in representations and the key issues discussed in the Assessment Report.
- discussed whether the activity would be able to comply with the proposed noise limits prior to 0700hrs and noted that this is likely to restrict the activities that can be undertaken prior to this time.

- discussed the predicted vibration level caused by blasting and concluded that these did not represent a threat to the Airport or TasWater infrastructure.
- considered whether dust was likely to represent a hazard to aviation.

The Board concluded that the proposed expansion could be carried out in a sustainable manner and without impacting aviation or infrastructure subject to compliance with the Board's conditions.

North West Transmission Upgrade Project

The Board noted that under the *Major Infrastructure Development Approvals Act 1999* it would be required to provide environmental assessment guidelines for this project although it is unlikely to assess it.
