



Public forum/General Meeting Thursday 6 June 2024

Acknowledgement of Country

Present

Representation across coastal organisations and concerned/interested local residents, 53 in total.

Apologies

Amy Beardsley, Bert Brown, Theo Ellenbroek, Angela Evans, Iris Iwanicki, Erica Jolly, Warwick Norman, Robyn Ravalico, Chrissy Schultz, Pedro Schultz, Geoff Short, Tony Williams

Public Forum

AUKUS nuclear submarines at Osborne/Port Adelaide: implications for local communities

Speaker: David Noonan, Independent Environment Campaigner

David has 30 years' experience scrutinising environment and nuclear public interest issues in SA. He will discuss his briefing paper [The health of emergency response workers and the Port Adelaide community is at risk in a potential AUKUS nuclear submarine reactor accident](#) (PDF, 27/4/24) which addresses the implications of emergency workers facing catastrophic conditions in the event of a nuclear submarine accident.

David's presentation is available on the WACRA website: <https://wacra.org.au/news-events/meetings/>

Q: How dangerous is this nuclear risk compared to Chernobyl or Fukushima?

A: Any level of nuclear accident is dangerous. There is no safe measure to ionising radiation so it's an equivalent. Smaller scale does not mean it's of less concern.

Q: If there were three nuclear subs parked at the same time, would they set each other off?

A: Probably not. Megawatts vary with reactors. Subs could be up to 200 megawatts running on high level enriched uranium, not insignificant. In comparison, Lucas Heights is around 20mw and a small reactor type power station around 300 to 400mw.

Q: What are the examples from overseas?

A: USA lost two subs at sea back in the 1960s with full crews lost. They have sunk to a depth where they have not been recovered. The Americans understand it was not the fault of the reactor but the subs are too deep to investigate fully. Russia has also sunk a number of submarines.

Q: What about the French and British who have been operating nuclear subs for 50 years and haven't had any accidents?

A: They did have a collision between the two as neither knew the other one was there. Info on military accidents is often not in the public realm, for instance UK stopped publishing 'incident' info on their N-Subs in 2017 under the guise of 'national security'. Maybe the same will happen here. Approx. 20 British subs are tied up in docks with no longterm disposal plan to get rid of the nuclear fuel in these obsolete subs. The Americans take the reactors out of the subs, plus the

nuclear fuel, and store it above ground. Then they put the reactor in a shallow trench and retire them. It's not convincing that they know what to do. The Russians have lost a lot of subs through sinking.

Q: Re Virginia class subs – we were told they were 'sealed' reactors so does this mitigate some of the danger?

A: When they say sealed, that means the reactor doesn't need refuelling over the life of the sub (approx. 33 years in total). We are set to buy 2nd hand subs, the first lot could be 10-12 years old and already loaded with intractable US-origin nuclear waste.

Q: Are there appropriate Health and Safety policies as yet?

A: We still need to develop proformas for our own health and safety. We will likely use information and policies from the US and UK and adapt for our use. There is still much work to do in this area. As health authorities say there is no healthy exposure to ionising radiation. There is no safe level. All nuclear reactors come with the potential for accidents.

Q: England has been using subs for 60 odd years with no problems. What is your response to that?

A: It doesn't mean their nuclear industry workers were well catered for. The English Sellafield site is one of the most contaminated sites in the world. England is heavily in debt to their nuclear industry – especially in the management of waste.

Q: In the Chernobyl and Fukushima accidents, it's worth being aware that the range from which people were evacuated was over 50ks from the site. The planning won't necessarily solve the problem. It depends on conditions (eg wind direction). In terms of scenarios, what realistically do you think could be an effective exposure plan?

A: It comes back to the community's 'right to know' and the government's responsibility to carry out these studies. The public should seek information regarding potential action/studies regarding processes and affected areas after an accident, should one occur. I encourage you to write to relevant MPs asking for information which you have a right to know (but are not being told). The civilian regulator already has distances in mind.

Thanks to David Noonan for an amazing presentation. We have some good suggestions from him that the WACRA Committee will be bringing back to a general meeting.

General Meeting

My Tree Project (MTP)

Julie Whitehead reporting

Context for MTP followed by the MTP compilation video. The final documentary will be available later this year. More information about the My Tree Project: <https://wacra.org.au/my-tree-project/>

Treasurer's report

Shelley Harington reporting

Not a detailed report as we are in the process of handing over the role to a new treasurer, which involves liaising with the bank.

\$3,763.33 which includes the MTP \$3000. We have paid approx., \$828.94 to date, leaving just over \$2000 in the fund.

Next meeting there will be more information.

Moved: Richard Smith

Seconded: Julie Whitehead

All in favour

City of Charles Sturt Annual Business Plan

Kate Denton reporting

It is exciting that council has put up a big bid for tree planting (tree canopy). It's ongoing money – recurring budget which means it's there ongoing. There is a 6.25% rate increase.

There are big road projects as well, and the library – funded in prior budgets.

Everything is finally going in the right direction. But there is a big task ahead of us. The percentage increase is about 6000 trees. They want to get 25% extra tree canopy by 2045.

It will be approved at the end of the month.

Moved: Becky Llewellyn

Seconded: Alan Goldsmith

All in favour

Coast Management Review update

Jim Douglas reporting

WACRA will be consulted. The consultants will meet with all groups along the coast.

WACRA has looked briefly at the report but these members are away tonight.

Government's response to ABMR IAP report on 24 May 2024:

- Trial dredging from nearshore between North Haven and Taperoo Sept-Nov 2024
- 90,000m³ to be delivered from dredge by sand slurry pipeline to West Beach
- 200,000m³ of quarry sand to be delivered to West Beach over next 12 months

Issues for clarification include:

- Site was not recommended by Bluecoast, so why chosen?
- Will small grain size, carbonate content, seagrass wrack make it unsuitable?
- What effect on North Haven and Taperoo beaches and dunes (re 90,000 cubic metres to be taken each year)?
- What Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) controls will apply – compared with 2017/18 Outer Harbour dredging? As a result of an extensive consultation process, we had monitoring put onto land, a group which involved our organisation and others. This group looked at the results of dredging that took place. Turbidity levels determined whether the dredging was stopped.
- What criteria will be used to assess success/failure of trial?
- Will results of the trial be relevant to prospects of longterm dredging 2km offshore? We don't know why they are going close to shore rather than offshore.
- What strategy to retain sand on West Beach? Temporary groynes etc? We think there should have been a tank testing process where they can test wave, sand and wind movement and see what the speeds etc are. Also we've had advice from Ian Dyson (geologist) who thinks geotechnical sandbags should have been used. They have helped to build up the beach south of Glenelg – a proven method. We think it should have been part of this trial – what will hold the sand back?

We haven't seen anything answered around these concerns but we will meet with the consultants (Bluecoast) and also send these questions to Environment Minister Kyam Maher and Deputy Premier Susan Close. We are open to talking with other organisations but need to put our own position in place first.

Q: I suggest another question – if the trial at North Haven fails what then. Another assumption seems to be that if this trial fails we immediately defer to a pipeline.

A: Noted, and we will put it forward.

Bruce Foster: We are pretty much of the same concerns as WACRA. What is encouraging is that the dredge and barge option was preferred by Bluecoast so that is good. But this particular site is not suitable for purpose due to grain size etc. The dredge and barge option we proposed, but it was a mass nourishment program that was designed for success. The bottom line is that I appreciate the opportunity to make representation and I hope that WACRA will take the opportunity too with Steve Dangerfield (of TSARiley, engaged by DEW to manage the public consultation). DEW is still shovel ready to put in a pipeline.

Shine Hub and City of Charles Sturt Renewable Energy Offers

Marty Cielens reporting

How many know about this project? It has just closed. It is a 3-part offer to community if people are interested in putting solar on their roof, or solar and battery, or just a battery. It is still possible to register.

It's a way of creating a giant network using the community's solar panels and batteries, so watch this space if you are interested.

<https://shinehub.com.au/charles-sturt/>

AOB

Regulated and significant tree law reforms

'The South Australian Government is taking immediate action to better protect Adelaide's urban tree canopy and safeguard large, mature trees from destruction.' (17 May 2024)

<https://www.premier.sa.gov.au/media-releases/news-items/new-rules-to-protect-adelaides-tree-canopy-coming-into-effect-immediately>

Thanks to all for coming. It's been a great meeting.

Meeting closed at 9.05pm

Next meeting Thursday 5 September 2024

Drinks and nibbles followed

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Jim Douglas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "D".

Minutes signed off by Jim Douglas (Committee member)