

Technical Advisory Consultative Committee

Meeting #2 Wednesday 9 February 2022

Chair's Summary

The TasPorts Technical Advisory Consultative Committee (TACC) deals specifically with providing advice to TasPorts on dredging and dredge spoil disposal. Additional information on the TACC may be found at [Technical Advisory Committee \(tasports.com.au\)](https://tasports.com.au).

The TACC held its second meeting on the 9 February. Some members met in the Aberdeen Room at the Devonport Paranple Centre while the Chair and others participated via Webex. The major purpose of the meeting was to receive a technical briefing on the Devonport East Terminal 3 Dredging Reclaim Project.

Present were representatives from TasPorts (Charlie Livesey, Wendy Doran (Harbour Master) and Sam Wilson-Haffenden), the commercial fishing industry/Tasmanian Seafood industry Council (Stuart Richey and Tim Hess), Cradle Coast Authority (Sheree Vertigan), the EPA (Fionna Bourne), the Department of Natural Resources and Environment (Sven Frijlink), a member of the Devonport community (Jim Otterson) and the Mersey Yacht Club (Terry Travers). The TACC was independently Chaired by Ian Cartwright. TasPorts observers/advisers (Susan McLeod and Michele McGinity) were also present. Mieke Matimba (ERA Planning and Environment) acted as rapporteur.

Following a request from the first TACC meeting, Sam Ibbott from Marine Solutions provided a presentation of the issues associated with the Devonport East Terminal 3 Dredging Reclaim Project, which included: (1) the purpose of dredging; (2) the history of dredging in Devonport; (3) sensitive receptors; (4) sampling; (5) sediment quality; (6) background turbidity; (7) plume modelling; and (8) monitoring triggers.

Industry again expressed concerns about the transport of fine sediment from dredge spoil beyond the river entrance negatively impacting scallop fisheries, as they believe had happened in the past. TasPorts reiterated their view that the 2015 dredging work referenced throughout the meeting was carried out lawfully in accordance with commonwealth regulations and on a sound scientific basis, and that there was no verified evidence that the dredging activities had impacted scallops.

The modelling used to predict settlement of sediment was also questioned.

The TACC noted that none of the data for the Devonport East Terminal 3 Dredging Reclaim Project is hypothetical or based on data from an historical event. All data was gathered from the Mersey River in Devonport by Marine Solutions Tasmania, and sampling and sediment analysis was conducted in accordance with ANZECC quality and regulatory guidelines. Acoustic doplars were used to monitor velocity changes in the water column, and how sediment is mobilised at different speeds. Based on the small scale of this dredging activity, its location close to the shore and the sediment composition, the modelling suggests that at the highest predicted elevation level (a spring ebb tide) the silt is unlikely to travel further than 2km offshore. He stated that a heavy rain event would create greater disturbance.

In order to gain confidence in predicted movement of sediment associated with dredging, TasPorts, with the support of the fishing industry representatives, agreed to commission a peer-review and that industry would be included in conversations with the chosen consultant about methodology. Marine Solutions will also liaise with TasPorts post peer review regarding possible other measures that could be investigated to dispel concerns.

Dredging is scheduled to commence in the second half of 2022 between August and December, and this likely means that activities will take place in spring rather than winter, potentially meaning there is a lower river flow. It was noted that no blasting of bedrock is planned.

The date of the next TACC meeting will be scheduled once the outcome of peer review is available for discussion.