

**Independent Expert Group for the Gunns Limited Pulp Mill project at
Bell Bay, Tasmania**

WORKING PROTOCOLS

PURPOSE

The role of the Independent Expert Group (IEG) is to advise the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts (the Minister) and the Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts (the Department) as required, and to assist in the design, implementation and approval of the Environmental Impact Management Plan (EIMP) relating to the pulp mill, in accordance with Condition 6 in the Minister's approval.

BACKGROUND

The Australian Government's assessment of the pulp mill was confined to a set of defined environment matters – being the Commonwealth marine environment and threatened and migratory species. Air quality, emissions, odour, transport and coastal marine impacts are the responsibility of the Tasmanian Government. Lumber supply to the pulp mill and forest management issues are dealt with under the Tasmanian Regional Forest Agreement and are administered for the Australian Government by the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

As part of the approval conditions, the Minister must approve an EIMP prepared by the proponent, Gunns Limited, before the development can be undertaken. The phases of development referred to in the approval are pre-construction, construction, pre-commissioning and ongoing monitoring. The EIMP will comprise a total of fifteen Modules which cover each separate phase of the development. Each module requires separate assessment by the Department (and IEG) and approval by the Minister.

In addition, under the approval Gunns Limited is required to seek the Department's approval to contract a number of appropriately qualified persons to undertake the activities outlined in the EIMP.

The Department is working with the members of the IEG to discuss the various functions and responsibilities necessary for the effective monitoring of the approval conditions.

RELATIONSHIP WITH INDEPENDENT SITE SUPERVISOR (ISS)

The Independent Site Supervisor (ISS) will support the IEG by verifying that the action is taken in accordance with the approved EIMP, as required in Condition 10 of the Minister's approval.

The ISS will liaise with the IEG as required.

SCOPE OF WORK

General tasks

The IEG is to provide independent scientific and technical input and advice to the Minister and the Department on the design, implementation and approval of the EIMP.

The considerations of the IEG should include:

- independent scientific and technical input and advice on material submitted by Gunns Limited through the Department regarding the design, implementation and approval of the EIMP, extending through pre-construction, construction, pre-commissioning and ongoing monitoring phases,
- scientific and technical advice as required to assist with the assessment of tenders for key consultancies required in the design and implementation of the EIMP, and
- provide advice to the ISS and Department as to the appropriateness of relevant methodologies and monitoring data.

DOCUMENT SUBMISSION

The Department is to act as secretariat for the IEG, receiving correspondence from Gunns Limited and other parties, and distributing as appropriate. This role applies in reverse also, whereby the Department will distribute the advice of the IEG to Gunns Limited and other parties.

Specifically, documentation flow between Gunns Limited, the Department, the IEG and the Minister is to adhere to the following process:

- Gunns Limited to provide the draft EIMP and monitoring reports to the Department,
- the Department to provide the draft EIMP to the IEG for review,
- the IEG to provide scientific and technical comment on the draft EIMP to the Department, and provide comment on and evaluation of the monitoring reports to the Department,
- if the IEG recommends changes to the draft EIMP, the Department will provide the IEG's recommendations to Gunns Limited for response,
- any further changes to the draft EIMP made by Gunns Limited in light of the IEG's comments are to be provided to the IEG for further review, unless in the view of the Department these changes do no more than give effect to the IEG's comments,
- the Department to submit reviewed EIMP modules to the Minister for approval,
- the Department to notify Gunns Limited of the outcome of Ministerial consideration, and
- the Department to liaise with Gunns Limited about any issues relating to the monitoring reports and the EIMP.

MEETINGS OF THE IEG

The IEG will meet as necessary to formulate advice to be provided to the Department and the Minister. The Department will provide documents and other material to the members of the IEG to allow them adequate time to review the material prior to meetings. The IEG may:

- meet via telephone or other electronic means,
- meet in person in Canberra, Tasmania (Hobart/Launceston), Melbourne or elsewhere as required, and
- seek advice or assistance from Departmental officials or experts to conduct meetings it deems necessary in the performance of its work.

Activities outside of meetings

The Chair of the IEG may agree to one or more members of the IEG:

- undertaking research or consultations on behalf of the IEG, and
- meeting with Gunns Limited or its advisers as necessary in the discharge of their functions

Any advice or reports prepared by the IEG for the Minister or the Department should include a description of all advice considered or consultation conducted by the IEG, in the course of preparing the advice or report.

MEMBERSHIP AND OPERATION

The IEG will comprise of a minimum of five members, with the Chair responsible for the operation and conduct of the IEG and the finalisation of advice to the Minister and the Department.

Members:

- Professor Frank Larkins (Chair)
- Professor Paul Haddad
- Professor Helene Marsh
- Dr Graeme Batley
- Dr Mike Herzfeld

(NB: The Minister may appoint additional members)

Quorum and procedures

A quorum of the IEG will comprise the Chair and two other members.

Reporting and timelines

The IEG will normally provide its advice to the Department and the Minister within 20 business days of receiving draft EIMP components. The Chair will inform the Department if a longer period is likely to be required.

The Department will provide administrative support to the IEG as required.