



EXHIBITION OF POTENTIAL SITES FOR HAZARDOUS/ INDUSTRIAL WASTE TREATMENT PRECINCTS

October 2005

Discussion Paper:

Opportunities for Communities to have a Greater Role in the Ongoing Monitoring of Hazardous/Industrial Waste Treatment Precincts

Background

A desire for greater community engagement and oversight of hazardous/industrial waste treatment facilities has been raised often during the 3C's stakeholder involvement program. Community distrust of government regulation and industry management of hazardous waste was identified early in this process and persists in the community.

This discussion paper summarises the 3C's initial thinking on how the community can have input into the management of precincts on an ongoing basis. We invite comments from our stakeholders on this issue. We will consolidate all comments received during the public exhibition period and provide this as advice to State Government for their consideration and inclusion in their precinct management and legislative model as appropriate. The process for developing the precinct model is outlined in Briefing Paper 8.

Advice on Dedicated Precinct Committees

We propose that a separate precinct monitoring committee be established for each precinct to maximise local stakeholder knowledge and input. Their main functions would be to:

- discuss issues arising from precinct operations,
- hear and discuss community views and concerns,
- provide feedback to local communities on the operation of the precinct
- provide advice as necessary to relevant government authorities and Ministers.

Precinct Committee Structure

The 3C proposes that separate committees would exist for each precinct established out of the siting process. It is envisaged that there be one in each of the Pilbara, Goldfields and South-West areas?

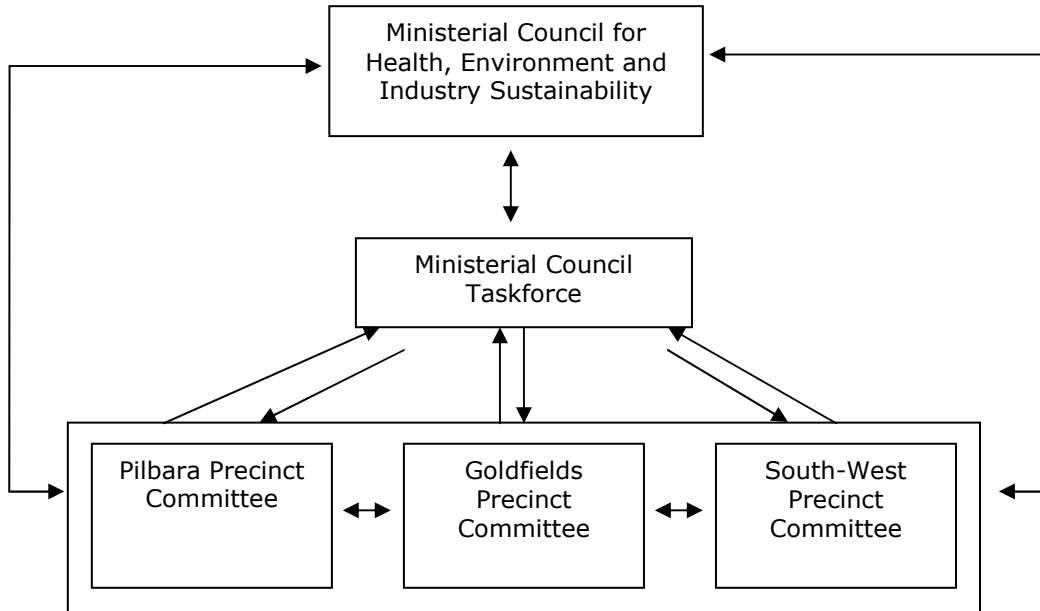
There are a number of different options for who the committees could report to, such as:

- the precinct management body (eg, if precincts are managed on behalf of Government by LandCorp, then reporting to LandCorp);
- the Department of Environment (DoE);
- an interdepartmental advisory committee (with high-level participation from the DoE, Department of Industry and Resources (DoIR), WorkSafe WA, Department of Health (DoH) e.g. the Ministerial Council Taskforce referred to in Figure 1)
- The Minister for the Environment; or

- The Ministerial Council for Health Environment and Industry Sustainability via the Minister for the Environment. The Ministerial Council includes the following Ministers: Environment (Chair); Planning and Infrastructure; Health; State Development, Tourism and Small Business; and Consumer and Employment Protection.

The 3C's preferred reporting structure is presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1 - Proposed Reporting Structure



Structure of the Regional Precinct Committees

Terms of Reference

The 3C believes that the terms of reference should be negotiated between committee members but would essentially be to:

- monitor the operation of the precinct;
- consider and make recommendations regarding community views and concerns about the precinct;
- advise on issues within the precinct; and
- provide feedback to the local and broader community on a regular basis.

The 3C believes that the main objective should be to ensure that the precinct operates according to regulatory requirements and operating guidelines, and eliminate (as the first preference, where possible) or minimise negative impact on surrounding areas.

We propose the following membership and structure for committees:

Membership

Ministerial appointment from nominations by stakeholder groups for a term of two years.

Membership up to 12 members (however, eight may be more manageable) consisting of representation from:

- One waste treater management representative
- One waste treater worker representative
- One waste generator

- Three local community representatives (including indigenous)
- One local government representative
- One community health representative (General Practitioner, nurse or similarly qualified person)
- One environmental group representative
- One representative from the transport sector.

In addition, it is proposed that one or two Agency officer representatives attend the committee meetings in an advisory capacity. These officers would not be appointed by the Minister (eg, representatives from DoE, DOIR, DoH).

The 3C propose that an independent chair be selected by consensus agreement of the committee with provision for a six-month probationary appointment. The chair should have technical and public involvement background. The chair's appointment to be endorsed by the appropriate Minister.

Proposed Activities of the Precinct Committees

- Review precinct monitoring data .
- Review any public complaints/suggestions and precinct incident reports and recommend action where necessary.
- Provide ongoing advice to Department of Environment about precinct operations and issues, and report annually to the Minister for the Environment.
- Provide a forum for stakeholder discussions about activities in the precinct.
- Disseminate information to local communities about activities in the precinct including any problems or opportunities arising.
- Provide advice on monitoring programs for technologies in the precinct (frequency, accuracy, siting etc).
- Provide quarterly public information meetings for the first year of precinct operation and then six monthly or as required thereafter.

Issues that Could be Considered by the Committees

- The types and volumes of hazardous waste entering and leaving the precinct and their form (liquid, solid, encapsulated etc).
- Changes in waste types permitted to enter the precinct.
- Changes in types and operating conditions of technologies in the precinct.
- Timely access to monitoring data for any emissions generated by treatment technologies.
- Conformance of technologies to operational standards for the precinct.
- Timely access to groundwater monitoring data.
- The workplace operational standards of facilities within the precinct (safety, handling of materials, storage etc).
- Emergency response preparedness.
- Issues relating to precinct expansion or contraction.
- Maintenance of buffer integrity.
- Regulatory standards and enforcement.
- Changes to Licences and Works Approvals.
- Traffic issues (safety, congestion, DG routes).
- Periodic review of complaints/adverse reactions register, incident reports and reviews.
- Periodic review and advice on biological monitoring program for worker safety.
- Periodic review and advice on precinct worker concerns and health issues.
- General amenity issues related to precinct.

Resources

We propose that the Ministerially-appointed committee be entitled to sitting fees and that additional resources may be made available from Waste Management Board funds or other sources.

Questions and Thought Starters

The 3C is seeking your thoughts on this paper. In particular, we would like to hear your responses to the following questions:

1. Do you believe there is a need for precinct monitoring committees?
2. Who should be represented on the committees?
3. How should members be identified and appointed?
4. Should members be appointed on a voluntary basis or be modestly remunerated for their effort?
5. What should the committee reporting structures be (to whom should the committees report to)?
6. What types of issues should be considered by the committees?
7. What other issues do you think should be considered?