



EPA Bulletin 1276

**Magellan Lead Carbonate Project, Wiluna – To Facilitate the Export of
Containerised Lead from the Port of Fremantle**

In advice to the Minister for the Environment, on a proposal by Magellan Metals Pty Ltd to export containerised lead concentrate through the Port of Fremantle, the Environmental Protection Authority has concluded that it is unlikely that the EPA's objectives would be compromised, provided there is satisfactory implementation by the proponent of the recommended conditions and commitments.

The Port of Fremantle is currently the only container terminal in Western Australia capable of handling the volume and proposed method of transport of lead carbonate.

EPA Chairman Paul Vogel said that the management of fugitive lead emissions, at the minesite, along the transport route and at the Port of Fremantle was the main issue assessed by the EPA.

"The lead concentrate is to be sealed in United Nations and State Government approved bulk bags and loaded into shipping containers, which are then closed with a steel bolt until arrival overseas," Dr Vogel said.

"An accredited, independent, inspector will ensure that there is no fugitive lead dust on the outside surfaces of both the bulk bags and the shipping containers prior to leaving the minesite."

Magellan carried out a risk analysis for the handling and transport of lead carbonate concentrate from the mine to the Port of Fremantle that shows that after risk reduction measures are put in place all risks are ranked in the low to moderate risk categories.

An Emergency Response Plan has been developed that sets out the procedures to be followed in the event of an accident during transport or loading of the lead carbonate concentrate from the mine site to the Port of Fremantle. The objective of the plan is the immediate containment of any release of concentrate and a quick and complete clean up. The document has been produced in consultation with the Fire and Emergency Services of Western Australia.

"As an additional safeguard the EPA has also recommended a condition requiring a Health, Hygiene and Environmental Management Program," Dr Vogel said

"Amongst other requirements this will detail the procedure of publicly reporting lead monitoring results of baseline and periodic sampling programs along the entire transport route, including the storage areas at both Leonora and the Port of Fremantle.

The EPA's report is available at www.epa.wa.gov.au and is open for comments until close of business 24 December 2007. 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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Background

- Magellan Metals Pty Ltd (Magellan) proposed to develop an open-cut lead carbonate mine and processing facilities approximately 30 kilometres west of the Wiluna townsite to produce a lead concentrate and export the concentrate through the Port of Geraldton. In November 2000, the then Minister for the Environment approved this proposal.
- On 29 December 2004, the then Minister for the Environment approved a variation to export through the Port of Esperance rather than the Port of Geraldton.
- Mining commenced in November 2004 and Magellan exported concentrate in bulk from June 2005 until March 2007 through the Port of Esperance. The export of bulk lead carbonate concentrate through the Port of Esperance was halted by the Department of Environment and Conservation due to fugitive lead and nickel dust pollution from the Port of Esperance. Subsequently, the Magellan Mine was put on care and maintenance.
- A Parliamentary Inquiry into the cause and extent of lead pollution in the Esperance area was referred to the Education and Health Standing Committee and a report of its findings and recommendations was tabled in the Legislative Assembly on 6 September 2007 by the Education and Health Standing Committee.
- On 10 April 2007, pursuant to 46(1) of the Environmental Protection Act 1986, the Minister for Environment requested the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) to inquire into Magellan's proposed changes to the environmental conditions set on the Magellan Lead Carbonate Project (Statement No. 559).