

Media release

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VICTORIAN COASTAL COUNCIL WELCOMES MINISTERS ANNOUNCEMENT FOR EES FOR WONTHAGGI DESAL PLANT

The Victorian Coastal Council today welcomed the Minister for Planning's Decision on 28 December 2007, for an Environmental Effects Statement (EES) for the desalination plant near Wonthaggi in Victoria's east.

Libby Mears, Chair of the Victorian Coastal Council, said, "This is a big project and a new industry in Victoria which needs to be near the coast. An EES process will help the Victorian community to understand the proposed development and how environmental impacts can be managed."

The Victorian Coastal Council, which released its draft Victorian Coastal Strategy for public comment in early November 2007, recognises that the plan to build a desalination plant to boost water supplies across Victoria is a State Government policy agenda and part of the State's *Water Plan*.

"The Council has been briefed on the project and will remain interested in the EES process", Ms Mears said. "An EES provides the opportunity for the detail of the proposal to be aired to the community, and for an independent inquiry to be established to provide a report to the Minister."

The Victorian Coastal Council is an independent Statutory Authority comprised of 11 representatives appointed under the provisions of the *Coastal Management Act 1995*. Its task is to undertake state wide strategic planning, and prepare and submit to the Minister for Environment and Climate Change a draft Victorian Coastal Strategy.

Ends...

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