

# ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 14 August 2023

## FORTHCOMING AEBN EVENTS



WEBINAR  
MID-YEAR UPDATE  
**AEBN ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE FOR BUSINESS: NEW LAWS AND DEVELOPMENTS FROM ACROSS AUSTRALIA**  
24 AUGUST 2023  
10:00AM – 3:00PM (AEST)  
Presented by the  
Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN)  
[www.aebn.com.au](http://www.aebn.com.au)

**[AEBN WEBINAR]**  
**[MID-YEAR UPDATE - ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE FOR BUSINESS: New Laws and Developments from across Australia](#)**

10.00am to 3.00pm  
24 August 2023



WORKSHOP WEBINARS  
**DANGEROUS GOODS, HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES/CHEMICALS AND GHS**  
1. SERIES 1 – 25 OCTOBER 2023 (10AM - 1:45PM)  
2. SERIES 2 – 29 OCTOBER 2023 (10AM - 1:45PM)  
COVERING STATES & TERRITORIES ACROSS AUSTRALIA  
Presented by the  
Australian Environment Business Network (AEBN)  
[www.aebn.com.au](http://www.aebn.com.au)

**[AEBN WEBINARS]**

- **[SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances and GHS](#)**

Covering: Regulatory framework, Identification, Classification, SDSs and Labelling

10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)  
25 October 2023

- **[SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances](#)**

Covering: Rules and practical applications for the safe Storage & Handling and Transport

10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)  
25 October 2023

## FEDERAL

### Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard (IChEMS) proposed decision:

#### Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is seeking your input on proposed scheduling decisions under the [Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard \(IChEMS\)](#).

IChEMS is a national approach to managing chemical use, storage, handling and disposal. It will deliver nationally consistent environmental standards for managing industrial chemicals and make it easier for industry to choose less harmful chemicals.

Chemicals will be listed on the IChEMS Register in one of seven schedules, to provide information on their relative environmental risk. The IChEMS Register will also include risk-proportionate controls that should be applied to protect the environment.

The information that you provide on these proposed decisions will inform the regulatory scheduling of chemicals on the IChEMS Register.

The chemical's listed below are included in the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants (POPs). The chemicals listed below are an international chemical of concern, which can cause serious harm to the environment if not managed properly.

Your feedback on the proposed decision will help ensure that Australian governments and businesses manage the environmental risks of these chemicals.

You are invited to make a submission on the proposed standards for managing the environmental risk of the following:

- **Proposed Schedule 7 decision - Perfluorooctanoic Acid (PFOA) and related chemicals.**

Proposed decision and supporting documents:

- [Decision for consultation – PFOA](#)
- [Indicative list of CAS Numbers – PFOA](#)
- [Q&A - PFAS and PeCB decisions](#)
- [Chemical Profile – PFOA](#)

Please read the proposed decision and supporting documentation, including the 'question and answer' document and provide [feedback](#) by 1 September 2023.

- **Proposed Schedule 7 decision - Perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) and related chemicals.**

Proposed decision and supporting documents:

- [Decision for consultation – PFOS](#)
- [Indicative list of CAS Numbers – PFOS](#)
- [Q&A - PFAS and PeCB decisions](#)
- [Chemical Profile – PFOS](#)

Please read the proposed decision and supporting documentation, including the 'question and answer' document and provide [feedback](#) by 1 September 2023.

- **Proposed Schedule 7 decision - Perfluorohexane sulfonate (PFHxS) and related chemicals**

Proposed decision and supporting documents:

- [Decision for consultation – PFHxS](#)
- [Indicative list of CAS Numbers – PFHxS](#)
- [Q&A - PFAS and PeCB decisions](#)
- [Chemical Profile – PFHxS](#)

Please read the proposed decision and supporting documentation, including the 'question and answer' document and provide [feedback](#) by 1 September 2023.

- **Proposed Schedule 7 decision - Pentachlorobenzene (PeCB)**

Proposed decision and supporting documents:

- [Decision for consultation – PeCB](#)
- [Q&A - PFAS and PeCB decisions](#)
- [Chemical Profile – PeCB](#)

Please read the proposed decision and supporting documentation, including the 'question and answer' document and provide [feedback](#) by 1 September 2023.

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## Australia and UK announce joint funding call for green hydrogen projects

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The Australian and United Kingdom (UK) governments have announced a joint funding call to accelerate green hydrogen projects. The program will be launched in October 2023.

Australia's Federal Minister for Climate Change and Energy Chris Bowen and UK Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero Grant Shapps announced a new joint initiative at a Green Hydrogen Roundtable during the 14th Clean Energy Ministerial and 8th Mission Innovation Meeting in Goa, India.

Both countries will provide funding for Australian and British companies to

work together on research, development or demonstration projects on renewable hydrogen.

The new arrangement is part of a broader push by the Australian Government to work with like-minded countries to build supply chains, enhance investment and shape global markets for clean energy technologies.

The agreement is expected to build on a clean energy partnership between Australia and the UK developed in 2021. It will focus on renewable hydrogen and its applications to decarbonise industry and transport. International collaboration is essential in helping to achieve our hydrogen ambitions with the required urgency and deliver a net zero transition for both economies.

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## Clean Energy Regulator 2023-24 compliance and enforcement priorities: Released

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The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has released its [Compliance and Enforcement Priorities for 2023–2024](#) that sets out priorities where the CER will be focusing compliance and enforcement activities for the year ahead. Businesses participating are responsible for complying with all scheme requirements.

Focus areas are:

- Safeguard Mechanism entities under-reporting emissions
- accuracy and completeness of information provided in the ACCU Scheme (formerly the Emissions Reduction Fund)
- verification of energy and emissions data to combat greenwashing
- written statements for Small-scale technology certificates (STC) claims are not false or misleading
- liable entities in Large-scale Renewable Energy Target (LRET) with outstanding shortfall debts

- accuracy of climate-related commitments and context statements in Corporate Emissions Reduction Transparency (CERT) reports, and
- non-compliant or poorly performing auditors.

The CER administers schemes in line with the following compliance and enforcement principles:

- The obligation to comply with legislative requirements governing the schemes rests with those participating in them.
- When the CER detects non-compliance, we respond with enforcement that is both proportionate and takes into account the impact of the non-compliance on scheme objectives.
- In dealing with non-compliance, the CER will draw from our full suite of compliance and enforcement powers, in line with our [Compliance policy for education, monitoring and enforcement activities](#).

Should you require further information, please visit [Compliance and enforcement priorities](#), email [enquiries@cleanenergyregulator.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@cleanenergyregulator.gov.au) or call 1300 553 542.

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## Update on Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme (SRES) installer and designer accreditation scheme operator application process

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The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) expects to make a decision on, and announce the outcome of the [Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme \(SRES\)](#) installer and designer accreditation scheme operator (ASO) application process in February 2024.

If one or more operators are approved, the Clean Energy Council's (CEC) accreditation services will move to the approved ASO(s). The CER will not be accrediting installers and designers. For currently accredited installers and designers, or those considering applying for accreditation, it is

business as usual in engaging with the CEC. For example:

- the CEC will continue to accredit installers and designers until the CER's decision.
- accredited persons should continue to complete mandatory training, follow installation guidelines, codes of conduct and maintain the currency of their accreditation.

Once the CER has published its decision, if one or more ASOs are approved CER will advise the transitional arrangements. In such case, it is the intention of the CER to work with the parties (including the Clean Energy Council (CEC)), to have the smoothest transition for all accredited persons including ensuring value for accreditation fees already paid. CER is not yet in a position to be able to provide the detail on this.

For any questions, please email [cer-sresreforms@cer.gov.au](mailto:cer-sresreforms@cer.gov.au) or call CER on 1300 553 542.

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## Clean Energy Regulator Compliance update for 1 April to 30 June 2023

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The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has released its [Compliance update for 1 April to 30 June 2023](#) that provides information on activities related to its [compliance and enforcement priorities](#).

The update includes:

- outstanding Renewable Energy Target (RET) shortfall charge debts
- RET enforceable undertakings
- registered scheme auditors' rotation requirements
- Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme compliance update.

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## Climate Change Authority submission on Fuel Efficiency Standard

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The Climate Change Authority has [made a submission](#) in response to the Federal Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts Fuel Efficiency Standard consultation paper.

The consultation paper sought views on key considerations for the design of a Fuel Efficiency Standard for light vehicles to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

In its submission the Authority stated that the Federal Government's proposed Fuel Efficiency Standard should decline to 0 g CO<sub>2</sub> per km as rapidly as the market can adapt, with due consideration to, and monitoring of, supply chain issues.

The Authority emphasised that:

- overcoming supply chain issues and increasing the scale of electric vehicle production, and ultimately reaching price parity between electric and fuel combustion vehicles, will be part of ensuring consumers are able to make low emissions choices in the vehicles they purchase.
- there needs to be greater deployment of recharging infrastructure for electric vehicles in Australia to ensure this does not hold back demand for these vehicles. Additionally, the increase in electrified transport will have implications for the electricity grid, which should be considered in related energy transition policy development processes.

The submission contains insights and recommendations on the design of the Fuel Efficiency Standard to ensure its integrity and effectiveness which aligns with previous advice from reports, '[Light Vehicle Emissions Standards for Australia](#)' (2014) and '[Prospering in a low-emissions world: An updated climate policy toolkit for Australia](#)' (2020).

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## GRANT OPPORTUNITIES:

### Current grant opportunities by the Federal environment government

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A number of Federal Government grants have been released for businesses:

- [Carbon Farming Outreach Program](#) – closes 14 Aug 2023
- [Great Barrier Reef Marine Debris Management and Mitigation](#) – closes 11 Aug 2023
- [Resources Methane Abatement Fund](#) – closes 16 Aug 2023
- [Powering the Regions Fund – Critical Inputs to Clean Energy Industries – Primary Steel Production Sector](#) – closes 2 Nov 2023

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## Draft decision on State of Conservation of the Great Barrier Reef:

### Released

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The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) has released the [draft decision on the State of Conservation of the Great Barrier Reef](#). This is a draft decision that is expected to inform the World Heritage Committee its final decision.

Australia is taking increased action and investing significantly to protect the Reef, by:

- committing to ambitious emission reduction targets
- investment significantly to improve Reef water quality by reducing nutrient and sediment run-off into the Reef
- supporting the sustainability of Reef fisheries, and
- investing a record \$1.2 billion in Reef protection and restoration.



Climate change is the biggest threat for Reef's worldwide. It is a global threat that must be met with global action.

Australia will continue to work constructively with UNESCO and the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) to ensure protection of the Reef and all our World Heritage properties.

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## High Seas Biodiversity Treaty:

### Comment sought

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A new [high seas biodiversity treaty](#) was adopted by the United Nations on 19 June 2023. The treaty establishes a regime to conserve and sustainably use marine biological diversity in the high seas.

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is seeking your views on whether Australia should ratify this treaty and what impact this would have. Your feedback will help inform Australia's decision to ratify this treaty.

The treaty addresses four main topics:

- Marine genetic resources:** The treaty regulates the use of marine organisms collected in the high seas.
- Area-based management tools:** The treaty creates a framework to establish area-based management tools in the high seas, such as marine protected areas, to protect and restore biodiversity and ecosystems.
- Environmental impact assessments:** The treaty puts in place an environmental impact assessment process to avoid or reduce impacts on the marine environment from activities in the high seas.
- Capacity building:** The treaty requires Parties to provide capacity building and transfer marine technology to developing States.

The treaty aims to support cooperation with existing international bodies including regional fisheries management organisations, the International Maritime Organization and the International Seabed Authority. It would be applied in a way that respects the mandate of those other organisations.

Please provide your feedback by 21 September 2023 via the [online Survey](#).

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## VICTORIA

### FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Air Quality Precincts Grants Program

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Sustainability Victoria has opened Round 1 of the [Air Quality Improvement Precincts Grants Program](#) intended to support businesses located in the Metropolitan Melbourne Outer West Air Quality Improvement Precinct to reduce the emission of PM2.5 and PM10, common air polluting particles.

- For individuals, Stream 1 provides up to \$50K. Stream 2: \$50,001 to up to \$100,000.
- For groups (Collaborative Partnerships), Stream 1 provides up to \$50K. Stream 2: \$50,001 to up to \$1M.

Details are now available. Applications close at 11.59pm on 6 September 2023.

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## Illegal dumping of industrial waste - enforcement

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EPA Victoria has laid charges against a Sunshine North company and its two company directors for allegedly dumping industrial waste at Solomon Heights Estate, Sunshine North between 24 February 2021 and 16 September 2021.

It is alleged amongst the industrial waste was Category B contaminated soil that included asbestos material, waste glass, brick and tiles.

The company and its two directors have also been charged with contravening a clean-up notice.

The matter is now before the Courts.

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## EPA Victoria warns businesses of breaches in storing and stockpiling waste

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"It is critical how you store and stockpile waste. You must prevent any fire risks. All businesses must understand the importance of meeting EPA Victoria deadlines and notice requirements," said Stephen Lansdell, EPA Victoria's Western Metropolitan Regional Manager.

A waste company has been convicted and fined in the Broadmeadows Magistrates' Court over missed deadlines and poorly managed waste stockpiles at their Brooklyn facility.

EPA Victoria conducted an investigation after EPA officers responded to two small fires at the Waste and Recovery Centre in early 2021.

EPA officers found stockpiles of wood chips, scrap timber and mixed waste that were in breach of safety policies. Stockpiles were too high and too close together. The company had also failed to meet EPA imposed deadlines for fire risk and management plans.

The Court convicted the waste company and imposed a \$15,000 fine. EPA was awarded costs in the amount of \$7,344.

Mr Lansdell said the case is a clear warning to businesses. "These policies are there to prevent catastrophic fires. They limit the size of piles and give firefighters the chance to trap the fire while it is still small," he said.

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## Fine issued to graffiti cleaning company for white substance into stormwater

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EPA Victoria has fined a North Coburg company \$3,698 after one of its employees was seen washing a white substance into a stormwater drain.

A community member noticed the employee washing the substance into

the gutter. They photographed the incident and reported it to EPA Victoria.

The North Coburg company had been hired to spray an anti-graffiti coating on a nearby mural. The employee was in the process of cleaning off a spray unit but should not have been doing it into the street.

"Tipping any waste down the street and into stormwater drains is not on. It has been against the law for a long time and a fine is clearly warranted. "We estimate about 300 litres of the chemical cleaning substance was tipped down the drain which eventually reaches Kororoit Creek," said Steve Lansdell EPA Victoria's West Metro Regional Manager.

EPA Victoria said the company has shown it is not how they would normally operate their business, and have spoken with the employee involved and will improve their staff training.

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Battery safety to prevent fires

NSW Government is raising awareness on how to prevent potential fires from the improper disposal of batteries.

Households are urged to use, store and dispose of batteries safely to stop the surge in house, garbage truck and waste facility fires.

NSW EPA will roll out social media content that warns of the risks of batteries and advises consumers how to properly dispose of old, unused or dead batteries. NSW EPA has released information on [safe battery disposal](#).

EPA will seek the support of all NSW Councils to encourage residents to never discard dead batteries in household waste or recycling bins.

Fire and Rescue NSW data shows there has been an almost 20% increase in battery-related fire or explosion incidents, when comparing the first half of this year to the first half of last year. [Fire and Rescue NSW](#) has released information on battery safety.

In the first six months of 2023 there were 114 lithium battery related fires, with key items of concern being power packs and chargers, micro-mobility devices like e-bikes and e-scooters and portable power banks.

Local councils and waste contractors have seen a significant rise in the number of truck and rubbish fires caused by batteries, which if damaged can explode and spark fires which are difficult to put out.

Batteries which are thrown into rubbish bins instead of being disposed of safely also contribute to an increase in recyclable materials winding up in landfill.

## QUEENSLAND

### Sugarcane growers to benefit from specialised support

Sugarcane growers committed to reducing nutrient run-off into the Great Barrier Reef will soon have access to specialised support through the [Sugarcane Practice Change Program](#) by the QLD Government.

Industry experts are invited to apply for a share in funding under the Sugarcane Practice Change Program for projects that will assist sugarcane growers manage the use of nitrogen and phosphorus on their farms.

The funding is part of the QLD Government's \$125 million investment to support the cane, grazing, banana, horticulture and grains sectors across the Reef catchments to improve production, profitability and sustainability whilst improving the quality of water in local waterways and the Reef ecosystem.

The Program builds on the previous success of a suite of nutrient management planning projects in the Wet Tropics, Burdekin, Mackay, Whitsunday and Burnett Mary Regions.

## SOUTH AUSTRALIA

### SA new noise policy commences 31 October 2023

From 31 October 2023, a new SA noise policy will come into effect. The [new noise policy](#), which will operate under the Environment Protection Act 1993, has been developed after extensive review by SA EPA and will replace the Environment Protection (Noise) Policy 2007. The new policy is established under Part 5 of the Act. It was gazetted on 3 August 2023 and will be implemented from 31 October 2023.

To assist, SA EPA has released the updated:

- [General environmental noise Information Sheet](#), and
- [Construction noise Information Sheet](#).

The *Environment Protection (Commercial and Industrial Noise) Policy 2023* will continue to protect human health from the impacts of commercial and industrial noise by providing an updated legal framework for the assessment of a wide range of commercial and industrial noise issues. Unlike pollution of water or air by chemicals, noise pollution is not visible but falls within the definition of being both a 'pollutant' and 'environmental nuisance' under the Environment Protection Act 1993.

SA EPA's Principal Adviser for Noise Ian Yorke said the fundamental nature of how the policy regulates noise remains largely unchanged.

"The existing policy has been in effect for 16 years and some improvements have been identified over that time," he said. "In addition, with the introduction of the *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016*, local government is now responsible for the management of local nuisance issues, such as noise from sources not licensed by the EPA and domestic noise sources.

Most provisions under Part 6 of the *Environment Protection (Noise) Policy 2007* have been removed to avoid duplication of these provisions." The removal of duplicated provisions now covered under the *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016* has resulted in

a name change to the policy, that will now assess and regulate noise from commercial and industrial sites.

The new policy is connected to decision-making regarding noise impacts of developments under the South Australian planning system, including the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016* and the single electronic Planning and Design Code.

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