

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

**Date:** Wednesday, 1 February 2023  
**Venue:** Southern Ports – Esperance Administration Boardroom  
 Cnr Bower Avenue and the Esplanade, Esperance WA 6450  
**Time:** 1700 hours

<b>Attendees:</b>	Stephen Francis Stephen Schemedje Frank Roe Wayne Walter Rob Horan Steve Lewis Scott Bates Rob Alexander Alex Leonard Alana Monaghan  Michelle Spicer	Committee Member & PCCC Chair Committee Member & PCCC Deputy Chair Committee Member Committee Member Esperance Shire Representative CEO, SPA Regional Manager, SPA Esperance General Manager Port Development, SPA Environmental Manager, SPA Esperance Corporate Communications & External Affairs Manager, SPA Committee Secretary, SPA Esperance
<b>Apologies:</b>	Kris Starcevich Malcolm Heasman Pia Powell David Swan	Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member

Meeting opened by Chairperson at 17:01 hours, who welcomed all and thanked everyone for attending.  
 Apologies were noted.

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

None

**2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 2 November 2022**

The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 2 November 2022 were noted as approved via circular resolution on 30 November 2022. The circular resolution is affirmed by the committee.

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

No matters arising

**4. COVID-19 UPDATE**

Management provided an update on COVID-19:

Although we see COVID slowing down in our community, Southern Ports will continue to provide an update at PCCC meetings for any new information or impacts. Covid leave has been extended until 31 March in line with government policy. October/November saw an increase in cases within our workforce. There has been minimal impact on port operations and no disruptions to our service delivery.

## **5. TRADE FACILITATION & SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE**

Management provided an update on current and new trade for Port of Esperance:

As at end of January Esperance port is sitting above trade forecast with over 7.6MT imports and exports.

- Grain exports are already over 2MT for this financial year.
- Strong growth in Spodumene/Lithium which sees our multiuser shed (shed 4) fully utilised.
- Fertiliser season has commenced, expect to see an increase in vessels.
- Iron-ore remains steady and on budget with optimistic negotiations continuing.
  - Discussion was held around a potential smaller venture customer north of Norseman. The resource is there however there is some work to do on operational modelling.
- Discussion around potential containerised rare earth product.
- Nickel/Copper slightly down this financial year, however the port is expecting tonnage through late Feb/Early March.
- Nickel conference to be held in Perth next month, SPA will attend.
- Increasing enquiries around break bulk cargo for windfarms.
- Discussions around potential biomass woodchip exports (essentially biomass woodchips are burnt chip that can be utilised in power stations).

## **6. PORT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Management provided an update on port development and projects in Esperance:

### **Projects:**

- Berth 2 flush tank and DMT filter – this will result in absolute best practice of our storm water/effluent treatment.
- Container Crane secondary structures updates – to ensure full life expectancy of the asset.
- Shed 3 recladding project – innovated and descoped due to contractor availability, will go back out to market soon.
- Ongoing asset recovery program.
- Ongoing asset inspections program including conveyor structures, sheds, RCD.
- Hughes road repairs.

### **Master Plan**

(currently with the Minister's office)

- SPA working with our board looking at building a business case for shorter term redevelopment opportunities for Esperance port.
- Asset management system nearly at completion and we will be looking to go for certification which would see Esperance being the only port in Australia with certification for asset management.

Further discussion was held around:

- Southern Ports received a high commendation for 'Port of the year' (close second to the award winner) at the recent Industry awards.
- Funding submissions in FY24 cycle:
  - Hughes road entire rebuild
  - Renewing control systems
  - Operations centre for employees

## **7. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Environmental Management provided the following update:

*Continuing Items:*

### **Biosecurity**

Several incidents in the quarter:

- Two bee swarms reported to DAFF (Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry) and removed from site – were sampled for varroa parasites that were not found.
- One overseas container full of beetles that were found to be a local species, potentially the container had been left open at a local grain yard under artificial lights that attracted the beetles. This was also reported to DAFF and fully investigated.
- Imported fertiliser contaminated with Chinese grain reported to DAFF. All solids and wash waters contained and isolated. Biosecurity Officer sampled grain and found low biosecurity risks, non-viable seed, and no parasites present. Fertiliser was released by DAFF for BAU (biological use authorisation).

Although undesirable, recent incidents gave opportunity for the team to exercise procedures in place. Management commended the Environmental Team on their quick and effective responses.

### **State Marine Parks**

Butty Head, the preferred contingency site for Port development has been left out of the proposed sanctuary zone network. Will still be in the marine parks as a general use area and lower level of protection. As the area is less than 5% of the marine park, it can be removed from the marine park by DBCA without Ministerial approval. Thus, should not be an impediment to any development if FFI or the Port require it.

*New items:*

Environmental Team have been assisting the Project Team in setting defensible management triggers for quality of groundwater discharged for dewatering excavations included in works to improve the stormwater treatment system on B2.

Confirmed proposed new storm moorings being laid on the seabed within Port waters do not require a native vegetation clearing permit under an exclusion clause when building a permanent structure.

### **Marine Environmental Quality Planning (MEQP)**

Across Ports of Albany, Bunbury and Esperance has commenced a voluntary initiative to establish a coordinated risk-based marine management plan. This will be supported by monitoring programs to establish environmental quality baselines. As well as better managing the marine environment, the MEQP will also expedite approvals for development earmarked in the draft Master Plan

It is anticipated the stakeholder consultation will be organised in the next few weeks. This will help direct the focus of what uses of the marine environment should be protected by the plan. A list of

interested parties will be drawn, along with PCCC members, invites will include Tjaltjraak, DBCA and South Coast NRM.

### **Truck Noise and MRWA signage raised as an issue by local labour member**

SPA has approached MRWA several times to re-assess signage on Harbour Road obliging trucks not to use their compression brakes through residential areas and to address the signage to the Tommy Windich precinct. MRWA indicated they are withdrawing compression braking signage and no longer placing signs restricting caravan access to unsuitable roads. This response was regarded as unsatisfactory, and elevation will be further considered.

To assist SPA potentially identify drivers, we ask complainants to provide exact times of noise occurrence. Truck companies have been very responsive to complaints relayed.

Shire rep will raise at the next Roadwise committee meeting.

*Further discussion was held around:*

- Environmental team are eagerly anticipating the new storm water system on Berth 2. Achieving this at the port which will represent best practice.
- PCCC members extended appreciation from the Esperance community to the environmental team at the port for their ongoing efforts.

## **8. STRATEGIC PROJECTS UPDATE**

SPA CEO updated members with a Strategic Projects report, which covered the following topics:

- Appointment of southern Ports CEO – Keith Wilks, Southern Ports' current COO, has been appointed as the incoming CEO of Southern Ports, commencing 1 May 2023. Steve Lewis, current CEO, will work closely with Keith to ensure a smooth transition prior to his retirement.
- Southern Ports strategy remains the same, '*strong regional ports, strong regions*' which is underpinned by trade and investment, operational excellence and sustainability.
- FY24 Strategy:
  - Iron Ore strategy for magnetite and supply chain
  - Grain strategy – working with CBH on trade forecasts
- Master Plan currently with Minister's Office – endorsement expected in the coming months.
- Working on PMax (port maximisation) projects to present to the minister. Strategic asset plan will remain in place along with the planning of individual projects as required.
- Technology:
  - Esperance port driving 'smart ports' technology
  - Award recognition in asset technology
  - Internal systems – IntelliPorts project
- 2023 will see some work on cyber security.
- Asset management system accreditation.
- Asset recovery program – continuing across the three ports.
- GTE bill – government has introduced GTE bill which will provide more control over funding and other elements of state finance. This will align WA with other states.
- Employer of choice – focus on our people and enhancing aspects such as training, development, diversity, and inclusion to mention a few.
- Sustainability:
  - Sustainability Plan – Working on embedding sustainability practices and this is based on an internal draft sustainability plan.
  - Emissions reduction – emissions baseline work completed last year.

- We have looked at a series of options for reducing emissions by 2030 and reaching the government target of net zero emissions by 2050.
- Climate change risk – discussion was held around climate change risk and potential future impacts on the port. This study was based around port infrastructure (not secondary impacts like trade forecasting due to climate change). Based on several different scenarios modelled, it is unlikely to see any impacts in the short or long-term, however regular assessment will be ongoing (minimum every 5 years) and if potential impacts are identified, these will be factored into future asset renewals and asset management.

On behalf of the community and members, the PCCC thanked CEO Steve Lewis for his input at Southern Ports and effort in attending meetings over the years and wished him all the best on his retirement.

## 9. CORPORATE AFFAIRS UPDATE

The following media and sponsorship statistics were provided to the PCCC prior to the meeting and included in minutes for public perusal:

### Media Coverage

Media coverage relating to Southern Ports and the Port of Esperance from 24 October to 23 January has included:

- DCN Australian Shipping & Maritime Industry Awards
- Tugboat operator competition in regional ports
- Taylor Street Jetty
- Cruise infrastructure
- Return of shore leave for seafarers

### Community Investment Program

Eleven Esperance-based community groups and organisations have received support from Southern Ports in the most recent round of our Community Investment Program.

Successful applicants in this round were:

Organisation	Activity
Esperance Cycling Club	Tour De Esperance 2023
Esperance Deep Sea Angling Club	Esperance Archipelago Offshore Angling Classic
Esperance Equestrian Club	Southern Ports Annual Training and Development Camp
Esperance Golf Club	Esperance Golf Classic
Esperance Mechanical Restoration Group	Restoration Chamberlain Model 40K Tractor
Esperance Lotteries House	ELH Access Ramp
Fitzgerald Biosphere Group	Into the Biosphere (Esperance events)
Hopetoun Community Resource Centre	Fitz Kids Cook
Restore Hope Foundation Esperance	Christmas Hampers
Ravensthorpe Community Resource Centre	Ravensthorpe Community Christmas Tree
South East Vets Football Club	2023 away game in Kalgoorlie

Applications for the next round of funding are currently being sought, closing on Wednesday 15 February 2023.

## Stakeholder survey

Southern Ports' key stakeholder survey is nearing completion, with community members, port customers and other key stakeholders contacted for interview in late 2023. With all interviews now complete, data analysis is underway with the report expected in February 2023.

## Social media

In the October to December quarter:

- Southern Ports' LinkedIn page continued to achieve excellent growth with:
  - 300+ new followers
  - 1,300 reactions (a 22% increase on last quarter) and 3,200+ clicks (an 67% increase on last quarter)
  - a record number of video views (9,745 views)
- Southern Ports' Facebook page recorded a modest 33 new followers and 4,500 engagements. While still solid and growing, Facebook performance was lower than previous quarters due to several factors, including page maturity, fewer paid advertising campaigns, and a seasonal slump (also recorded in 2021).

Southern Ports' Facebook page provided an opportunity to connect with the following regional organisations during the quarter:

- Edge of the Bay Festival
- Esperance Twilight Aerials Gymnastic Academy

Human interest content relating to Southern Ports' staff and local communities remain popular with our followers. The highest performing posts related to:

- Industry awards – Southern Ports' commendation at the Australian Shipping & Maritime Industry Awards
- Maritime industry activities – a tug naming ceremony held in collaboration with Svitzer
- Community – a port visit by the Esperance Port Community Consultation Committee
- Environment – posts about wildlife at the ports.

*Further discussion was held around:*

- On behalf of the Rotary Club of Esperance, a big thank you to Southern Ports for their contribution to the Australia day celebrations which was a huge success seeing at least 4-5 thousand people attend.
- Local Content – Southern Ports are proud to support our surrounding feeder towns via the community investment program with broader advertising happening for the program.

## 10. MEMBER DISCUSSION/FEEDBACK & COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Discussion was held around the following:

- Management of unfenced lake area at Taylor St Park where the Australia Day celebrations were held.

- The land is owned by Southern Ports and leased and managed by Esperance Shire.
- Mackenzie Marine & Towage (MMT) 50-year anniversary next week, PCCC members congratulated MMT on 50 years of reliable and efficient service.
- MMT purchase of new tugboat and potential for PCCC members to be given a tour in the future. SPA will contact MMT for further details.

#### **11. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- PCCC Charter under review which will see processes more efficient for running of the PCCC and member approvals. Once finalised the document will be distributed to PCCC members and raised at next meeting.
- Esperance port has seen some skill shortages in the electrical and mechanical fields recently. We are pleased to report we have secured 5 new staff members for roles within the port which has also brought new families to the region.
- Following statement provided by Mission to Seafarers to be included in minutes: *"The Mission to Seamen wish to express their thanks to Michelle for her assistance in our seeking to provide a new vehicle for the transport of seafarers in the port"*

The Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

**Meeting Closed:** 18:14 hours

**Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 3 May 2023