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# EPA Bulletins 1273 & 1274 - EPA reiterates its recommendation of acceptability for the Fimiston Gold Mine Operations Extension (Stage 3).

Release Date: 3 December 2007

Incoming Chairman Paul Vogel said that the EPA's conclusion on the environmental acceptability of the proposal has not changed in the revised report.

"The EPA Board notes that it was regrettable the previous Chairman, Mr Barry Carbon, did not record his previous association with KCGM nine years ago," Dr Vogel said.

"However, the EPA Board confirms that this in no way affected the EPA's deliberations and conclusion on the environmental acceptability of the proposal," Dr Vogel said.

"There have been some changes included in Bulletin 1273 to clarify some of the contents of Bulletin 1270, but no changes to the recommended environmental conditions."

All clarifications within the two reports have been printed in blue for ease of comparison.

The proposal is to expand the Fimiston operations in Kalgoorlie by widening and deepening the Superpit by means of the Golden Pike Cutback.

The cutback would allow for the widening and deepening of the pit to 600 metres, covering a surface area of 46 hectares. Mining operations will not occur as close to Williamstown as they currently are to Boulder.

The clarifications include:

- Department of Health advice on potential health impacts of metal levels in dust;
- a revision of the section concerning airblast overpressure and vibration;
- an update to the response to submissions to include reference to additional studies and reports that had been undertaken after the public review period and to expand the response on seepage from tailings storage facilities (Response 23.1) and the placement of waste dumps (Response 25.1.2); and
- some minor corrections, including to noise level figures to provide consistency with the Regulation 17 report.

KCGM has also made an application to the Minister for the Environment for approval under Regulation 17 of the Environmental Protection (Noise) Regulations 1997, for a variation to the applicable standard for noise.

"The EPA is satisfied that KCGM has taken all reasonable and practicable measures to comply with the noise regulations, however there is still a residual noise impact," Dr Vogel said.

"Whilst KCGM has operated in accordance with their Ministerial Conditions for noise they have

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always had a defence under the Environmental Protection Act in terms of non-compliance with the noise regulations.

"The noise regulation 17 approval would provide clear and enforceable noise limits to KCGM's operations for the first time."

The application is being processed simultaneously with this assessment, and will be released for public comment (previously Bulletin 1271 now 1274) with this report.

The EPA has recommended that the proposed mining operations do not commence before approval is given under Regulation 17 of the Noise Regulations.

The EPA's reports are available at [www.epa.wa.gov.au](http://www.epa.wa.gov.au). Bulletin 1273 is subject to appeal until close of business 17 December 2007. Bulletin 1274 is open for comment till 8 January 2008. Appeals and comments will be considered by the Independent Appeals Convenor (9221 8711).

The final decision will be made by the Minister for the Environment.

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