



Chief Executive Officer
Apache Northwest Pty Ltd
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WEST PERTH WA 6872

Our Ref A584034
Enquiries Robert Hughes
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Attn: Libby Howitt

Dear Sir/Madam

**NOTICE UNDER SECTION 39A(3)
*Environmental Protection Act 1986***

PROPOSAL: Varanus Island Compression Project
LOCALITY: Shire of Ashburton
PROPONENT: Apache Northwest Pty Ltd
DECISION: Not Assessed – Public Advice Given

Thank you for your letter referring the above matter to the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

This proposal raises a number of environmental issues. However, the EPA has decided not to subject this proposal to the environmental impact assessment process and the subsequent setting of formal conditions by the Minister for Environment under Part IV of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* (EP Act). Nevertheless, the staff of the Office of the EPA has provided the attached advice to you as the proponent, and other relevant authorities on the environmental aspects of the proposal.

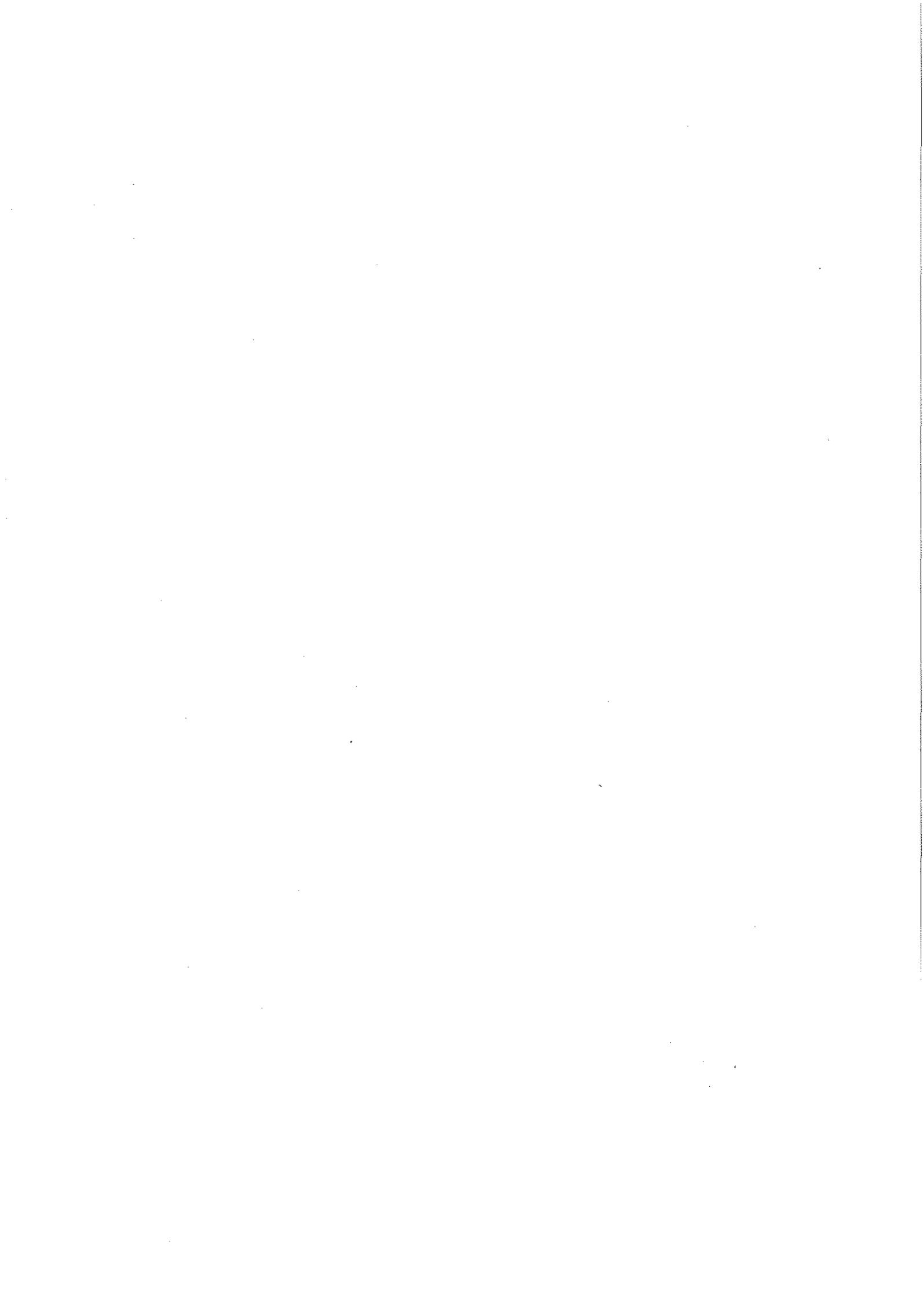
The EPA's decision to not assess the proposal is open to appeal. There is a 14-day period, closing 2 April 2013. Information on the appeals process is available through the Office of the Appeals Convenor's website, www.appealsconvenor.wa.gov.au, or by telephoning 6467 5190.

Yours faithfully

Anthony Sutton
Director
Assessment and Compliance Division

18 March 2013

Encl



Public Advice Under Section 39A(7)

Environmental Protection Act 1986

Summary

The Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) received a referral for the Varanus Island Compression Project. The EPA considers that the project is not likely to have a significant impact on the environment and can be adequately regulated through the statutory decision-making processes of the Department of Mines and Petroleum (DMP) and the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC).

Proposal and Potential Environmental Impacts

The referral documentation received by the EPA is for the construction of two Solar Mars 100 gas turbine compressors, Centaur 40 power generator, pipe rack, equipment room, as well as supporting infrastructure and services including accommodation camp upgrade, wharf upgrades, construction of a kitchen/mess cyclone refuge, upgrade of concrete batching plant and bulk earthworks. The proposal also includes clearing of 0.75 hectares of vegetation.

The EPA notes that the proposal has the potential to increase light emissions from the site which can potentially result in changes to the behaviour of marine turtles and seabirds. The EPA notes that the project will result in some clearing of vegetation, changes to a hydrocarbon containment bund and air emissions from the compression units.

EPA Consideration and Decision

The EPA has assessed the lighting management plan and specifications for site and notes they are generally consistent with *Environmental Assessment Guideline 5: Environmental Assessment Guideline for Protecting Marine Turtles from Light Impacts (EAG5)*. The EPA notes that construction will take place during daylight hours and outside of the main seabird and turtle nesting seasons. The EPA notes that DMP will be assessing impacts to fauna including marine turtles and seabirds from lighting through a construction management plan. Monitoring of potential impacts from lighting on marine turtles will be reviewed by DMP and DEC. Given that the lighting is adequately regulated on the site, EPA considers that impacts to turtles and seabirds can be adequately managed and do not represent a significant impact.

The EPA notes that there is not declared rare flora or priority flora species on Varanus Island. The EPA considers that there is unlikely to be significant impacts from clearing vegetation and it is adequately assessed through the clearing permit process.

The EPA notes that the air compression units will be subject to a works approval from DEC under Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*. The EPA considers that air emissions can be adequately regulated through the works approval.

The EPA notes that the emergency hydrocarbon containment area will reduce in size from the construction of the proposal. The EPA notes that the emergency containment has been designed for 110% of the biggest containment vessel and a 140mm 24 rainfall event. The EPA notes that DMP will regulate the emergency containment area and will consider the adequacy of the bunding capacity as part of the approval process.

EPA Advice

The EPA's objective for the proposal is to ensure marine turtles and birds are not exposed to unacceptable lighting emissions, clearing does not result in impacts to conservation significant flora and air emissions are within acceptable limits.

It is the EPA's opinion that the potential environmental impacts from the proposal are not significant and can be managed through the Construction Management Plan and clearing permit from DMP and the works approval from DEC.