

Statement of Reasons

EAST POINT OUTFALL EXTENSION – POWER AND WATER CORPORATION

PROJECT

Power and Water Corporation (PWC) is proposing to construct and operate the East Point Outfall Extension (EPO) within Darwin Harbour. The proposal will involve replacing or extending the existing East Point Outfall which currently takes treated effluent from the Ludmilla Waste Water Treatment Plant and discharges it along the eastern edge of East Point at the mouth of Ludmilla Creek. The Notice of Intent (NOI) has identified a number of potential options for installing the pipeline and the construction methodology including:

- The replacement and extension of the existing EPO with a pipeline placed into an exposed seabed trench (excavated prior to pipeline installation); or
- Installation of a sub-seabed pipeline within tunnel.

The PWC has advised that the options presented in the NOI will be fully examined in the EIS prior to construction and appropriate measures will be implemented to reduce or control potential impacts associated with the activity.

DECISION

The Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) has decided that the EPO will be assessed at the level of Environmental Impact Statement in accordance with Clause 8(2) of the Environmental Assessment Administrative Procedures.

JUSTIFICATION

A review of the NOI identified the following potential significant impacts and risks to the environment from the proposed development:

- Erosion and long-term integrity of sand waves occurring in the construction area;
- Suspended material caused by construction, reducing light availability for submerged aquatic flora;
- Loss of biodiversity within a single benthic community;
- Transport of dredge material to intertidal areas and wader bird feeding areas;
- Impacts at the mixing zone and increases in nutrient loads from the outfall that requires dispersion modelling;
- Introduction of aquatic pests during construction; and
- Increased underwater noise and its impact on cetaceans and dugongs.

The NT EPA has decided that assessment by Environmental Impact Statement is warranted to ensure the risks from the proposal are thoroughly considered. The NT EPA has based this decision on the following key considerations:

- The number and complexity of the risks/issues which could result from the range of alternatives proposed in the NOI;
- Assessment by EIS will provide for thorough consideration of the issues and will provide opportunities for the collection or further analysis of existing information; and
- Assessment by EIS will provide a thorough and transparent assessment process which provides opportunities for public consultation.



DR BILL FREELAND

CHAIR

NORTHERN TERRITORY ENVIRONMENT PROTECTION AUTHORITY

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