

There are now more than 2,500 people working in design and construction roles right across the project.

There are people based in Wonthaggi, Pakenham, along the pipe and power corridor and at design offices right across Australia, all dedicated to ensuring this project is completed successfully. They come from Bass Coast, South Gippsland and other parts of Victoria, as well as interstate and a few from overseas.

Out on the desalination plant site, both Tunnel Boring Machines (TBMs) have been delivered to site and crews are hard at work assembling the machines ready for the start of tunnelling.

Entries have closed for the TBM Naming Competition and the Community Liaison Group will soon be judging the winners.

Thiess Degrémont has now erected more than 500 tonnes of structural steel, the first pre-cast concrete walls are going up and the first roof components will soon be installed.

Victoria's new desalination plant has been designed to address strict visual and acoustic requirements and the roof of the reverse osmosis building is central to this.

Underneath the living green roof will be acoustic panels supplied by Ortech from Bendigo, through a \$6 million contract. Interestingly, the Ortech panels are made from wheat and rice straw fibres and have been used with great success on other major projects around Australia.

Winter is setting in, which presents a range of challenges, one being acid sulfate soil management.

Acid sulfate soils are naturally occurring soils and common along the east coast of Australia, particularly around coastal regions.

Many construction projects have to deal with these soils, which were identified as present on the desalination plant site in the EES.

The design and construction methodologies being implemented have minimised the extent of disturbance of these soils.

Acid sulfate soils contain iron sulfide minerals which, if exposed to air, react with oxygen and produce acid. The issue is readily managed with lime, a common, natural garden and farm chemical compound which neutralises the acid.

Clearly, water run-off from acid sulfate soils must be carefully managed to ensure it doesn't enter other water bodies before it has been treated. This has been done by containing all groundwater and surface water on site in sediment ponds, which are regularly tested and treated as part of the site's environmental monitoring program.

The EPA has issued AquaSure with a pollution abatement notice (PAN) in relation to this matter and AquaSure has taken positive steps to address the issues on site. The EPA notice is a proactive, preventative action, and there has not been any pollution incident on site. I am very confident that the management plan that we have put into place will prevent any pollution incident from occurring.

Out on the pipeline, more than 20 kilometres of pipe has now been laid and power cable is being installed.

Pipe and power construction crews are working their way from north to south, crossing roads and waterways as they go.

Six road crossings are now complete, with 30 to go. Each crossing requires a great deal of planning and we work hard to minimise impacts wherever we can. We remain grateful for the patience of the communities and local residents that bear with us while these works are completed.

Out in the community, Thiess Degrémont has joined the many local organisations supporting the construction of a new clubhouse for Inverloch Surf Life Saving Club.

The Club provides a safe beach environment and emergency rescue services for the Inverloch community and its many visitors.

Thiess Degrémont is very proud to be supporting the Club, in a place that many of their workers and their families are now calling home.



Chris Herbert CEO, AquaSure

QUESTION:

Why is the design and approval process for the desalination project different to that for building a house?

ANSWER:

In fact the design and approval process for the desalination project is very similar to that for a domestic house – if on a much larger scale. Indeed, there are multiple layers of approval for each stage of design, including concept design, detailed design and design documentation. Construction of each element can only start after the design for that element is approved.

Just like a domestic house, we need planning approvals and building approvals. But because of the scale of the project, we seek the necessary design approvals progressively as work goes ahead.

The planning approvals, like a domestic development approval, come from various Government agencies, through the Department of Sustainability and Environment. Our works approvals, like the building permit, come from the Environment Protection Authority. Our final certificate, like the Certificate of Occupancy for a house, comes from the Independent Reviewer and Environmental Auditor, and from the Environment Protection Authority.