

# Technical Advisory Consultative Committee

Meeting #13 – 14 January 2025

## 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 13th meeting on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2025. The major purpose of the meeting was to provide the TACC with an update on issues concerned with the upcoming maintenance program dredging in Devonport, including arrangements for monitoring and reporting the effects of dredging.

Participants present at the TasPorts Board Room, 48 Formby Road, Devonport were: Ian Cartwright (TACC Chair), Stuart Richey (TSIC), Rhys Menadue (TasPorts), Ben Hansen (Tas Ports), Abbey Gibson (Tas Ports) and Susan McLeod (Tas Ports).

Those present using Teams were: Micheal de Vos (Tas Ports), Kathryn Wheatley (TasPorts), Andrew Shelverton (Proxy for Harbor Master – TasPorts), Kelly Hunt (TARFish and recreational angler), Fiona Bourne (EPA), Christa Capel (ERA Planning & Environment).

Efforts continue to engage the local indigenous community; TasPorts reported on an extensive process with Six River's Aboriginal Corporation since the last TACC meeting as part of these efforts.

TasPorts confirmed that the Sea Dumping Permit Application (SDPA) for dredging operations in Devonport had been lodged with the federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) in mid-September. As is common with these types of operations a Request for Information (RFI) from DCCEEW was received in around December 2024. While no major issues were raised DCCEEW asked for a range of additional information that included:

Presentation of the sediment report as a standalone report;

- An additional introduced marine species (IMS) survey in summer to cover potential seasonal differences in species
- Assurance that methods of dredging other than using a trailing suction hopper will not increase turbidity beyond that already modelled
- Obtaining responses to proposed dredging activities from ANZ terminals and Cement Australia.
- Further information on the turbidity trigger values and how they were determined in the Adaptive Monitoring and Management Plan (AMMP);
- Further comparison between reference sites and disposal location, to ensure that TasPorts is reporting on the approach outlined in the Sediment Analysis Plan (SAP).

TasPorts is preparing or has provided responses to these and other DCCEEW requests. Timelines for the project will be influenced heavily by the timing of the approval and issue of the permit, with the worst-case scenario being that the permit will be issued in April. The dredging can then still occur within this financial year based on the 12-14 week duration of the campaign.

The reports sent to DCCEEW as attachment to the SDPA will not be sent out for public comment as the Department does not consult on the application – it is assessed internally. After the permit is issued the reports will become available on the DCCEEW and TasPorts websites.

Several global companies have come forward and tendered Expressions of Interest for the Devonport dredging work. A shortlist has been created and tenders closed at the end of January 2025. TasPorts should have an appointment made about 3-4 weeks after the tender closes. It was noted that the selected contractor cannot commence dredging until the permit is received.

Five monitoring buoys (see:<https://tasports.com.au/news/water-monitoring-buoys>) have been deployed as per the AMMP in the following locations: Forth River; near the kelp bed outside of the Mersey River river-mouth; Pardoe Beach near sea grass; and near the historic scallop bed and between the historic scallop bed and offshore disposal ground in about 38m of water. Moving and maintaining the buoys is expensive as their sensors (8 per buoy) need to be cleaned and calibrated every four weeks. It is also logistically challenging and expensive to place and extract buoys, due to the need for large equipment. That said, TasPorts will make every effort to ensure full use of the monitoring buoys to manage impacts from dredging, including through considering extended deployment and ensuring data is available to a wide range of stakeholders and, where possible, incorporating additional data (e.g wave and wind condition). The issue of buoy deployment will be discussed at the next (May) TACC meeting.

The TACC was provided with an overview of efforts by TasPorts to improve transparency and the flow of information about dredging via the TasPorts website, including a live water quality monitoring dashboard. In addition to a tabular and graphical presentation of monitoring data, a 'traffic light' system based on data inputs from sensors will provide an easily understood means of assessing risk. Green indicate data below a trigger point, yellow indicates approaching a trigger and red if the trigger is reached. At a yellow status, TasPorts will commence investigations into the causes that have elevated the indicators.

The next TACC meeting is scheduled for late March 2025.