

AN UPDATE FROM AQUASURE

A few weeks ago in this column, I talked about our marine research program.

The marine biological monitoring component of this program began last week. It will involve detailed surveys of the marine environment including reef, habitat and community mapping. Surveys will be carried out by biological scientists and will help us better understand what kinds of marine flora and fauna live in certain areas and how abundant they are, complementing the extensive research undertaken for the Environment Effects Statement (EES).

This information will assist in confirming the best location for the intake and outlet structures and will provide a baseline for ongoing marine monitoring when the plant is operational.

At the desalination plant site, bulk earthworks have reached the half-way point and excavation of the box cut has commenced. The box cut is a 27-metre deep channel from which the tunnel boring machines will begin their journey underground to construct the marine tunnels.

Along the pipeline and power route, temporary fencing is being installed and tree trimming and, where necessary, removal works are underway.

A temporary access road is progressively being established along the 84km pipeline route, starting near Cranbourne and heading south towards the desalination plant site.

These works will result in increased traffic movements including truck, service vehicles and heavy machinery on adjacent roads over the coming months. We will be alerting communities to this through advertisements in local papers and on-road signage.

Our liaison team is working with affected landholders to accommodate individual needs and minimise impacts during these works. Many landholders have asked for specific types of temporary fencing to be installed and we are doing our best to accommodate these requests.

The Environmental Management Plan (EMP) and contract documentation for the Victorian Desalination Project was publicly released on 26 November 2009.

The EMP describes the strict environmental safeguards that are in place during construction and is the blueprint for how we manage and respond to environmental issues across all areas of the project.

You can download a copy of the EMP from our website or you can request a copy on DVD by calling 1800 811 214. Alternatively, you can visit our Community Information Centre at 1 McBride Avenue in Wonthaggi, where printed copies are on display.

Regards



Chris Herbert CEO, AquaSure

X FICTION

The desalination plant will not be able to withstand a flood or rising sea levels.

✓ FACT

It is a requirement of our contract that the desalination plant is above the 1 in 100 year flood and expected sea level rise. Flood modelling has been completed and the plant design meets these requirements.

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