

VWMA - Independent Inquiry into EPA Government Response



Environment
Protection
Authority Victoria





ANDREWS LABOR GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO THE INDEPENDENT INQUIRY INTO THE ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY



Government Response

Delivers an EPA that:

- is focused on prevention
- gives industry clarity, certainty and support
- holds polluters to account
- is modern, with fit-for-purpose legislation
- is more responsive to local and regional issues
- has strengthened governance
- is a trusted, authoritative source of science

Key Reform Directions

Legislative overhaul

- *Statutory Objective* to protect human health and the environment by reducing the harmful effects of pollution and waste
- *General Duty* to minimise risk of harm to human health and environment

Increased capability and expertise for EPA

- Environmental public health
- Chief Environmental Scientist
- Prosecution strategy

Better integration and coordination on whole of government responses

- Mining
- Land-use planning
- Environmental Justice

Increased service delivery for community and industry

- Local government environment protection officers - pilot
- Support to comply
- Reliable, up to date information/ access to risk data

Key reform elements relevant to the waste sector

Changes proposed for legislative framework

- EPA objective focused on harmful effects of pollution and waste (Rec 5.3)
- General Duty (Rec 12.1)
- Licensing – fixed terms, regular reviews, post-closure licensing (Rec 12.3)
- Notification of pollution incidents (Rec 12.3)
- Strengthened sanctions (Recs 13.3)
- Review regulation/management of hazardous wastes and asbestos risks (Rec 14.3)
- Licensees to make emissions monitoring information publicly available (Rec 16.2)

More effective local response

- Pilot local government environment protection officers (Rec 18.1 - 18.3)

Better integration across government

- Whole of government approaches to complex problems and environmental justice (Recs 7.1, 7.3)
- Strategic land use planning to reduce conflicts, protect sensitive uses, identify and protect buffers (Recs 10.1 - 10.3)

Building EPA capability

- Prosecution strategy (Rec 13.1)
- Increased resourcing for land use planning functions

Improving risk information and access to government data

- Site history database (Rec 14.1)
- Statewide environmental monitoring and reporting of health, environmental & liveability outcomes (Rec 7.2)

Key reforms: interim board

Appointment of an **interim board**.

- Chaired by Cheryl Batagol
- Members: Dr John Stocker, Professor Rebekah Brown, Ross Pilling, Monique Conheady, Debra Russell, Robert Hogarth and Professor Arie Frieberg

Key reforms: Environmental Public Health Unit

- Early support for implementing a reformed environmental public health function in EPA.
- In December 2016 the EPH function and staff transferred from DHHS to EPA. EPA now has an established environmental public health function and we will be enhancing and building this function over time.
- EPA has appointed Dr Andrea Hinwood as Victoria's first Chief Environmental Scientist.

Key reforms: Local Government EPO Pilot

- Establish a new statewide network of local gov't environmental protection officers to address localised pollution and waste complaints, appropriately authorized under the EP Act (eg. Litter, noise, septic tanks)
- Pilot funded for approx. 10 councils in 17/18
- Currently designing scope of pilot with DELWP and stakeholders

Phases of implementation



Draft Strategic Framework

Our Vision

- A healthy environment supports a liveable and prosperous Victoria now and always

Our Purpose

- To protect the environment and human health by preventing and reducing the harm from pollution and waste.

Our Role

- A world class environmental regulator of pollution and waste.

Draft Strategic Framework

Our Strategic Priorities

1. Equip community and business

We work with community and business to help them understand their environment and duty in protecting it

2. Be an influential authority

We are a trusted source of advice on environmental standards and conditions, environmental regulation of pollution and waste and influential in working with others to address complex problems.

3. Prevent harm

We work with others to prevent harm from pollution and waste

4. Respond to harm

We hold polluters to account and work with our partners to respond to pollution and emergency incidents and legacy contamination

5. Organisational excellence to enable world class environmental regulation

We are an organisation that values our people and supports them to deliver public value through high performance

EPA's approach

- Committed to delivering a next generation EPA for Victorians
- Focused on
 - Outcome delivery
 - Engaging with diversity of stakeholders
 - Ongoing service delivery + ambitious reform agenda

Questions?

