

MEDIA STATEMENT



Dr Mike Nahan MLA
Member for Riverton
Joe Francis MLA
Member for Jandakot

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SMRC Licence Conditions Toughened But Is It Enough?

Dr Mike Nahan, the Member for Riverton and Mr Joe Francis, the Member for Jandakot cautiously welcomed the Department of Environment and Conservation's decision to subject the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council's (SMRC) Canning Vale waste facility to tougher odour emission conditions under a new draft licence.

"Joe Francis and I are pleased to see new tougher conditions being imposed on the SMRC. There has been a weakness in the SMRC's license to operate its Regional Resource Recovery Center in Canning Vale and the conditions should have been much stricter when it was first issued," said Dr Nahan.

"The new license conditions have been proposed as a result of community concerns that the Member for Jandakot and I have been raising and because of DEC compliance actions, which identified that sections of the operating license were deficient."

"These much needed changes will force the SMRC to ensure that odour emitted from their premises does not unreasonably interfere with the health, welfare, convenience comfort or amenity of any person who is not on the premises."

"However, I have concerns that there are no clear, measureable, quantified targets outlined in the new license and no information about the penalties that DEC could impose on the SMRC for any future breaches."

Dr Nahan and Mr Francis said that as a result of the high number of community complaints, they invited the Minister for the Environment, Hon Donna Faragher to visit the SMRC's facilities and the Minister is undertaking the site visit on Friday 5 March at 11am to see the problems for herself.

"It will be the first visit that Environment Minister Faragher has made to the SMRC and I will be joining that visit along with Dr Nahan," said Mr Francis.

"After the site visit, the Minister will be meeting with Dr Nahan and I and representatives from the community to hear first-hand about their experiences in having to deal with the odours virtually on a daily basis."

Dr Nahan and Mr Francis said they were disappointed that the SMRC had not put any notification on its website about the new licence requirements or the fact that the public had a 21-day period from Monday 1 March in which to comment on the new conditions.

"The SMRC has a poor record of communicating with the community and this is just another example. More than 380,000 ratepayers from the seven member councils are affected by the decisions that the SMRC and its board make so they should be working extremely closely with the community," said Mr Francis.

Dr Nahan said the SMRC is subject to at least three significant pollution investigations by DEC at the moment and over the last four months, he has had more than 120 community complaints about the odours.

"The SMRC may divert waste from landfill but in so doing it has become a serial polluter, which is simply not acceptable," said Dr Nahan.

"I believe the SMRC should be letting the community know about the new license conditions and I join with Joe Francis in encouraging members of the community to take the opportunity to comment on the new conditions within the 21 day period," said Dr Nahan.

"Joe Francis and I will continue to defend the local community's right to freedom from the SMRC's unwanted odour emissions."

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