

*In absence of a state Editor for Tasmania, this update was written by Angela Leslie*

## **Review of Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994**

The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment has commenced a review of sections of the *Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act* (EMPC Act). The review will focus on the following key issues:

**Schedule 2 activities:** a review of the current list of activities that require additional scrutiny and assessment under the Act.

**Fees:** a review of the fees for a variety of environmental services carried out by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment, including assessment and annual permit fees. The review will focus on a fee restructure that reflects a user/polluter pays principle.

**Assessment timeframes:** timeframes for environmental impact assessments are currently regulated by three pieces of legislation, creating uncertainty for all stakeholders. The review will consider amending the current 180 day timeframe and the legislative structure of the assessment process.

Comment on the review closed on 9 March 2001.

## **Review of Major Infrastructure Development Approvals Act 1999**

The Minister for Primary Industries, Water and the Environment introduced the amendments to the *Major Infrastructure Development Approvals Act* into parliament on 20 March 2001. The amendments introduce two key changes to the Act as well as some consequential provisions. Whilst the Act and the amending Act were drafted specifically to facilitate the construction of the State's natural gas pipeline, they are applicable to all major infrastructure projects. The key amendments are designed to facilitate development by providing developers with greater access to land in certain circumstances.

## **Natural Resource Management Strategy**

In April 2001 the State Government announced plans to develop a Natural Resource Management Strategy to guide the management of natural resources in Tasmania. Previously natural resource management plans have been developed on a site-specific and issue-specific basis. However the current approach will tackle resource management in an integrated manner building on some existing management plans.

## **Water Management Plan**

On 18 March 2001 the Minister for Primary Industries, Water and Environment, David Llewellyn announced the development of four Water Management Plans aimed at the sustainable management of Tasmania's water resources. The management plans will provide a clear set of principles for the management of water flows in river catchment areas.

The plans are being developed in accordance with the *Water Management Act 1999* and will involve an extensive consultation process with key stakeholders.

## **Salinity Program**

On 20 March 2001 Tasmania officially joined the National Dryland Salinity Program (NDSP). A report released last year indicated that 54,000Ha in Tasmania were affected by dryland salinity, with further areas at risk. Membership of the NDSP will facilitate the development of treatment and prevention strategies by putting Tasmania in touch with the latest information and research on the issues.

## Development of Noise Policy

The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment has proposed the preparation of a Draft Environment Protection Policy on Noise to replace the *Environment Protection (Noise) Regulations 1977*. Comments on the proposal are invited from key stakeholder groups.

## Development of an Air Quality Policy

The Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment continues its preparation of an Air Quality Policy as existing policies are about to sunset. The new policy will replace the *Environment Protection (Atmospheric Pollution) Regulations 1974*, the *Environment Protection (Domestic Solid Fuel Burning Appliances) Regulations 1993* and the *Environment Protection (Prohibited Fuels) Regulations 1991*. The draft policy will cover issues such as management of industrial point sources of air emissions, diffuse sources of air pollution and monitoring of air quality. After an extensive consultation with key stakeholders the department is set to prepare a Draft Environment Protection Policy and a Regulatory Impact Statement. Both of these documents will be available for public comment.

## **Wanted:** State Editor for Tasmania

### COMMITMENT:

- Preparation of updates for NELR four times per year
- Provision of case notes/articles if possible

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