



Our ref: DWERDG90/19
Enquiries: James Milne, Ph 6436 6895

Mr Vince Puccio
Chairman
Community Alliance for Positive Solutions Inc.

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Dear Mr Puccio

MEETING HELD TUESDAY 5 FEBRUARY 2019

Thank you and the representatives from the Community Alliance for Positive Solutions Inc. (CAPS) for coming and speaking with me at our meeting held 5 February 2019.

I note several concerns were raised by members of CAPS at that meeting regarding Alcoa's Wagerup Alumina Refinery (the Refinery). I have now had some time to follow up these specific matters and provide you with this direct response.

It was alleged by members of CAPS that a liquid waste spill occurred from the Powerhouse area of the Refinery. The Department's Compliance and Enforcement officers have followed up this matter directly with Alcoa and are continuing to investigate. The Department would greatly appreciate reports of pollution incidents being made by your members directly to the Pollution Watch Hotline on 1300 784 782 or emailed to pollutionwatch@dwer.wa.gov.au.

CAPS supplied photographs of dead or stressed trees along Somers Road in proximity to the residue storage area associated with the Refinery. I understand there are many factors, natural and man-made, that can cause or contribute to stress on trees or their death. The Department is making enquiries to identify possible causes or explanations and will inform you of the outcomes once those enquiries are complete.

As discussed, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) is currently undertaking an inquiry under section 46 (s46 inquiry) of the *Environmental Protection Act 1987* (EP Act) for the Refinery, under Ministerial Statement (MS) 728 and 1069. The inquiry relates to a request from Alcoa to optimise the existing two production units at the Refinery. I understand that a meeting has been scheduled for 26 March 2019 with yourself and the Chairman of the EPA to discuss these matters further.

It was also discussed at our meeting that the Department is continuing work on a risk-based review of Licence L6217/1983/15 held by Alcoa for the Refinery. The review is being undertaken concurrently with the EPA's above-mentioned S46 inquiry which will

inform the risk-based review. Any amendments to the licence from the review will need to take into account any changes to the MS 728.

The licence review will also take into account the submissions received from CAPS to date and will address outcomes of the Minister for Environment's 20 February 2018 determination on the CAPS appeal against the 30 October 2015 licence amendments.

I acknowledge the many other matters raised during the meeting as summarised in a list of points provided by CAPS. The Department will cross-reference these points with above-mentioned submissions on the risk-based review and consider any additional items through the review process.

On the matter of Alcoa's application for a further noise approval under regulation 17 of the *Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997*, CAPS' submissions have been taken into consideration and the Department is finalising its report back to the Minister for Environment to determine whether to grant or refuse to grant a further noise approval.

I again thank you for your time on 5 February 2019 and for your ongoing interest with the Department's work relating to the Refinery. As I indicated at the meeting, the Department will arrange another meeting with CAPS in the coming months, once the s46 inquiry and licence review processes have substantially progressed and we have further updates to provide.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mike Rowe', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Mike Rowe
DIRECTOR GENERAL

26 March 2019