

EPA Board Communiqué

September 2019

Regular Meeting 130, Tuesday 3 September 2019

Implementation of Changes to Streamline Assessment Process

The Board requested an update on the implementation of the changes to streamline the assessment process and was advised that the remaining actions required were to hold workshops with consultants in both the north and south of the State. Overall, the implementation appears to be reducing the work required by proponents, but it will be 12 to 18 months before the full impact will be clear.

Request for Funding – Tyre Clean-up Program

The Board considered a request for funding from the Tasmanian Conservation Trust (TCT) to continue its work on cleaning up dumps of waste tyres. The proposal included the removal and recycling of tyres from both public and private land. While the Board was comfortable with the use of public money from the Environment Protection Fund (EPF) to collect dumped tyres from public land, it had reservations over funding clean up on private land – especially where the owner had been responsible for bringing tyres onto the property.

The Board agreed in-principle to the allocation of \$30,000 from the EPF conditional on the TCT obtaining other funding for the project and the Board being able to stipulate the purposes for which EPF funding could be used.

Savage River Rehabilitation Project – Research Project Proposal for Old Tailings Dam Cobalt Study

Grange Resources Tasmania proposes to undertake research into the feasibility of recovering cobalt from the Old Tailings Dam (OTD) at Savage River and offset this against the Purchase Price; a liability owed by Grange for rehabilitation of the Savage River mine prior to Grange taking over operation. Under the Goldamere Agreement, the State is responsible for pollution emanating from the OTD. The Savage River Rehabilitation Program (SRRP) is funded from the Purchase Price and monies deposited in the Environment Protection Fund which is controlled by the Board. The recovery of cobalt from the OTD has the potential to benefit the long term management of acid pollution emission from the dam. The Board discussed ownership of cobalt in the dam and how any commercial recovery of metals from the dam would interact with the SRRP.

The Board approved in-principle the use of up to \$368,850 from the Purchase Price Fund, in accordance with the Goldamere Agreement, for the proposed Old Tailings Dam Cobalt Study (Stage 1) subject to a contract being provided to the Board for review and final approval.

Request for Funding – Kids4Kids Environmental Conferences 2019-2021

The Board considered a request to continue funding the Kids4Kids Environmental Conference and agreed to provide funding of \$4,000 per annum from the Environment Protection Fund for a period of three years (2019, 2020 and 2021) to Sustainability Tasmania to help students from regional schools attend the annual Tasmanian Kids4Kids Conferences.

Special Fee Remission – Hardrock Coal Mining

The Board granted a special fee remission or Hardrock Coal Mining for a coal mine at Fingal. The company is in the hand of receivers and managers, and the development has not commenced.

Other matters

The Board received further information on the development of offset guidelines for avian mortalities at windfarms and the audit of the Granville Harbour Wind farm. A briefing on the establishment of a Standard Conditions Working Group was also provided. The Group will systematically review the standard conditions used by the EPA, including those imposed by the Board through permit conditions.
