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## EBA SIGNED FOR VICTORIAN DESALINATION PROJECT

Thiess Degrémont and five construction industry unions have today signed an enterprise bargaining agreement (EBA) for the Victorian Desalination Project.

Thiess Degrémont, design and construct contractor for the project, reached agreement with the Australian Manufacturing Workers Union (AMWU), Australian Workers' Union (AWU), Communication Electrical Plumbing Union – Plumbing Division (CEPU), Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union – Construction and General division (CFMEU) and the Electrical Trades Union (ETU).

The EBA will cover the workers employed by Thiess Degrémont on the \$3.5 billion Victorian Desalination Project, the biggest infrastructure project in Victoria's history.

Thiess Degrémont's Project Director, Greg Miller, said the agreement represented an excellent outcome for all involved.

"It's been a long road but at all times, the unions have supported the urgency of the project and the need to deliver water for Victorians by December 2011," said Mr Miller.

"This agreement represents a partnership and a shared understanding of our responsibility to deliver this critical project on time."

"The labour agreement we have developed together balances excellent working conditions with a reasonable and flexible approach to allow the project to be delivered. It also provides clarity about union coverage on site."

ETU Assistant Secretary, Troy Gray, said Victorians could rest assured that the project is in good hands. "We know how important this project is to Victorians and to workers, some of whom have done it hard in the aftermath of the global downturn," said Mr Gray.

"That's why we all worked night and day to reach an agreement that gives Victorians water, and workers the rights and conditions they deserve."

Thiess Degrémont has been contracted by AquaSure to design, construct and commission the desalination plant, marine tunnels and structures, 84km transfer pipeline and 87km underground HVAC powerline to supply power to the plant.

More than 7,000 applications to work on the project have already been received. Recruitment is set to ramp up significantly early next year, with workforce numbers scheduled to peak around November 2010.

“There’s no doubt about it – if you work in the construction industry, this is the project to be on,” said Mr Miller. “The first labour and trade jobs were advertised last month and many more will be advertised early next year.”

“The unions share our desire to see as many locals as possible join our team and for the project to deliver development opportunities through apprenticeships, traineeships, programs for Indigenous recruitment and more.”

The EBA will come into effect following certification by Fair Work Australia.

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**About Thiess Degrémont**

Thiess Degrémont is the design and construct contractor for the \$3.5 billion Victorian Desalination Project. The biggest infrastructure project in the state’s history will deliver Australia’s largest desalination plant, securing a source of water for Melbourne and regional communities, independent of rainfall.

Thiess Degrémont is a joint venture between Thiess, one of Australia’s largest and most trusted construction and services companies, and Degrémont, a world leader in reverse osmosis desalination technology.