



**Minister for Environment; Disability Services
Deputy Leader of the Legislative Council**

Our Ref: 62-06772

Hon Diane Evers MLC
Member for North Metropolitan
Diane.Evers@mp.wa.gov.au

Dear Ms Evers

Thank you for your email, received in this office on 7 March 2018, regarding the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) review of the Alcoa Wagerup refinery licence and the assessment of its noise application.

As you are aware, the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) is undertaking two assessments related to Alcoa of Australia Limited's (Alcoa) Wagerup Alumina Refinery: a review of the refinery licence, and an assessment of an application by Alcoa to the previous Minister for Environment under regulation 17 of the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*.

You may be aware that on 20 February 2018 I determined an appeal against an amendment to the Wagerup refinery licence from 2015. The DWER initiated the current review of the licence while the appeal was under consideration by the Appeals Convenor.

In my appeal decision, I requested that the DWER ensure that the review takes into account uncertainties relating to VOC emissions from the refinery, the nature and scale of particulate emissions (particularly PM_{2.5} emissions) from the premises, and the apparent increase in mercury emissions from the refinery. Given the drawn-out nature of the appeal, I also requested the DWER to complete the review expeditiously.

The DWER has advised me that it is treating the review as a priority, and that it expects to complete the review and amend the licence in the final quarter of 2018, noting that the environmental considerations for the refinery premises are complex. The Department will publish its review decision and related amendments to the licence on the DWER web site and will publicly advertise the licence amendments.

Members of the public (as well as the licensee) have the right to appeal against licence amendments. Stakeholders can register to be notified of decisions for public appeal by subscribing to email updates via www.der.wa.gov.au/about-us/40-email-alert.

The second assessment currently undertaken by the DWER relates to an application made by Alcoa to the previous Minister for Environment under regulation 17 of the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*.

The previous Minister referred the application to the then Department of Environment Regulation in May 2015. The assessment of the application could not be undertaken until Alcoa submitted required technical reports and studies in late 2017.

The DWER is currently assessing this information and will provide me with its recommendation when the assessment is completed. The Department expects to complete the assessment by the end of the year, noting that further consultation with the community and Alcoa will be required.

Once I have received the DWER's recommendations, I will make a decision on the application. The decision will be published in the *Government Gazette* and on the DWER web site. Members of the public (as well as the applicant) will have the right to appeal against the decision.

Thank you for raising these matters with me.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'S Dawson', written in a cursive style.

Hon Stephen Dawson MLC
MINISTER FOR ENVIRONMENT

27 MAR 2018