

AN UPDATE FROM AQUASURE



Readers will no doubt be aware of recent announcements that completion of the desalination plant has been delayed.

Our construction contractor, Thiess Degrémont, has advised that the plant will not reach full production by 30 June 2012 as expected. We are in discussions about negotiating an extension of time.

I am conscious that this news has generated some questions in the community, with many people asking whether this means that a large construction workforce will remain in town.

The answer is no.

Construction of the project is more than 81% complete. Both the marine and tunnelling components of the project were finished earlier this year, followed by completion of the transfer pipeline and underground power supply in recent weeks.

With civil and structural works nearing completion, the main focus has now moved to electrical works and commissioning of the desalination plant itself. These activities do not require as large a workforce.

With this in mind, Thiess Degrémont is continuing to demobilise its large construction workforce and there are currently no job opportunities available on the project.

The subject of construction completion leads me to another important topic – the reinstatement of local roads and land.

With installation of the desalination plant's pipeline and underground power supply now effectively complete, construction crews are now working to remove bulk spoil stockpiles and haulage road material from their work sites.

Four crews will be working to get this work done as quickly as possible, but it will result in an increase in heavy truck movements on local roads within the Bass Coast Shire over the coming months.

As these roads are no longer required by the project, they will be progressively reinstated to their pre-existing condition and their management handed back to Council.

In the meantime, it remains the responsibility of our pipeline contractors to maintain local roads that are being used as temporary haulage routes.

We encourage members of the community to continue to report any concerns about maintenance or unprofessional driver behaviour as this helps to guide the activities of road maintenance crews and encourage good driver conduct.

Thanks to these reports, crews have been able to respond promptly to recent maintenance issues on Gurdies St Hellier Road, the Stewart Road Shutoff, Turnbull-Woolamai Road and Dalyston-Glen Forbes Road.

Spoil and haul road removal is the last stage of work that will require the use of local roads.

I realise it has been a long and sometimes frustrating period for those members of the community that have had to share their roads with our traffic and we are grateful for your ongoing patience and understanding.

The completion of the project may be delayed but we remain committed to ensuring that all work is done to the highest standard and with respect for the communities that have been our hosts for the past two years and will be our neighbours for another 27 years.

Chris Herbert CEO, AquaSure

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