

CAVEAT BRIEF

To: Minister for the Environment, Parks and Land Management

Tracking No.: **24/40180**

Date: 23/04/2024

From: A/g Executive Group Manager, Environment, Heritage and Water

Subject: ACT Air Quality Assessment

- A/g DDG, Environment, Water and Emissions Reduction 29/04/24

Recommendations

That you **note** the information contained in this Brief.

Noted / Please Discuss

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10/5/2024

Minister's Office Feedback

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Background

The Government response (Attachment A) to the Commissioner for the Sustainability and the Environment report into wood heater policy in the ACT provided in-principle support to the Commissioner's recommendations (Rec 1 and 2) to phase out and ban wood heaters in urban areas of the ACT subject to air quality and regulatory impact assessments.

CABINET

The Statement of Requirements (SOR) for the air quality assessment ([Attachment B](#)) has been developed based on previous air quality planning assessments in the ACT. The project area for the assessment is all urban areas of the ACT ([Attachment C](#)) excluding areas previously assessed.

Issues

Since the 1990's the ACT Planning Authority has undertaken air quality assessments for any new greenfield developments. Previous studies have resulted in wood heaters being banned in Dunlop, East O'Malley and the Molonglo Valley (excluding Wright).

The air quality assessment for the Molonglo Valley recommended all suburbs not contain wood heaters, however leases had been issued for Wright before the restrictions could be implemented through the leasehold system. Therefore, while Wright is excluded from this study it will be included as the areas where wood heater installation should be restricted in the future. A planning air quality assessment has also been undertaken for the western edge future urban area, including parts of the Tuggeranong Valley which also recommended wood heater installation be restricted. The Tuggeranong Valley is included in the study area to confirm this assessment for the entire valley.

Budget

A budget of \$75,000 has been allocated for the project from the Environment Protection Policy Branch 2023-24 budget. A 2024-25 budget bid was submitted for these works including a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) and a single point of contact (SPOC) to project manage the consultancies but was not supported by Treasury. A revised bid has been submitted noting the funding for the air quality assessment has been sourced internally. The Expenditure Review Committee of Cabinet (ERC) has supported \$115,000 for a consultancy for the RIA but has not supported the SPOC position for 12 months to project manage the consultancies. The project management will be covered with existing EPSDD resources which may result in delays to other work.

Timing

The anticipated timeframe for the consultancy is to have it completed by the end of the current financial year as detailed in [Attachment B](#).

Attachments

Attachment	Title
Attachment A	Government Response – CSE Wood heater Investigation
Attachment B	Statement of Requirements (SOR) – ACT Air Quality Assessment
Attachment C	ACT Urban Areas