



Media Release

SURVEY WORKS CONTINUE FOR THE SUGARLOAF PIPELINE

Sugarloaf Pipeline Project Director, Rod Clifford, today confirmed that survey works along the preferred corridors, including core drilling works, would continue, following clarification by the Federal Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts.

Mr Clifford said while flora, fauna, cultural heritage and other survey works had been taking place consistent with the planned timetable, core drilling works planned for this week had been temporarily suspended following community concern that they may contravene requirements under the EPBC Act.

“There was some concern in the community that the core drilling works, which are an essential part of the investigative works for the pipeline, may contravene the EPBC Act.

“While our preliminary advice suggested that those works were not in fact a part of the pipeline construction itself and therefore permissible, in response to those concerns we temporarily suspended works to confirm absolutely that the core drilling works were allowed under the Act.

“Our legal advice, confirmed by the DEWHA, is that the works are not considered part of the physical construction of the pipeline itself and are part of the normal investigative aspects of the project to collect geological evidence about various sites.

“We will therefore resume those works, consistent with our planned timetable in the coming days.

“It is important to emphasise that as with the survey works done to date, these works are essential in helping to determine the best route for the pipeline with the least possible impacts.

‘Throughout this project, we have always sought to work with the community and respond to their concerns about the project and its potential impacts and we will continue to adopt this approach in the delivery of this important infrastructure project.’”

Mr Clifford said consistent with DEWHA’s request, Melbourne Water would post a schedule of current and future drilling and investigative works on its website.

The Sugarloaf Pipeline is a key plank of the Government’s Our Water Our Future: Next Stage plan.

It will bring up to 75 billion litres of water to Melbourne from 2010, available from the Food Bowl Modernisation Project, which is expected to realise 225 billion litres of water to be divided between the environment, irrigators and Melbourne.

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In exchange for the 75 billion litres of water per annum, the Victorian Government is contributing \$600 million toward the first stage of the Food Bowl Modernisation Project and Melbourne Water is contributing \$300 million. The remaining \$100 million will be paid by Goulburn-Murray Water.

Media inquiries: Ben Pratt, 9235 7277

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