

#### **4.0 GOVERNMENT RESPONSE TO MINORITY REPORT OF HON CHRISTINE SHARP MLC AND HON JIM SCOTT MLC**

The minority report of Hon Christine Sharp MLC and Hon Jim Scott MLC raised concerns regarding Committee Members being constrained from commenting on Alcoa's proposal to expand its existing Wagerup refinery with a third production unit (Wagerup Unit III expansion), because of the formal assessment process being undertaken by the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA).

It is important to clarify the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process being undertaken is open to input from all stakeholders and no recommendations have been made by the EPA. A summary of the Wagerup Unit III expansion in the EIA process is detailed below:

- Alcoa referred its proposed expansion of the Wagerup refinery to the EPA on 15 June 2004.
- The EPA advertised the level of assessment for the Proposal as a Public Environmental Review (PER) on 21 June 2004.
- Based on public appeals the level of assessment was set at an Environmental Review and Management Programme (ERMP) on 16 July 2004, the highest level of EIA in Western Australia.
- A scoping document outlining the content of the ERMP was subsequently prepared by Alcoa and submitted to the EPA and made publicly available. The EPA sought public comment for a two week period ending 4 October 2004.
- This scoping document is now being finalised following public comment and will form the basis of the ERMP to be completed by Alcoa.
- When complete, the ERMP will be released for a 10 week public comment period. The ERMP is expected to be complete and submitted to the EPA in early 2005.
- Alcoa's response to public submissions will be sought prior to the EPA preparing its report and recommendations to the Minister for Environment. The EPA report and recommendations will be publicly available and a two week appeal period exists.
- The EPA report and recommendations, and appeals will be considered by the Minister for Environment before a decision is made.

In undertaking the ERMP assessment of Alcoa's proposed Wagerup Unit III expansion, the EPA is able to consider the evidence brought to and matters raised by the Committee. In this regard, the Committee Report has been brought to the EPA's attention for reference in its assessment of the Wagerup III expansion proposal.