

## **Townsville Port Stakeholder Working Group Media statement – 24/6/2015**

The complete Townsville Port Stakeholder Working Group met for the second time yesterday (24/6/2015) for what was a positive and useful session.

The four community representatives (Clive Berger, James Hobbs, Judy Newman and Ian Ferguson) reported positively back from their tour of the Port facilities, noting the large amount of recent building work and improvement throughout the area.

Major port users briefed the Group on their current processes focusing on dust and contaminant control as well as their plans for future improvement. Particularly welcomed advice of:

- South32 (Cannington Mine) enhancements to dust and stormwater controls and commissioning of real-time control monitoring.
- Glencore's (Mount Isa Mines) ongoing plans to focus on runoff and stormwater control as part of their continuous improvement at the Port
- Northern Stevedoring Services (NSS), which manages Port operations for the Sun Metals Refinery, implementation of real-time monitoring of dust and contaminants during loading and moving to solar power for its bulk storage facility to improve sustainability.

The Group will hear from other major port users - Queensland Nickel and Townsville Bulk Storage and Handling (TBSH) in future sessions.

The Group welcomed the effort port users are putting into minimising their impact on the environment – noting Glencore's recent investment of \$16m in environmental improvements at the Port as well as a further \$17 million earmarked for additional environmental improvements and contaminant control measures; and Northern Stevedoring Services new \$13 million fully-enclosed and negatively pressurised bulk facility.

While port users acknowledged to the Group that there is more to be done, they are taking real steps forward in reducing the environmental and social impact of the \$8 billion of trade that moves through the Port each year.

The Department of Science, Information Technology and Innovation (DSITI) advised it plans to have the upgraded 24/7 dust monitoring unit installed at the Coast Guard Monitoring Station by the end of July and the Group accepted the need for a period of commissioning and calibration before the system "goes live" later in the year.

This near real-time data will be a valuable tool for all concerned to better understand sources and impacts of dust in the area.

Next meetings will focus on gaining from regulators an understanding of the regulatory environment, accepted guidelines for assessing dust and contaminant levels, and accepted triggers for concern and action.

The community of Townsville has every right to be concerned about human health and environmental impacts from any source, and the Group is working collaboratively to understand the current situation and the work being done to improve performance.

The Group accepts it has a complex job ahead of it, seeking to:

- better inform our community about environmental performance at the Port by ensuring people have accurate and factual information about issues relating to air quality, dust deposition and environmental management practices,
- support and stimulate improvements to environmental performance,
- and to contribute to making Townsville a better place to live and work.

To achieve these outcomes we have agreed to work together, sharing and discussing information, and reaching consensus.

Based on mutual trust, the Group will be a forum where all members are able to present and discuss issues without fear of misinterpretation or misreporting. All members have a role to play in ensuring that the Group becomes neither a “talk fest” nor an exchange of polished public documents.

David Donohue

Chair, Townsville Port Stakeholder Working Group

0407 169 851