



EDUCATION AND HEALTH STANDING COMMITTEE

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MEDIA RELEASE

From: Hon Dr Kim Hames, MLA
Acting Chairman

To: Media

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INQUIRY INTO THE CAUSE AND EXTENT OF LEAD POLLUTION IN THE ESPERANCE AREA

The Education and Health Standing Committee has today written to the Minister for Environment seeking his advice on the current review by the Department of Environment and Conservation of the Esperance Port Authority's operating licence.

During the recent public hearings in Esperance, the Committee's attention was drawn to correspondence from the Department inviting public submissions on the review of the Port's operating licence by 14 May 2007. As the Committee is only in the preliminary stages of its inquiry it is not currently in a position to make a submission to the Department's review.

The Committee is of the view that its Inquiry findings and recommendations will be of relevance to the licence conditions applicable to the Esperance Port Authority. It has questioned the appropriateness of the Department proceeding with its review of the Esperance Port Authority operating licence at this time, and without the benefit of the Committee's report which is due to be tabled on 16 August 2007. It is important for members of the public to be aware, however, that the Committee does not have any role or powers other than to inquire into, report and make recommendations within its terms of reference.

The Committee nevertheless encourages Esperance community members and groups to participate in the Department's review of Esperance Port Authority operational licence. The Department's review does provide an important avenue for that community to participate in the assessment of the Port's licence conditions, even if the Committee is unable to contribute at this time.