



SECTION 22
Health and Safety



22.0 Health and Safety

22.1 Introduction

Chapter B.20 (Health and Safety) of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) describes the health and safety values of the broader community, onsite workforce, suppliers, visitors and other stakeholders, and addresses occupational hazards and relevant risks associated with the construction and operation of the Port Expansion Project (PEP). The design, construction and operation of the PEP will be undertaken in accordance with regulatory requirements at the time of each stage to minimise health and safety risks to personnel, property and the broader community. Health and safety risks associated with the PEP will be managed through the ongoing implementation of the Port of Townsville Limited (POTL) management systems.

This section provides information to address submissions received in response to the EIS relevant to health and safety and the impacts of the proposed revised design on these values. Key matters identified from the submission process include:

- mosquito management in sediment ponds
- management of flammable liquid fuels during ship transfers
- management of future port tenants and export / import materials.

22.2 Response to Submissions

22.2.1 Mosquito management in sediment ponds

Townsville City Council requested further information regarding the management of mosquitos in sediment pond bunds surrounding the new rail loop. Mosquito management measures during the construction and operational phases were addressed in Chapter C.2 (Construction Environmental Management Plan) and Chapter C.5 (Operational Environmental Management Plan) of the EIS and have been revised to extend management from the wet season to the entire year. The revised Construction Environmental Management Plan and Operational Environmental Management Plan are provided in Appendix B2 and Appendix B3 of the AEIS respectively.

Site inspections will be routinely undertaken during the construction and operational phases to identify mosquito breeding areas and chemical control measures will be used where required. Chemical control measures will be implemented by POTL in common areas and by tenants in leased areas, as required and in accordance with POTL procedures and relevant regulatory requirements.

22.2.2 Management of flammable substances during ship transfers

The Department of Justice and Attorney-General – Hazardous Industries and Chemicals Branch submission recommending specific controls be considered to manage the risk to personnel during unloading of liquefied petroleum gas (LPG) cargoes at the port. The risk to personnel unloading and storage of gas was identified in Appendix U.3 of the EIS. Existing POTL management systems will be updated to accommodate the PEP.

The Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B2) has been updated to include measures to manage risks to PEP personnel in association with hazardous material ship transfers including restrictions on working near ships during unloading activities.

Concerns were raised by one submission regarding the risks associated with discharging cargoes of flammable liquid fuels and storage at the port. Flammable liquid fuels are those which have a flash point of less than 61°C. The handling and storage of hazardous materials including flammable liquids associated with the construction of the PEP will be undertaken in accordance with POTL management systems and regulatory requirements. The existing POTL management systems will be updated to accommodate construction and operation activities associated with the PEP.

One submission queried the potential for LPG odours to be generated during berthing activities. There is no connection with LPG odours and the berthing of vessels, and the EIS does not address future tenants or products due to the timescale of the Project. The existing POTL management systems provide management and monitoring of environmental factors that have the potential to extend impacts beyond the port boundaries. Management and monitoring activities will be undertaken during construction and operational phases in accordance with current POTL procedures and to ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

22.2.3 Management of future port tenants and export / import materials

Three submissions requested further information regarding the siting and development of facilities to handle hazardous chemicals at the port and the potential risks associated with discharging flammable liquid fuels at the port. The handling, storage and disposal of hazardous materials used in the construction of the PEP and POTL operated activities will be undertaken in accordance with POTL management systems and regulatory requirements,

as addressed in Chapter B.20 (Health and Safety) of the EIS. Measures to manage hazardous materials during construction and operation activities are further outlined in the Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B2) and Operational Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B3).

Tenants and port operators are responsible for developing and implementing safety management plans to manage their own operations, including spills, within their tenancies, in accordance with regulatory requirements and POTL management systems. POTL have developed procedures and guidelines for safety management at the port, including for the management of spills and POTL undertakes regular reviews of their own operations to ensure compliance. This includes safe handling, storage, use and disposal of hazardous materials and response to spills.

One submission raised the potential impact of spills associated with exporting uranium whilst another submission queried the impacts of increased traffic associated with the export of mining goods on human health once the PEP is operational. The Port of Townsville is a multi-cargo port that imports and exports cargo to support North Queensland and the broader development initiatives of Northern Australia. Whilst the PEP EIS has identified mining exports as potential future trade, any such cargo export will be subject to separate assessment and approvals processes and is not specifically addressed in this EIS. Uranium has not been identified as a potential cargo in the PEP EIS.

Future industry development at the Port will be subject to separate approvals and regulatory requirements including requirements for work health and safety management and spill management.

22.3 Revised Environmental Impact Assessment

22.3.1 Legislation and policy

Legislation and policy changes that have occurred since the development of the EIS are identified in Section 1.0 of the AEIS. The legislative and policy changes did not impact on the assessment of health and safety values presented in the EIS, or the management of these values.

22.3.2 Design refinement

The project design has been revised as described in Section 2.0 of the AEIS. This revision focusses on amendments to the extent of dredging and reclamation works and does not impact upon the management of health and safety values.

22.3.3 Supporting studies

No additional studies were required to assess the revised design and address comments received from submissions on health and safety management.

22.3.4 Revised assessment

22.3.4.1 Impact assessment

Impacts of the Project on health and safety management remain consistent with that identified in Section B.20.4 of the EIS. POTL has undertaken a number of reclamation projects in the past and is well placed to manage health and safety associated with the Project.

22.3.4.2 Mitigation measures

The design, construction and operational phases of the PEP are covered by an extensive regulatory framework extending beyond the health and safety legislation. Health and safety management measures for the PEP are outlined in the updated Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B2) and Operational Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B3) which will be updated in POTL management systems prior to construction of each stage.

22.3.5 Summary

Section B.20.4 of the EIS provided a risk assessment regarding health and safety for the PEP. The revised design is consistent with the assessment provided in the EIS. Management of health and safety will be updated in POTL management systems prior to construction of each stage. Tenants and port operators are responsible for developing and implementing safety management plans to manage their own operations.

22.4 Conclusion

POTL has undertaken a number of reclamation projects in the past and is well placed to manage health and safety associated with the Project. POTL currently manages health and safety risks through their management systems. With the implementation of mitigation measures through these mechanisms, the Construction Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B2) and the Operational Environmental Management Plan (Appendix B3), the PEP is not expected to significantly impact upon existing procedures and framework or responses to safety issues.