

# Technical Advisory Consultative Committee

Meeting #7 Monday 2 November 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 eighth meeting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> November. Most participants met in the TasPorts Board Room in Devonport with others attending via Microsoft Teams.

Present at the Board Room in person were: Ian Cartwright (TACC Chair), Jim Otterson (community representative), Stuart Richey (TSIC), Tim Hess (TSIC), Rhys Menadue (TasPorts), Sheree Vertigan (Cradle Coast Authority), Caroline Lindus (ERA Planning & Environment), Sam Wilson-Haffenden (TasPorts), Terry Travers (Mersey Yacht Club), Penny Sale (TasPorts), Holland Turner (TasPorts – Env. Manager), Galina Enright (Site engineer with HBJV).

Present via Microsoft Teams were: Fiona Bourne (EPA), Sven Frijlink (DNRE), Wendy Doran (Harbour Master TasPorts), Andrew Shelverton, Michele McGinity, Mick Wall (new Harbour Master), Darren Richardson, Ian Teakle,

The major purpose of the meeting was to review the results of the revised plume modelling and associated recommendations for Quaylink dredging operations, receive an update on seabed levelling and consider progress with the development of options for the planned maintenance dredging.

**Plume modelling for Quaylink dredging.** As previously agreed following peer review of the initial plume modelling, BMT undertook an updated study including 3D hydrodynamic data the results of which were used to review the dredge management and monitoring plan. The modelling used plume source assumptions covering best and worst case scenarios. A flood period was not modelled as a scenario as it was considered unlikely to eventuate. In addition, such conditions would dilute the plume substantially, making accurate assessment difficult. The Project Team provided further clarity on impact thresholds and how the system requires action to be taken when thresholds are approached/exceeded will operate.

Based on the revised assessments, BMT concluded that predicted impacts are constrained to within the dredge footprint and immediate surrounds with risk to areas being very low. TACC members posed a range of questions concerning the modelling scenarios, including the validity of using summer flows, allowance for cumulative impacts and the non-modelling of flood events. BMT advice is that the amount of additional turbidity and sedimentation predicted to be generated by capital dredging by the modelling is presented as a risk assessment. It was acknowledged that the dredge turbidity impacts are additional to whatever else is occurring within the river, natural or otherwise. Dredge impacts will be considered as part of the ongoing monitoring, which will seek to assess whether the turbidity is within levels considered reasonable, based on an understanding of background processes.

Following questioning the TACC agreed to accept the four BMT recommendations to improve monitoring and risk mitigation from Quaylink dredging operations.

**Seabed levelling update.** The current seabed levelling is scheduled to be finished around 17 November. Post flood hydrographic surveys are being assessed to determine how much levelling was lost in the flooding. Given some of these flooding delays, operations may be extended beyond 17 November. TasPorts confirmed that levelling operations are within EPA approved standards, including those for monitoring. No material will be lifted.

**Maintenance dredging.** The TasPorts proposal for maintenance dredging has been presented to the Commonwealth Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) and in principle approval has been provided for the proposed ecological surveys. Design engineers are still working on the multicriteria analysis and rating of options for the dredging and are considering a range of issues including choice of vessel, cost, disposal sites and environmental impacts. It was noted that cutter suction dredge operations incur less turbidity than seabed levelling and in that respect, is very low impact. Disposal is the issue hence the extensive approval process that needs to be undertaken. Concern over the choice of dredge disposal sites and the potential impact on the ecosystems has been reflected in previous comments from TACC members. A permit to commence operations is unlikely to be granted before September/October 2023.

**Other issues.** Broadening of the TACC terms of reference remains under consideration. Fishing industry TACC members reiterated a request for improved communication and a forum to raise port user concerns and have them addressed. High on the list of these concerns is the non-availability of adequate space to moor and service fishing vessels and safety assessment. TasPorts reiterated support for the fishing industry and undertook to seek a resolution to the issues raised.