

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

Date: Wednesday, 3 May 2023
Venue: Southern Ports – Esperance Administration Boardroom
 Cnr Bower Avenue and the Esplanade, Esperance WA 6450
Time: 1700 hours

Attendees:	Stephen Schmedje Malcolm Heasman David Swan Wayne Walter Frank Roe Rob Horan Keith Wilks Scott Bates Iain Robinson Monica Birkner Alana Monaghan Dennielle Massang Natasha Norrish Michelle Spicer	Committee Member & PCCC Deputy Chair Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Esperance Shire Representative CEO, SPA Regional Manager, SPA Esperance Interim General Manager Port Development, SPA General Manager Sustainability, SPA Corporate Communications & External Affairs Manager, SPA Communications Specialist, SPA Environmental Advisor, SPA Esperance Committee Secretary, SPA Esperance
Apologies:	Stephen Francis	Committee Member & PCCC Chair

Meeting opened by Deputy Chairperson at 16:59 hours, who welcomed newly appointed Southern Ports CEO, Keith Wilks and thanked everyone for attending.
 Apologies were noted.

1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – 1 February 2023

The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 1 February 2023 were noted as approved via circular resolution on 22 February. 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:

It was discussed that COVID-19 will be removed as an agenda item going forward after today's meeting. If there is any major new information or potential impacts, we will re-visit this topic. Covid is still circulating within the community and our workforce. We continue to practice good hygiene habits and measures remain in place throughout the port, such as hand sanitising stations, signage, and hand washing facilities.

- Reminder to check RAT test expiry dates on any stock supplies
- Recent figures from ITF showed that there is 99% vaccination rate within the global fleet. The high rate of vaccinations lowers business risk to the shipping industry.

5. TRADE FACILITATION & SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE

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

Esperance currently tracking above budget:

- Iron Ore remains steady with potential for the port to facilitate a new customer
- Grain exports expected to break records this year. Ships at anchor are waiting on cargo accumulation at the port. It is unusual at this time of year to be this busy with grain.
- Fertiliser is tracking strong and likely to see a record year in fertiliser imports this year
- Fuel imports on the increase from last year
- We saw a drop in nickel due to issues at IGO with power station fire
- Woodchip trade remains strong - recently we saw a 45,000-tonne vessel

Upcoming prospects:

- Spodumene trade growing, the port continues liaising with potential customers
- Enquiries continue from Nickel producers with nickel prices increasing
- Potential for Feldspar exports through the port via Rotabox. Feldspars are a group of rock-forming aluminosilicate minerals containing varying amounts of potassium, sodium, and calcium, often used in ceramics.
- Committee discussion around rare earth processing plant in Kalgoorlie and if any progress on this to date. Southern Ports (SPA) management confirmed that discussions continue however the customer is exploring opportunities for how best to export product.

6. PORT DEVELOPMENT UPDATE

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

Projects:

- Berth 3 road works – road sealing nearly complete
- Road repairs – maintenance/asphalt repairs near CBH annex and Berth 3 level crossing which tie in nicely with Berth 2 Hardstand works
- Berth 2 flush tank and DMT filter – best practice of storm water/effluent treatment
- Tug Mooring installation – two new storm moorings will facilitate additional tugboats and will provide safe and permanent mooring option for marine towage services.
- Shed 3 recladding project – reduced scope due to contractor availability, currently under tender evaluation
- Container crane secondary structure repairs – to ensure full life expectancy of the asset

Further discussion was held around:

- SPA continue to manage contractor market for current works
- Final Master Plans are available on website

- Taylor St Jetty – discussions continue with Shire of Esperance and DOT to look at options
- Tommy Windich Grave – SPA working with MRWA around signage for directions and access to this area and to solve any confusion, especially for vehicles towing caravans as there is insufficient turn around room

7. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UPDATE

Environmental Management provided the following update:

Recent Incidents:

Submerged vessel in Esperance Bay

A small tender boat for a visiting training vessel, *Immortalis* experienced some difficulties which caused it to become submerged in Esperance Bay around 300 metres off the coast. There was a minor loss of diesel fluid from the breather valve on the vessel. SPA activated our emergency response team who swiftly assisted in the clean-up and retrieval of the tender with minimal impact on surroundings.

Member question regarding a small layer of purple fluid noticed on top of water the following day. Environmental Team confirmed that this was unrelated to the incident and in fact a coral spawning / algae bloom which is common at this time of year. It was noted by the committee that the event was handled very professionally, and emergency drills performed at the port were proven effective for real life events.

Soot Emissions from Vessel

A small amount of soot was emitted from the Inert Gas Generator from a berthed vessel due to a spike of reduced oxygen content. In response to a community complaint, booms and clean-up was complete within a couple of hours.

Further discussion was held around the following:

- Marine Quality Plan Meeting took place in April with some external Stakeholders, including PCCC Members to discuss suggestions what values the community has on protecting marine environment for our Marine Quality Management Plan. SPA has also engaged with Tjaltjraak to discuss embedding cultural values into the plan.

8. SOUTHERN PORTS UPDATE

Newly appointed CEO, Keith Wilks provided the following update:

- Majority of members will know Keith from his former role as Southern Ports COO (since January 2020). Keith was recently appointed as CEO of Southern Ports. This role commenced on 1st May 2023.
- Keith congratulated former CEO Steve Lewis on his distinguished career and wished him well on his retirement. A farewell dinner was held for Steve where he was honoured with a Scholarship in his name: *Steve Lewis Regional Scholarship* which will fund the full tuition for an undergraduate degree or accredited VET program in a STEM, management/leadership, maritime or related field.
- SPA continues to have a strong strategic direction and is in the implementation phase of our current strategy. SPA has expanded from 180 staff to 280 over the past few years with most employees in Esperance.
- We are anticipating the treasurer's budget announcement next week which should see a strong set up for future commodities, approvals for projects around Esperance roads, container crane and operational technology.

- Discussion was held around the recent accolades recognised for Southern Ports. Southern Ports also received a recent award in Asset Management Resilience. Recent awards are reflective of our growing confidence as an organisation and celebrate changes we have made. We celebrate individual ports, and what each port has to offer, however we are very much 'one' Southern Ports.

9. SUSTAINABILITY UPDATE

Sustainability Management provided an overview on Southern Ports Sustainability Plan:

- At Southern Ports, sustainability is: *“ensuring our organisation, people and regional ports are strong, resilient and enduring, both now and for future generations, and that they are contributing to our regions’ ongoing prosperity”*. It underpins decisions made throughout the organisation.
- SPA Sustainability Plan was developed from the ground up through implementation of a working group that engaged with staff, stakeholders and the community.
- Our four sustainability pillars focus on People, Environment, Community & Partners, and Regional Prosperity.

People (engage and empower):

- engage and empower by building an agile and future-focused culture
- support safety, equity, diversity and inclusivity in the workplace
- enhance employee experience and engagement

Environment (protect, regenerate and transition):

- lead on environment performance
- progress climate action and energy transition
- work with nature in our ports

Community and Partners (thrive together):

- foster and support liveable regions
- engage and communicate with communities and stakeholders
- drive collaborative research and project work

Regional Prosperity (build for the future):

- evolve as a globally competitive and resilient business
- facilitate trade and tourism for a connected region
- invest in 'future ports' developments and infrastructure

The future of Taylor St Jetty was raised by committee members:

- Regarding the jetty nearing the end of its useful life (within 6 -12 months), members expressed a strong desire to work as a group together with relevant government departments, to explore solutions for mooring and passenger transfers of tourism vessels
- Currently, there is no other facility in Esperance town centre for tourism vessels to board / disembark passengers'. Temporary pontoons are deployed by SPA for cruise ship tenders, however these are not suitable for permanent use by tourism vessels.
- Discussion around other potential options such as; additional infrastructure in the yacht club marina, utilising the tanker jetty (noted as not possible), and/or Bandy Creek Harbour (suggested most likely solution).
- SPA will continue to communicate with any groups that may be impacted

10. 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 January to 21 April has included:

- Community Investment Program successful recipients
- training vessel tender diesel release
- Taylor Street jetty
- accommodation shortages in Esperance for employers
- plans to set up a green hydrogen hub and export in Esperance
- milestone for tugboat operator Mackenzie Marine and Towing
- award coverage - asset management excellence award; Internet of Things (IoT) awards finalist
- lithium shipments current and potential
- bulk carrier (Interlink Saga) incident when travelling from Busselton to Esperance
- new CEO appointment
- lupin shipment

Community Investment Program

Nine 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 Anglican Community School	Year 8 and 9 Canberra Camp 2023
Esperance Bowling Club Inc	2023 Men's Superfour Bowling Carnival
Esperance Clay Target Club	61 st Annual Easter Carnival
Esperance Community Arts (Inc)	2023 Taste of the World Multicultural Food Festival
Esperance Rugby Club	Esperance Junior Rugby
Hope Community Services	2023 NAIDOC Week Long Table Pamper Lunch
Munglinup Bushmen's Association	Munglinup Bushmen's Easter Campdraft
Ocean Heroes	2023 Ocean Heroes Event
Tangaroa Blue Foundation	WA Beach Clean-Up Esperance

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






Stakeholder survey

Southern Ports' key stakeholder survey has been completed and feedback from community members, port customers and other key stakeholders shows an overall positive result. The results are awaiting presentation to the Board and will be presented at the next PCCC meeting.

Social media

In the January to March quarter:

- Southern Ports' LinkedIn page continued to achieve excellent growth with:
 - 400+ new followers
 - content seen 77,400 times (16.2% increase on last quarter)
 - 1,600+ reactions (an 30% increase on last quarter) with 30+ people sharing content and 3,000 clicks (in line with last quarter's results).
- Southern Ports' Facebook page recorded 214 new followers and 12,545 engagements (including comments that quadrupled this quarter). This is largely due to the popular Picnic at the Port event held in Bunbury, the Community Investment Program and profiled staff.
- Southern Ports is well positioned in relation to other port authorities on Facebook:

Page	Page likes ↓	Page likes change ↑↓
 Gladstone Ports Corporation GPC is responsible for the import of raw material and the export of finished pr...	6.8K	↑ 45
 Fremantle Ports Fremantle Ports is a Western Australian Government trading enterprise that st...	5.5K	↑ 31
 Southern Ports Strong regional ports, strong regions. Southern Ports manages Western Austr...	2.3K	↑ 115
 Mid West Ports Authority Mid West Ports Authority has been overseeing safe, secure and efficient port a...	2.1K	↑ 45
 Ports Australia The national peak maritime body for the ports sector - connecting Australia t...	1.3K	↑ 3

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

- Community – a call for applications for the Community Investment Program and Bunbury's Picnic at the Port open day promotion
- Team – Southern Ports' staff member Cameron Sinagra that was profiled for the #MeetTheTeam series
- History – installation of a special plaque at the Victoria Street mural located in Bunbury

Other points of interest:

- A key communications activity in Esperance this quarter included liaison with the Shire and local media in relation to the exhaust soot release from a vessel in late March and, the following week, a small diesel leak from the *Immortalis* tender vessel after it submerged in Esperance Bay.
- Early preparations for the Esperance Show are underway with merchandise and display materials currently being reviewed.

Further discussion was held around:

- SPA is exploring proactive avenues to share information/announcements with the community
- Final quarter of FY/23 for Community Investment Applications. Management encouraged members to get word out to their networks for new applications.
- Discussion with members around potential for a port open day in Esperance and how best to engage with community for insight into possibilities around this
- SPA continue to take learnings from various events held at each port to continuously identify improvements for upcoming events such as the Esperance Show to be held in October, where SPA will again hold a stall.

11. MEMBER DISCUSSION/FEEDBACK & COMMUNITY QUESTIONS

Discussion was held around the following:

- Discussion around truck noise on Harbour Road where the houses sit above the wall. SPA continue to engage strongly with truck companies who have been pro-active in enforcing compliance on truck drivers. SPA ask complainants to provide exact times of noise occurrence to trace back times for evidence of individual trucks. SPA have also approached MRWA several times to re-assess signage options.

Mission to Seafarers update:

- 1406 seafarers have been brought ashore to date, since shore leave was granted post Covid

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- As raised at PCCC meeting held in February, the PCCC Charter has been updated with a small change that will see more efficient processing of member approvals. A copy of the Charter will be provided to members.
- Wayne Walter and Frank Roe have been reappointed as committee members for a period of 2 years. Passed by PCCC members and approved by CEO.
- New applicant for Esperance PCCC Rod Taylor was approved by Regional Manager and CEO (as per new PCCC Charter approval process). Members have reviewed Rod's application, there were no objections and the PCCC endorsed his appointment.
- Kris Starceovich and Pia Powell have elected not to renominate. SPA would like to thank Kris and Pia for their contribution.
- Discussion around communications with members outside of meetings to gain prompt feedback on some items. There were no objections.

The Chair thanked all for attending and closed the meeting.

Meeting Closed: 18:09 hours

Date of Next Meeting: Wednesday 2 August 2023