

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
SOUTHERN PORTS - ESPERANCE  
PORT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

**Date:** Wednesday, 19 May 2021  
**Venue:** Southern Ports – Esperance Administration Boardroom  
 Cnr Bower Avenue and the Esplanade, Esperance WA 6450  
**Time:** 1630 hours

<b>Attendees:</b>	Stephen Francis Brett Thorp Stephen Schmedje David Swan Malcolm Heasman Basil Parker Steve Lewis Robert Alexander Scott Bates Alex Leonard Monica Birkner Michelle Spicer	Committee Member & PCCC Chair Committee Member & PCCC Deputy Chair Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Shire Representative CEO, Southern Ports General Manager Port Development, Southern Ports Regional Manager, SP Esperance Environment Manager, SP Esperance General Manager Sustainability, Southern Ports Committee Secretary, SP Esperance
<b>Apologies:</b>	Simon Gribble Tori Castledine	Committee Member Corporate Affairs Advisor, SP

Meeting opened by Chairperson Stephen Francis (SF) at 16:37 hours, who welcomed all and thanked all for attending.  
 Above apologies were noted.

**1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Chairperson Stephen Francis declared Pacific National team will be visiting Esperance port within one month.

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 03 FEBRUARY 2021**

The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 03 February 2021 were noted as approved via circular resolution on 15 March 2021. The circular resolution is affirmed by the committee.

This was acknowledged by Brett Thorp (BT) and seconded by David Swan (DS).

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

None

**4. COVID-19 UPDATE**

Scott Bates (SB), *Regional Manager Esperance* provided the following COVID-19 update:

Scott welcomed CEO Steve Lewis recently returned from annual leave where Keith Wilks was acting CEO for 5 weeks.

Some employees were affected by the recent protocols and partial lockdown put in place for returning individuals from Perth/Peel region. This was due to a Managers Training Workshop held in Perth, where multiple employees and managers attended. Employees adhered to and displayed a robust approach to the measures in place.

The 14-day rule for vessels remains in place with positive vessel reporting results continuing.

A large percentage of frontline staff have received the COVID-19 vaccine along with multiple other staff. The vaccine has been offered to all employees however is not compulsory. Recent information regarding potential risk to individuals under the age of 50 has been repeatedly communicated to all staff and management are keeping up to date with all latest advice. There have been no adverse effects recorded to date. In the event that an employee may feel unwell, they are not required to return to work until feeling well.

Trade has not been affected, however due to release of COVID stimulus packages, there is a currently a shortage of labour due to an abundance of work in the region for specialised tradesmen.

Southern Ports (SP) are continuing to maintain vigilant measures including utilising correct PPE, social distancing and cleaning regimes.

Southern Ports remain ready to activate any measures if and when necessary.

All agencies are working well together and communicating regularly to ensure protocols are being followed and latest information is provided.

## 5. TRADE FACILITATION & SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE

Scott Bates, *Regional Manager Esperance* provided an update on current trade and new trade opportunities for Port of Esperance:

<b>Iron Ore -</b>	Iron Ore strong. Train derailment today is expected to have minor impact
<b>Spodumene -</b>	Well up on budget
<b>CBH -</b>	Transport issues have slowed grain down, however expected to catch up
<b>Fertiliser -</b>	Very strong, on track for a significant increase on budget
<b>Nickel -</b>	Slight reduction due to some product being sent to the Kalgoorlie smelter and some supply chain/shipping issues for one customer
<b>Fuel -</b>	Trade is steady, slightly up on budget
<b>Sulphur -</b>	Trade is steady
<b>Woodchips -</b>	Vessel due 2 <sup>nd</sup> June.
<b>Copper -</b>	Copper price is currently high

Due to current shortage of truck drivers some customers are having problems transporting product.

SP working with customers to assist the challenges in supply chain – rail, road, storage and access to Berths.

### Potential Upcoming Trade:

- Ongoing and progressive discussions with Macarthur. Development team continue to engage with them around the master planning.
- Yilgarn Mine

With the current high price of Iron Ore, the port continues to look at supply chain options whilst taking into consideration impact on Esperance town.

Comment around copper price and production due to the use of copper in green energy.

## 6. PORT DEVELOPMENT/PROJECTS UPDATE

Robert Alexander, *General Manager Port Development – Southern Ports* provided the following update on Port development/projects:

### Master Planning

Draft Master Planning document has been completed and will now go through internal review process.

Once key stakeholders have provided feedback, final draft will be developed, and further consultation will take place before finally closing the loop and finishing with stakeholder engagement piece.

The process has been positive, and we look forward to the opportunities and options for Esperance Port.

SP will continue to engage with the community for future planning of the port.

### Projects:

Due to high volume of work out in the market across the state, we have had some issues securing contractors and labour on some of our projects.

- **Shed 4 truck wash** – Automatic truck wash project completed
- **Sealing of internal roads** – Project scheduled to commence October 2021
- **Berth 2 hard stand and water treatment** – Impacted by availability of contractors. Currently looking at other options to progress this project.
- **Demolition of Nickel Circuit** – Contract will be awarded late May/early June. Potential high risk works due to working at heights and older infrastructure - SP will monitor closely to ensure our systems and processes are followed.
- **Breakwater repairs** – Preventative Maintenance ongoing. Shield rock works currently happening.
- **Power Station Connection** – New power station schedule to be completed March 2022. SP required to carry out a piece of work to connect to that. Transformers and cables procured. Project tracking along as expected.

SF – Question raised regarding project budgets and any impact cost wise?

RA – Projects have individual budget and most have contracts already in place. SP will explore alternate options if necessary and seek value for money.

SF – Demolition of nickel circuit, any expected dust issues?

RA – Has been considered in tender package if nickel residue is detected and will work closely with environmental during project.

SB – Due to regular cleaning of circuit we expect minimal dust.

SP will continue to communicate with key stakeholders and take a holistic approach to support the supply chain and match capacity going forward, as per master planning.

## 7. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Alex Leonard (AL), *Environment Manager Esperance*, provided the following environmental management update:

### Woodchips

Additional loading controls were implemented whilst there was dry product. These measures will also be applied to fresh harvested product going forward. The remaining small amount of dry

product will be blended with full moisture product (90% fresh – 10% dry) prior to being shiploaded. All subsequent vessels will be loaded at 100% freshly harvested product going forward. While no dust issues are expected going forward, a system of dust screens developed by the *Tasmanian Environmental Protection Authority* for loading woodchips at the Port of Burnie will be trialled to indicate nuisance depositional dust to better guide decisions on loading controls and to avoid potential dust on nearby houses.

### **Iron Ore**

SP continue to take a proactive approach for improvements on dust controls.

Two independent dust control experts will review existing dust controls on the iron ore circuit early in June to identify any practical recommendations for improvement. The objective is to get as many improvements in place as possible before 2021/2022 summer. The final step will be to benchmark the Port's circuit against other iron ore handling circuits. The iron ore circuit to Berth 3 represented best practice in dust control when it was built in 2000 with the Port winning the Golden Gecko for the work in 2003. SP seek to maintain future focus with best practices going forward.

While the plan to optimise dust controls may not guarantee acceptable dust emissions due to exterior elements, it will demonstrate the Port is doing all it can to control dust. This will assist negotiations on conditions relating to acceptable product quality in the commercial contract with MRL. Dust is a potential issue due to the nature of the inconsistent product.

### **Sulphur**

Dust from the sulphur operations has been greatly improved following collaboration between the Port and FQM. Improvements in loading controls included the purchase of a surfactant dosing system to treat the sulphur in the holds of the ship before it is unloaded by grab and hopper. The most recent shipment unloading rates outstripped the rate of conditioning causing some occupational issues with dust onsite. Going forward additional hatch changes are being scheduled to allow more time for conditioning.

Quantitative risk assessment on sulphur handling regarding fire and explosions is still progressing. This includes investigating if there are any further controls that can be undertaken to reduce risks. Indicative results show the risk is low however further action is required on the ammonium nitrate storage to reduce this further. Discussions with GHD on the modelling are continuing as they assess the risks.

### **Biosecurity**

The port is now registered as first point of entry to receive international containers and exemption process no longer required.

With this approval comes the additional responsibility with the port accountable for biosecurity container inspections. The responsibility is largely transferred to stevedores via SP Port Access Licence, Ports Standards and Procedures and stevedoring licence. Both QUBE and Lynx have been trained by the local DAWE biosecurity officer in order to uphold standards.

### **Contaminated Sites**

Works have been completed on the underground fuel tank at Taylor street that the Bell tower is built on. The underground tank and associated pipes were cleaned out and filled with concrete according to the relevant standards. The topsoil was put back and the area mulched to allow pedestrians a wider walkway between the tearooms and the park with some native planting of the area to be completed.

Costs of these works and the Contaminated Sites assessment were recovered from owner BP. An expert in contaminated sites has been engaged to summarise all the historical investigations across the Port precinct including our leased land and present a case to the regulator that only low risks of contamination remain in our soils and groundwater, and given the use of land is not commercial, that the Ports two Lots containing both the landside Port operational areas and inner harbour seabed should be rezoned and restricted to commercial use and no further remediation or investigation is required.

### **State Marine Reserves**

Following on from initial briefing on the South Coast State Marine Reserves in March 2020, consultation recommenced recently following a pause due to COVID. The engagement strategy contains eight Sector Reference Groups including industry that consist of the Ports of Esperance and Albany. The information presented was mostly repeated from the previous briefing with no definitive areas yet marked on where the marine parks will be located and what restrictions on use will apply.

The representative from DBCA and DPIRD indicated that most of the areas on the South Coast will be east of Bremer Bay but repeated previous re-assurances that Port operations will be unaffected. Port's previous comments relating to the reduced boundary of Port waters and leaving Butty Head out of the reserves in the possible event that Port infrastructure is required at this location to facilitate trade will be resubmitted.

BT added further comment outlining the government's proposal for State Marine Reserve encompassing Esperance entire archipelago.

Southern Ports board of Directors visiting Esperance joined the meeting. Introductions were made.

### **Environmental data management system**

An Environmental data management system has now been procured for use across the environment teams of the three Ports and works to upload all our monitoring programs and historical data. The system will improve efficiency and reduce errors in data handling and potentially allow communication with other Port systems such as the Enterprise Resource Planning system that is currently being developed.

## **8. STRATEGIC PROJECTS UPDATE**

Steve Lewis (SL), *CEO Southern Ports*, provided the following strategic projects update:

Master Planning will assist how the Port of Esperance develops and future investment profile.

Supply chain route from Yilgarn will be a significant project which ties into previous supply chain work done prior to master planning.

ERP Project (Financial Accounting System) out for EOI.

Vision for Esperance is to be a smart port in asset work and additional technologies. The future we are mapping out is to utilise digital options within the next 4 years.

Towage tender out for Esperance and Bunbury.

Strategy document will be presented at next Esperance PCCC Meeting.

All of the above underpinned by commitment to sustainability.  
Trade in Esperance is very positive.

Discussion from committee in regard to towage tender process if weight is given to local business?

SL – Buy local is a government requirement to be incorporated.

## **9. MEDIA REPORT**

Monica Birkner, *General Manager Sustainability – Southern Ports* provided the following media and sponsorship report:

Media coverage of a range of topics relevant to Southern Ports and the Port of Esperance over the last three months included:

- The State Government's, including key agencies, ongoing response to COVID-19
- State Election issues

- Opening of the new Esperance jetty

Our social media presences continues to build our brand and profile throughout our regions

- 1529 people like our Facebook page and we have 1562 followers on linked in (up 212 since the last quarter)
- In the last quarter close to 148,000 people were exposed to our Facebook content and our LinkedIn posts were viewed close to 40,000 times
- We continue to perform strongly against other port-related social media pages
- We are seeing an increase in engagement from our stakeholders (particularly organisations we have provided sponsorship support to) and our port users
- About a third of our social media followers are based in Esperance

Recently we've provided sponsorship and community support to a number of organisations, including:

- Esperance Crisis Accommodation – Women's Refuge Children's play area
- Esperance Squash Club – 2021 Open Tournament
- Ocean Heroes Australia – surfing education camps for people with autism
- Esperance Depp Sea Angling Club – 2021 Archipelago Offshore Angling Classic
- Condingup Primary School P&C – 2021 Condy Community Fair
- Munglingup Bushmen's Association – 20201 Campdraft

## 10. MEMBER DISCUSSION/FEEDBACK & COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

PCCC Committee members added further comment commending efforts and level of community engagement and relayed very positive feedback from the community.

Southern Ports will be involved in the Esperance Agricultural Show in 2021.

Committee member SS thanked SP on behalf of the Rotary Club for funding for driver training simulator for Esperance Senior High School.

DS – EBYC working with the port on a number of projects including Marina development and port assisting in developing an Environmental Management Plan for new marina.

BP – On behalf of shire - grateful for resolution of Taylor St Fuel Tank.

BT – Esperance predominantly becoming grain growing area with yields cranking up.

Discussion with board and members around largest issue for Esperance Community. Most issues revolve around dust and contamination.

It was noted from members that improvements have been significant in the last 10 years. SP continues to work around wind directions, loading regimes, implementation of monitoring systems.

## 11. ITEMS FOR FUTURE DISCUSSION/PRESENTATION (relevant to port operations)

SP currently going through recruitment process for stevedores.

## 12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None

**Meeting Closed:** 18:05 hours

**Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 04<sup>th</sup> August 2021