



Planning, constructing and investing in communities throughout WA to help us ensure water for all, forever.

# Southern Seawater Desalination Project

## Newsletter – June 2008

### Approvals Process Overview

The desalination project requires a number of approvals before it can proceed.

The external approval processes running concurrently at this point include:

1. *Environmental* – State: Environmental Protection Authority (EPA)
2. *Environmental* – Federal: Department of Environment, Water, Heritage & the Arts (DEWHA)
3. *Planning* – Shire of Harvey
4. *Planning* – Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC)

Additionally the Water Corporation is required to notify the community through its own approval process called 'preliminaries to works'.

Here's where we're up to with each of the approvals:

#### 1) Environmental – State (EPA)

Submissions on our Public Environmental Review document closed on Monday, 16 June 2008. The issues raised in these submissions will be responded to by the Water Corporation. Thank you to all those who made submissions.

#### *What happens next?*

- The EPA sends all submissions to the Water Corporation anonymously

### FAST FACTS

- ❖ There are over 14,000 desalination plants in the world
- ❖ The desal plant will initially produce 50 GL of drinking water per year. This is equal to 25,000 Olympic swimming pools
- ❖ Approximately 13 Olympic swimming pools will fill the Harvey Summit Tank
- Water Corporation responds in writing to all issues raised and sends this response back to the EPA
- The EPA then assesses the proposal with the response to public submissions
- The EPA releases a Bulletin which is a recommendation as to whether the project should proceed
- There will be a two week public appeals period on the EPA Bulletin
- Any appeals are considered by an Appeals Convener, who will make a recommendation to the Minister for Environment
- The Minister for Environment then decides the outcome of the appeals and makes them public
- The Minister for Environment then makes a final decision on the project and if approved, may impose conditions

## 2) Environmental - Federal (DEWHA)

The Department of Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (DEWHA) will assess the proposal as a separate process under the Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act (EPBC).

This process examines issues of national importance such as whales, sharks, cockatoos and Western Ringtail possums.

DEWHA have set the second highest level of assessment which will require them to issue tailored guidelines and have a public comment period of no less than 20 days.

We will update the community about this further opportunity to have input into the proposal when we obtain more information.

## 3) Planning – Shire of Harvey

This week Development Application's (DA) for the proposed plant site and tank site were submitted to the Shire of Harvey.

Under legislation, the Shire of Harvey is able to advertise the DA's for a 21 day period which provides an avenue for the community to lodge further comments on the proposal.

## 4) Planning –WAPC

The project was classified as 'state significance' which means it requires additional planning approval from the WA Planning Commission.

The WAPC will send the DA's to government agencies to allow for further comments on the proposal.

## Preliminaries to Works

This week, the Water Corporation sent out official letters under the 'preliminaries to works' approval process to all affected and adjacent landowners notifying them of the impact the proposed works will have on their property, if the project goes ahead. This comes after

months of one-on-one consultation with each of the landowners.

Landowners have one month to lodge any objections and comments with the Project Manager who will in turn respond to each submission. This approval process can not be finalised until all other approvals are obtained, especially environmental.

## **Community Reference Group**

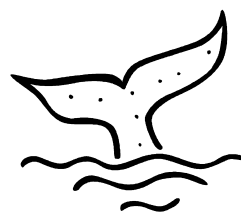
Thank you to those who have nominated for the CRG.

We expect to have the first meeting of the CRG in early August 2008.

The CRG will be an effective way for the community to communicate their concerns and suggestions and for the Water Corporation to utilize local knowledge to help build the most socially sustainable and environmentally-friendly project possible.

The CRG is not a short-term approach; it will remain for the long-term to ensure the community always has a voice in the Water Corporation's ear about the operation of the desalination plant.

We will formally update the wider community on the discussions of the CRG through this newsletter and through our website.



## **Whale Survey**

We're currently working with whale expert Chris Burton of Western Whale Research to establish the scope for a whale study for the Binningup-Myalup Coast. We will be encouraging the community to get involved in the survey and will provide more information on how you can participate in the study shortly.

## **QUESTIONS OR SUGGESTIONS?**

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