

PORT STAKEHOLDER WORKING GROUP RELEASES FIRST MONTHLY DATA DASHBOARD

Friday 26 August

The Port Stakeholder Working Group (PSWG) has today released the first edition of the [Townsville Port Operations Data Dashboard](#).

The monthly Operations Data Dashboard, believed to be the first of its kind for an Australian port, has been developed collaboratively by the members of the PSWG and is designed to provide easy-to-understand information about air quality in Townsville and operations at the Townsville Port.

PSWG Independent Chair David Donohue said that the Dashboard represented the culmination of 15 months of solid work from the Group.

“It was clear when we started this task that the community wanted more information and reassurance about air quality in Townsville.”

“The PSWG members have met monthly since April 2015 and have had to cover an enormous amount of ground not only in terms of understanding the issues at hand, but also to work through the science and data available to them, and then work out a way to try and simplify the information for public consumption,” he said.

“This Dashboard is the culmination of the PSWG’s work so far and a tool that we believe will provide the local community with the knowledge and data that they were seeking.”

“I congratulate the members of the PSWG for their efforts to produce this tool and thank them for their dedication to the task over the past year.”

The Operations Data Dashboard presents information on:

- The purpose of the PSWG
- The type of equipment used to measure air quality in Townsville and by whom
- Cargo types handled at the Townsville Port
- Access to live air quality readings from the XACT Monitor at the CoastGuard
- Monthly data graphs from three monitoring sites showing
 - General total dust levels
 - Lead in dust levels
 - General dust deposition levels
- Shipping data (vessel type, commodity, date, berth visited) both retrospective and on a live schedule
- Climatic data from the Bureau of Meteorology

The Operations Data Dashboard will be distributed during the last week of each month (containing data for the previous month) through various channels including:

- the Port of Townsville website – www.townsvilleport.com.au/about-the-port/community/PSWG
- local and regional media distribution list
- the Townsville Port’s Community e-Newsletter distribution list
- links provided on all four of the port’s social media channels

“The PSWG will continue to meet monthly and are looking forward to reviewing the Dashboard’s progress after listening to the community’s feedback.”

“It will be an evolving tool that may change over time as the PSWG reviews its effectiveness and we find ways to improve its functionality and relevance.”

The PSWG looks forward to the Queensland Government continuing to enhance environmental monitoring in Townsville, and will continue to support these efforts.

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Background

Established in April 2015, PSWG was established to provide a forum for ongoing engagement between Port of Townsville Limited (POTL) and port operators and key stakeholders including community representatives, North Queensland Conservation Council, relevant Government agencies and Townsville City Council relating to air quality, dust deposition and environmental management practices at the Townsville Port.

The PSWG is led by an independent Chair, Mr David Donohue, of Queensland Corporate Communication Network.

The objectives of the PSWG are:

- Maintain good working relationships between the port community, key stakeholders and the community, fostering open, transparent and constructive dialogue;
- Provide a forum to discuss potential issues and concerns relating to air quality; dust deposition and environmental management activities at the Port of Townsville;
- Ensure that the Townsville community receives comprehensive, accurate, appropriate and timely information on air quality, dust deposition and environmental management at the Port of Townsville;
- Improve knowledge and understanding of air quality, dust deposition, and environmental management related to port operations and broader ambient air quality in Townsville;
- Provide a forum for continuous improvement suggestions to be raised and discussed and;
- Consider and identify cumulative aspects or local pressures related to air quality, dust deposition and environmental management at the Port of Townsville.

Since it was first established, milestones have included supporting the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (DEHP) and the Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (DSITI) in the introduction of more sensitive and responsive monitoring through an XACT Air Quality Monitor at the downwind boundary of the port.

Previously, government air quality monitoring around the port had been limited to equipment which took a 24 hour sample once every six days. The sample then required several months of analysis before a result was known and published. While this allowed regulatory compliance to be monitored, it did not provide an ability to respond quickly to changes in monitored levels or seek to correlate changing wind speeds and directions, nor which activities could potentially be impacting on air quality.

The Data Dashboard draws on that data, adds shipping activity, wind and climatic data along with explanatory and background material to allow anyone with an interest to keep track of lead and dust emissions.

A second critical activity has been to understand the level of concern Townsville people should have about lead and dust levels. Working with port users, DEHP, DSITI and especially Queensland Health, the PSWG is satisfied that ongoing levels of environmental lead are only about 10% of that which would require further investigation. Along with other normal exposure, this would not be expected to exceed that level, is well within the expected community range, and below the level that would trigger further investigation.

PSWG members:

- Community Representatives - Clive Berger, Ian Ferguson, James Hobbs, Judy Newman
- Department of Environment and Heritage Protection
- Department of Health – Townsville Public Health Unit
- Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation
- Glencore (formerly Xstrata)
- North Queensland Conservation Council
- Northern Stevedoring Services
- Port of Townsville Limited
- South32 (formerly BHP Billiton)
- Sun Metals
- Townsville Bulk Storage and Handling
- Townsville City Council

- Independent Chair – David Donohue