

Tuesday, 11 November 2008

DESALINATION PLANT EIS AVAILABLE

Minister for Urban Development and Planning Paul Holloway said today the environmental impact statement for the Adelaide Desalination Project at Port Stanvac is now available.

Mr Holloway says the publication of the EIS and its supporting scientific analysis is part of the major development assessment process, which ensures the highest level of environmental scrutiny available in South Australia.

The statement details key environmental aspects for consideration in the plant's construction and also includes an updated cost estimate for the project, which incorporates costs of inflation and accelerating construction, of \$1.374 billion.

"The EIS produced by SA Water addresses all of the sensitive issues associated with the project such as the potential impact on the marine environment in the Gulf St Vincent," Mr Holloway says.

"Members of the public, government agencies, community groups and local councils are invited to consider the EIS as part of a six-week consultation period and lodge submissions to be considered by SA Water as part of the development assessment process.

"A public meeting is also being held within the next six weeks to allow members of the community to ask questions about the major project assessment process."

The six-week public consultation period runs until Wednesday 24 December with submission to be lodged with Planning SA by the Christmas Eve deadline.

A public meeting, to be organised by Planning SA, will be held on Monday 17 November at 7.30pm at the Hallett Cove Baptist Community Centre.

The features of the EIS include:

- Fast tracking of the desalination plant located at Port Stanvac with a rated capacity of 150ML/day (about 50 GL a year with a capacity to upgrade to 100 GL a year) using reverse osmosis technology
- Intakes and outlets up to 2.5 kilometres long to draw raw seawater into the facility and disperse concentrate to the Gulf.
- Environmental performance objectives and criteria that underpin the design, construction and operational phases.
- The development of sound management strategies and monitoring plans to avoid, minimise and/or mitigate any potential impacts.

- Meeting the standards set by Planning SA and agencies such as the Environment Protection Authority in delivery of the desalination plant.

Minister for Water Security Karlene Maywald says the publication of the EIS is an important stage in the design and approval process for the Adelaide Desalination Project.

“The State Government and SA Water are committed to informing the community on the design and construction of this project, which will provide Adelaide with a secure supply of water that doesn’t rely on rainfall,” Minister Maywald says.

“The publication of the EIS provides the community and government agencies with an opportunity to examine all the information that will assist the design of the plant and supporting infrastructure.

“Anyone interested in the Adelaide Desalination Plant is invited to provide feedback, as this valued input will enable SA Water to further refine the design and construction.”

Minister Maywald says the Adelaide Desalination Project EIS is supported by a comprehensive suite of studies and investigations. It includes a description of the identified environmental, social and economic issues and sets out the performance criteria that will be used to mitigate and/or manage them.

“SA Water has established detailed environmental performance objectives and criteria – in consultation with the EPA and other agencies – to come up with a concept design to inform modelling of a final detailed design for the project,” she says.

The EIS published by SA Water addresses more than 100 separate environmental, social and economic issues identified by the independent Development Assessment Commission, such as:

- potential impacts on the marine environment,
- climate change and greenhouse gas emissions,
- effects on terrestrial and marine flora and fauna,
- construction impacts including noise, dust, odour and vibration,
- infrastructure requirements, including the inlet and outlet pipelines,
- traffic generation and implications for the local and arterial road network,
- visual and community impacts from the proposed development,
- land contamination, and
- Indigenous and non-indigenous heritage.

The views of key stakeholders including the EPA, Department for Environment and Heritage, the Coast Protection Board, DWLBC, the Fisheries office of Primary Industries and Resources S.A., Onkaparinga and Marion councils, and the broader community will be taken into consideration.

Following the consultation period, SA Water will prepare a written response that addresses matters raised in public submissions.

The EIS for the proposed desalination plant and more detail about the major developments assessment process can be found online at: www.planning.sa.gov.au/go/major-developments