



Port Hedland Dust Management Taskforce Report

Government response

Introduction

In August 2017, the Government released the 2016 Port Hedland Dust Management Taskforce's Report to Government to obtain the views of the Port Hedland community, industry and other stakeholders. The Government has now formally responded to the Taskforce Report, taking into consideration community and industry concerns.

Background

In 2009, the Environmental Protection Authority raised concerns about the possible impact of dust on Port Hedland residents. The Government subsequently established the Port Hedland Dust Management Taskforce (2009) to plan for, and coordinate, dust management in the town. The Taskforce released their *Port Hedland Air Quality and Noise Management Plan* in 2010. The Plan proposed, amongst other recommendations, the drafting of a Health Risk Assessment to determine the impact of dust on the population.

The Department of Health finalised the *Port Hedland Air Quality Health Risk Assessment for Particulate Matter* in February 2016. The Taskforce used the findings of the Health Risk Assessment to prepare its Report to Government, which included recommendations for managing dust in Port Hedland.

In August 2017, the Government released the Taskforce Report for consultation. The consultation period concluded in October 2017, and included a community open day in Port Hedland in September 2017. Fifty submissions were received.

After considering the Taskforce Report and the feedback received, the Government has formalised its position on management of dust in Port Hedland.

GOVERNMENT POSITION ON DUST MANAGEMENT IN PORT HEDLAND

Health Risk Assessment

- The Government endorses the Taskforce recommendation that the current interim guideline of 24-hour PM₁₀ of 70 µg/m³ (excluding natural events) continues to apply to residential areas of Port Hedland and that measures should be introduced to cap (and if possible, reduce) the number of permanent residents in dust-affected areas of Port Hedland.

INDUSTRY DUST AND NOISE MANAGEMENT AND REGULATION

Air Quality Monitoring

- The Government supports the full transfer of the operation and maintenance of the Port Hedland Industries Council (PHIC) air quality monitoring network to the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), with appropriate cost recovery arrangements to be made through PHIC.
- To implement this recommendation quickly, Government has approved capital expenditure under the 2018/19 budget to DWER for the transfer and refurbishment of the monitoring network.

Industry Dust Management and Regulation

- The Government supports the Taskforce recommendation for the implementation of a coordinated risk-based review and assessment approach to managing dust in Port Hedland. To give effect to this:
 - DWER will complete the reviews of all port premises licences under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, applying a consistent and risk-based approach to the regulation of dust for each premises.

- Where premises are subject to Ministerial Statements, DWER will assist the Environmental Protection Authority to determine a consistent and singular regulatory approach for bulk handling port premises, to eliminate regulatory duplication.
- DWER will commission an independent third-party review and develop a dust management guideline for bulk handling port premises, outlining its expectations in relation to the assessment of dust impacts, dust control and monitoring requirements from these premises.
- Through licence reviews, DWER will implement the dust management guidelines for bulk handling port premises under Part V, Division 3 of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.

Noise

- The Government supports DWER working with industry to explore the feasibility of approvals under Regulation 17 of the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997, where the prescribed noise standard cannot be met by individual premises.
- The Government supports the Taskforce recommendation that the Port Hedland Cumulative Noise study is used to inform land-use planning for the West End of Port Hedland.

Land-Use Planning

- The Government supports the Taskforce recommendation that appropriate planning controls be implemented to prohibit sensitive land uses and restrict population growth in the West End of Port Hedland. To give effect to this, the Western Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) will consider an Improvement Plan and Improvement Scheme designed to achieve the land use outcomes described in Recommendation 5 of the Taskforce Report.
- In response to community concerns raised in the consultation process, the Government will act to ensure that any future West End planning controls will not prevent the redevelopment of residential properties – provided that the redevelopment would not result in an intensification or expansion of a non-conforming use – should they be more than 75% damaged by a natural disaster such as fire or a cyclone.

Local Government and Community

- The Government supports the Taskforce Recommendation that the Town of Port Hedland works with key stakeholders to identify and mitigate dust from non-industry sources.

Governance

- With the adoption of the measures outlined above, the Government considers that the Taskforce has effectively fulfilled its brief. Implementation of the above measures will rest with the relevant regulatory agencies. The Government thanks Taskforce members for their valuable contributions and notes that many members will continue to have important roles in giving effect to these measures.

Find out more

For further information related to dust management in Port Hedland, please contact the following:

Land-use Planning (Improvement Plan and Improvement Scheme)

Department of Planning, Lands and Heritage
Contact: info@dplh.wa.gov.au

Industry Regulation and Air Quality Monitoring

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation
Contact: info@dwer.wa.gov.au

Health Risk Assessment

Department of Health
Contact: enquiries@health.wa.gov.au

Port Hedland Dust Management Taskforce

Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation
Contact: porthedlanddust@jtsi.wa.gov.au

Additional information:

www.jtsi.wa.gov.au/porthedlanddustmanagement