

AN UPDATE FROM AQUASURE

Since my last update, earthworks at the desalination plant site have progressed well.

The dunes that will provide important visual and noise protection during and after construction are starting to take shape. Site establishment works are also ramping up, with the installation of new site offices, sheds and access roads.

In the community, we've continued to discuss the project and its progress at a range of meetings with local community groups.

One of the groups we met with again recently is Watershed Victoria. The meeting provided an opportunity for Watershed to explain their points of view and articulate their concerns, particularly in relation to marine impacts.

Protecting the marine environment is an issue of great importance to the community and our team.

The marine intake and outlet structures are currently in the early stages of design and we will be undertaking detailed marine research work that will shape the final design. The Environment Effects Statement (EES) provided comprehensive information on the marine environment and we will be adding to this.

The marine research work will include biological surveys, hydrodynamic modelling and toxicity assessments. It will not involve any construction activity – it is purely research to help us build

a more detailed understanding of the local marine environment, identify the most appropriate location for the marine structures and how they should work in order to meet the strict environmental Performance Requirements and the EPA Works Approval for the project.

The research will likely continue through to the end of the year, during which time you may notice our crew of biological scientists at work, diving off the coast of the plant site.

On other matters, last week was National Water Week and the theme was 'securing our water future'.

Out on site, the project team already identify their work as 'securing Victoria's water future.' The Victorian Desalination Project is just one of a range of projects being implemented to balance traditional water sources with those independent of rainfall, ensuring a secure water supply for Melbourne and regional communities into the future.

One of my aims in writing this column is to respond to questions raised by the community and to provide information that will assist with a fact-based understanding of the project.

At a recent presentation, a local resident suggested we include a fact vs fiction section with this column to help address misunderstandings or misconceptions surrounding the project.

I thought that was a terrific idea and I'd like to thank the gentleman for the suggestion. I hope you find it helpful.

Regards



Chris Herbert
CEO, AquaSure

X FICTION

Williamsons Beach will be closed during construction.

✓ FACT

Williamsons Beach will not be closed during construction. It will remain open and available for public enjoyment.

An exclusion zone will apply around the offshore floating equipment used to drill shafts for the marine structures, simply to protect the safety of the marine crew and members of the public out enjoying the water. The size of this zone will be determined by Marine Safety Victoria.

The exclusion zone will not include Williamsons Beach or Powlett River. We're keen to see the local community continue enjoying the beach and the river as they always have.

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