

# ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 14 August 2024

## UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

[AEBN Workshop Webinar -  
Interactive]

[SERIES 1 to Dangerous  
Goods, Hazardous  
Substances/Chemicals and  
GHS – INTERACTIVE  
WORKSHOP WEBINAR](#)

COVERING: Regulatory  
framework, Changes to laws  
and requirements,  
Identification, Safety Data  
Sheets and more

10.00am to 1.45pm  
18 September 2024

[AEBN Workshop Webinar]

[SERIES 2 to Dangerous  
Goods and Hazardous  
Substances/Chemicals –  
INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP  
WEBINAR](#)

COVERING: Safe Storage,  
Handling and Transport

10.00am to 1.45pm  
19 September 2024

## FEDERAL

### Carbon Farming Outreach Program training package available for businesses

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has made available a training package under the [Carbon Farming Outreach Program](#) for businesses.

The training package is intended to help farmers and land managers to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and store carbon.

The training package was developed by DCCEEW, the University of Melbourne, and its partners - the Indigenous Carbon Industry Network and Indigenous Professional Services.

The Australian Government has provided \$17.5 million to independent advisers. They are expected to deliver training and advice to farmers and land managers.

The Federal Government has also announced \$30.8 million to:

- expand the Carbon Farming Outreach Program
- establish a 'knowledge bank' to integrate existing training with new tailored resources
- support Rural Research and Development Corporations developing commodity-specific information for the knowledge bank.

### Independent Review of Key Issues Arising from Public Comment on PFOS Freshwater Draft Guideline Values

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has released the report - [Independent Review of Key Issues Arising from Public Comments on the PFOS Freshwater Draft Guideline Values](#).

The draft Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality (ANZ Guidelines) toxicant default guideline values (DGVs) for aquatic ecosystem protection technical brief for Perfluorooctane sulfonate (PFOS) in freshwater (f) (ANZG 2023) was made available for public submissions in May 2023. The public comment period was open until 17 August 2023. Six public submissions were received.

The report addresses specific concerns expressed in the public submissions and the conclusions.

### Release of Great Barrier Reef Scientific Consensus Statement

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has announced the release of the [2022 Scientific Consensus](#) that brings together the latest research to understand how activities on the land influence water quality and how water quality affects Reef health.

The Statement involved more than 200 experts, including 147 authors and reviewers from Australia and overseas. It's based on evidence from over 4,000 publications and confirms that the

science underpinning the Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan remains valid.

There are eight overarching themes in the Statement. The key findings include:

- human induced climate change is the primary threat to the Great Barrier Reef
- poor water quality continues to have a detrimental impact on the Reef
- improving water quality is essential for a resilient reef that can recover from disturbances such as extreme weather and mass coral bleaching events
- poor water quality can exacerbate climate-related impacts.

The Statement will inform the next Reef 2050 Water Quality Improvement Plan, which will be delivered in 2025.

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## NEW GUIDELINES For community engagement and benefits for transmission projects

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The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has released new [National Guidelines for Community Engagement and Benefits for Electricity Transmission Projects](#).

The guidelines set a nationally consistent approach for developers to engage early with communities on new transmission projects.

The guidelines aim to ensure developers to deliver positive outcomes for regional communities and First Nations groups so they meaningfully benefit from projects.

The guidelines encourage greater community participation in planning new transmission projects.

They recommend principles to effectively:

- identify and manage project impacts

- provide benefits to the communities who host transmission infrastructure.

The guidelines were developed through consultation with state, territory and local government, transmission developers, energy market bodies, industry bodies and community groups.

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## \$9M for research trials to help farmers lower livestock emissions

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The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has awarded the final 4 projects with grants under the [Methane Emissions Reduction in Livestock \(MERiL\) research and development program](#). All recipients under Stage 3 Round 2 (MERiL 3.2) grants are expected to share in over \$9 million of funding.

Livestock methane emissions represent a substantial portion of Australia's greenhouse gas emissions, making up around 70% of greenhouse gas emissions from the agriculture sector and 13% of Australia's total emissions.

The MERiL program aims to find effective solutions to reduce livestock methane emissions through:

- feed additives
- forage feeds.

The recipients were:

- The University of New England (\$3 million) NSW, WA & SA
- The University of Melbourne (\$1.14 million) Vic & NSW
- Ruminant BioTech Australia Pty Ltd (\$2.79 million) NSW
- Mort & Co Lot Feeders Pty Ltd (\$2.12 million) Qld.

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## Compliance Update of the Clean Energy Regulator's enforcement priorities

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The Clean Energy Regulator has released its [Compliance Update for 1 April to 30 June 2024](#) that provides information on activities related to the Regulators compliance and enforcement priorities.

This update includes important information on:

- compliance audits on ACCU projects
- Safeguard Mechanism Emissions-Intensity Determinations
- SRES REC Registry account types and the associated obligations
- RET outstanding shortfall charge debts
- Greenbot Pty Ltd permanently suspended as a registered person (subject to a temporary stay ordered by the Federal Court)
- criminal charges against a West Australian installer
- a refusal of registered person application
- RET Enforceable Undertaking - RACV Solar Ltd
- the deregistration of a Greenhouse and Energy auditor.

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## VICTORIA

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### EPA Victoria settles legal action with landfill operator

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A landfill operator will pay \$200,000 for a project to improve the local environment after EPA Victoria reached an agreement to settle legal action.

The Supreme Court of Victoria made final orders that the landfill operator make a payment of \$200,000 "for the carrying out of a project for the restoration or enhancement of the environment in a public place or for the public benefit."

In addition, the Court made orders mandating that the company's directors and key personnel involved in the environmental management of the site undertake an education and training program to be run by a suitably qualified independent professional.

The agreement to the orders is an acknowledgement from the landfill operator to the community that it had not complied with its operating licence by failing to contain odour to its site.

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### Grants awarded to support reduction in bushfire risk

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The Victorian Government has [awarded](#) \$1.66 million to nine councils over the next 2 years as part of the Safer Together Strengthening Local Government Partnerships program.

The grants are part of the Victorian Government's support for councils across the state, enabling them to design and implement community-centred approaches to reducing bushfire risk.

The Strengthening Local Government Partnerships program was established by the Government in 2018 to further support this work and has now awarded almost \$4 million in funding to support community-based initiatives.

The latest round of funding will be used for projects including supporting Strathbogie Shire Council to partner with Greater Shepparton City Council and their communities to design localised emergency action plans in these areas of high bushfire or grass fire risk. Similar projects are being adopted by Wellington Shire Council and Murrindindi Shire Council.

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## NEW SOUTH WALES

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### NSW EPA releases Strategic Plan 2024-29

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The NSW EPA has released its [Strategic Plan 2024-29](#) which outlines its plan for achieving positive environmental and human health outcomes over the next five years and beyond.

The plan sets out the areas of focus where the EPA expect to have the biggest impact in securing a healthy, functioning, clean and productive environment for the community and future generations.

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### Over \$4M awarded to tackle litter and illegal dumping

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The NSW Government has awarded more than \$4 million to help councils, businesses, community groups and public land managers protect the local environment.

\$3.6 million has been awarded to 16 projects focusing on reducing litter in a variety of locations, from Sydney Airport and inner-city suburbs such as Marrickville, to regional cities such as Bathurst and Maitland.

More than \$700,000 has also been awarded to 13 projects cracking down on illegal dumping through increased surveillance, infrastructure solutions, clean-ups, education, research, and collaboration.

The illegal dumping projects target two common dumping locations, with 47% of reported incidents occurring on the kerbside and another 41% in bushland.

Applications are now open for the next intake of litter prevention and illegal dumping grants. More information about the successful applicants and further funding opportunities is available [here](#).

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### 25 year milestone for key NSW environment act

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The NSW EPA has marked 25 years since the commencement of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act* in NSW.

On 1 July 1999 the framework for environmental protection in NSW was transformed when several pieces of legislation covering the regulation of air, noise, water and waste pollution were integrated.

The legislative changes unified fragmented environmental licensing systems under one piece of legislation, ensuring industries such as

manufacturing, mining, waste management and chemical processing were regulated as part of the same framework and by the same regulatory body.

The Act also granted the NSW EPA enhanced powers as the lead agency responsible for administering and enforcing the new laws, including authority to issue a range of environment protection notices and stronger powers to investigate individuals and corporations accused of violating environmental law.

NSW EPA Director Legislation and Legal Advice, Melinda Murray, said the POEO Act had been instrumental in holding polluters accountable and reducing both pollution and the environmental impacts of certain industries.

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### \$30,000 fine for Air Emissions

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The NSW EPA has fine a company \$30,000 after a failure at its coke ovens allegedly caused significant air emissions.

Coke ovens are heating chambers used to turn coal into coke for the ironmaking process. The incident occurred during a control system software update, which compromised the system. As a result, a significant amount of coke oven gas was released for a period of up to five minutes across multiple locations. The company immediately reported the incident and co-operated with the EPA's investigation.

A lack of safeguards to ensure the gas emissions were minimised or prevented was determined as the cause, with the company failing to identify the operation of critical control valves as a potential issue.

The licensee has committed to a review of the event to assess the risk of failure and identify any future improvements across their site.

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## NSW Government releases annual environmental water priority statements for 2024-25

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The NSW Government's Water for the Environment program has released [its annual environmental water priority statements](#) for the 2024–25 water year.

The program has a focus on preserving critical habitats for native fish and water-dependent wildlife across the state.

The statements outline the water for the environment priorities in 11 valleys: the Gwydir, Macquarie, Lachlan, Murrumbidgee, Snowy and montane, Murray Baaka – Lower Darling, Border Rivers, Namoi, Barwon-Darling, Hunter, and Intersecting Streams.

Each statement includes a list of river and wetland sites that will likely receive water for the environment, and is flexible as objectives and watering events can change depending on seasonal conditions.

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### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

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#### Industrial Chemicals Environment Protection Policy

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The SA Government has published in the SA Government Gazette giving notice of the intention to prepare a [draft environment protection policy regarding industrial chemicals](#).

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#### Review of the Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2015

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EPA SA has commenced a [review of the Environment Protection \(Water Quality\) Policy 2015](#).

The first stage of this review will be the release of a discussion paper for public consultation and to engage with stakeholders on opportunities to improve the policy. The intended outcome will be to develop a new environment protection policy relating to water quality. A notice has been published in the SA Government

Gazette giving notice of the intention to prepare a draft environment protection policy.

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#### Independent Review of the Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020:

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##### Comment sought

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SA Government is seeking your views on the impact and effectiveness of the *Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020* over the last three years to draft a recommendation report to the SA Deputy Premier.

The [Discussion Paper – Single-use and Other Plastic Products \(Waste Avoidance Act\)](#) provides information and poses questions on several issues which you are invited to provide input.

The review is seeking to:

- determine the effect of the current legislation on the community
- identify opportunities to improve the legislation ensuring it remains fit-for-purpose and meets evolving challenges.

Please provide your [comment](#) by 11 October 2024.

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#### Australian Gas Networks regulatory framework review 2026-2031:

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##### Comment sought

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The SA Government is seeking your views about a Draft Decision on the protections that AGN must deliver for South Australian consumers between 1 July 2026 and 30 June 2031.

The Draft Decision includes proposals to:

- Ensure that consumers receive information about how to disconnect from the gas network;

- Monitor how long it takes AGN to provide disconnection services;
- Continue network reliability monitoring and create service standards if required;
- Require AGN to seek our approval if it proposes to disable any part of the gas distribution network in the future, and
- Continue working with Government and other regulators on refining gas consumer protections in response to the energy transition.

AGN is one of Australia's largest natural gas distribution companies. In SA, AGN supplies gas through over 8,400km of distribution networks to more than 476,000 customers.

As a monopoly gas provider, AGN is subject to obligations set by regulators including the Commission, the Australian Energy Regulator (AER) and the Technical Regulator (TR). There are multiple regulators that regulate different aspects of AGN's operations.

The SA Government is reviewing the regulatory instruments that apply to AGN, including its licence and the codes and guideline it must comply with.

Please provide your feedback via the [online survey](#).

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### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

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#### Air quality report on Pinjarra WA finds dust levels below national guidelines

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There have been community concerns relating to dust issues in Pinjarra WA.

An air quality monitoring program commissioned by the WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has found levels of dust in Pinjarra, WA to be below national guidelines.

The Department has released a [report](#) on monitoring of air quality conducted over 2023 and 2024 at a community receptor location on the outskirts of the Pinjarra township.

The objective of the monitoring program was to assess ambient dust levels and was completed in response to community concerns about potential dust emissions from the nearby refinery operations. The results of the monitoring showed that the levels of dust in the air were below relevant national guidelines.

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## WA's Hazard Plan – Energy Supply Disruption

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The [State Hazard Plan for Energy Supply Disruption](#) covers the emergency management arrangements within the geographic boundaries of Western Australia for the hazards of gas, liquid fuel and electricity supply disruption. It describes prevention/mitigation of, preparedness for, the response to, and the initiation of recovery arrangements following a disruption, or simultaneous disruptions to energy supplies.

The Plan refers to a range of existing plans and documents relating to incident and emergency management but does not reproduce such information, instead providing directions to where the applicable publications can be located.

The Coordinator of Energy is the Hazard Management Agency (HMA) for gas, liquid fuel and electricity supply disruptions.

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## Exposure Draft of Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM) Amending Rules (FCESS Cost Review Amendments):

### Comment sought

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Energy Policy WA has released for comment the [Exposure Draft of Wholesale Electricity Market \(WEM\) Amending Rules \(FCESS Cost Review Amendments\)](#) that includes proposed WEM Amending Rules to:

- require Market Participants to specify reasonable Start Decision Cutoff times in their Real-Time Market Submissions;
- clarify that Metered Schedules for Scheduled Facilities, Semi-Scheduled Facilities and Non-Scheduled Facilities are Public Information;
- implement changes to the market power mitigation framework to improve its effectiveness and improve market efficiency, by ensuring Market Participants' offers reflect their efficient variable costs;
- make the current In-Service Capacity Only Scenario (which excludes all capacity offered as Available Capacity) the Reference Scenario;
- rename the current Reference Scenario (which includes any Available Capacity for which the relevant Start Decision Cutoff has not yet passed) the Available Capacity Scenario;
- impose an obligation on Market Participants who offer capacity as Available Capacity to monitor Pre-Dispatch Schedules and Dispatch Schedules for shortfalls in energy, Contingency Reserve Raise or Regulation Raise, and move capacity from Available Capacity to In-Service Capacity as required to alleviate any shortfalls;
- require Market Participants with Facilities accredited for RoCoF Control Service to offer their capacity into the Real-Time Market;
- introduce more efficient tiebreak methods for FCESS and energy;
- remove the payment of FCESS Uplift Payments for the provision of RoCoF Control Service;
- provide an alternative method of compensation (through Energy Uplift Payments) for Facilities constrained on by AEMO to provide RoCoF Control Service only;
- provide for Energy Uplift Payments for Facilities that are constrained on by AEMO during a period covered by a Low Reserve Condition Declaration;
- clarify the requirements for the high and low forecast Scenarios in terms of the treatment of Available Capacity;
- clarify that Energy Uplift Payments are based on In-Service Capacity Price-Quantity Pairs in Real-Time Market Offers only;
- modify the FCESS Uplift Payment calculations to avoid over-compensating FCESS providers when their enablement losses are partially or completely covered by other Real-Time Market payments;
- implement minor error corrections and enhancements across the WEM Rules.

Please provide your feedback on the Exposure Draft before 5:00pm (AWST) on 9 September 2024 by submitting comments to [energymarkets@demirs.wa.gov.au](mailto:energymarkets@demirs.wa.gov.au).

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## EPA WA conditions landfill to receive only Australian waste

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A proposal to increase gate tonnage at the nation's only commercial repository for Class IV and V waste has been [recommended for approval by the EPA WA subject to strict conditions](#) to ensure acceptance of waste only generated in Australia.

Tellus Holdings' Sandy Ridge facility, located 75km north-east of Koolyanobbing, began operating in 2021 and is licensed to accept 100,000 tonnes of waste per annum for 25 years.

The new proposal occurs within the existing and approved development envelope and increases the tonnage to 280,000. [Details](#) are now available.

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## Clean electricity for Burrup Peninsular WA

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Work is in progress on the development of Pilbara's first major transmission line to deliver clean electricity to the Burrup Peninsula, WA.

Plans are progressing for the delivery of a new high-capacity common use transmission line to link renewable

energy generation in the Maitland Strategic Industrial Area with Karratha and major Pilbara industry players.

Traditional Owners, the Ngarluma Aboriginal Corporation, and Murujuga Aboriginal Corporation - who have formed an alliance for the project that is part of a working group with the WA Government - are continuing to work alongside Perdaman, Woodside, and Yara Pilbara on the groundbreaking development.

The project has the potential to be the first in WA to attract concessional finance from the Commonwealth's *Rewiring the Nation* fund, up to \$3 billion of which has been allocated to WA.

The WA Government is continuing to work closely with Traditional Owners and industry to design the transmission assets, while ensuring minimal On Country impact.

The Pilbara is the engine room of WA's economy, responsible for about 20% of Gross State Product and contributing about a quarter of WA Government revenue.

It is anticipated the Maitland-Karratha-Burrup line will provide the template for future common use renewable infrastructure to support the region's decarbonisation.

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