

EPA Board Communiqué

18 March 2008



The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Board Communiqué has been developed to provide information on matters discussed by the Board at its monthly meetings.

State of the Environment (SoE) Report review process

The Board endorsed the proposed review and approval process for the development of the fifth South Australian SoE Report.

These reports, which are published by the EPA every 5 years, provide scientifically valid assessments of the state or condition of the environment, the pressures that influence this condition and the effectiveness of responses to these pressures. SoE Reports also provide Government with independent advice, endorsed by the Board, recommending future policy and program direction.

EPA's Current Involvement in Desalination

Increasingly desalination is being proposed or used as a method of sourcing high quality water due to drought and increasing water demands. The process results in hyper-saline brine discharges often containing chemical additives used in the desalination process.

The Board received a report on the EPA's involvement in desalination. The risk of environmental impacts related to desalination plants is being managed by early involvement by the EPA in the development process. The EPA also has involvement with desalination through the licensing and scientific advisory processes.

State Planning and Development Review

The Board received a presentation on the State Planning and Development Review from Mr Michael O'Brien MP, Parliamentary Secretary to the Premier. This Review was announced by the State Government in June 2007 to undertake an intensive and wide-ranging review of the planning system, with a view to ensuring South Australia leads the nation in planning reform.

The Review is being directed by a small, independent steering committee chaired by Mr O'Brien.

The main objectives of the Review and the resulting reforms will be to:

- realise a range of targets and objectives in SA's Strategic Plan;
- establish SA as the most competitive place in Australasia in which to do business;
- improve the performance, timeliness, certainty and accountability of the planning system - in both State and local government arenas; and
- review the role and responsibilities of Planning SA and local government - within the overall planning system.

The steering committee will report progressively to the Government during the course of the Review to ensure early adoption and implementation of recommendations for reform.