

VicTrack

Our ref: D/15/48785

Mr Nick Wimbush
Advisory Committee Chair
Major Hazards Advisory Committee
C/- Planning Panels Victoria
Level 5, 1 Spring Street
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Emailed to: planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au

Dear Nick

MAJOR HAZARD FACILITIES ADVISORY COMMITTEE: DISCUSSION PAPER VICTRACK INITIAL COMMENTS

Thank you for your letter sent on 28 October 2015 inviting VicTrack to provide comments to inform the discussion paper which will canvass key issues in land use planning and the regulatory framework around major hazard facilities.

VicTrack is the fourth largest landowner in the State of Victoria and is custodian of land for current and future transport requirements including the metropolitan, regional passenger and freight and the national freight line operations.

VicTrack also has a custodial role in approving applications from utilities, local government, private corporations and individuals proposing to install services within VicTrack land including the operational rail corridors throughout the state. Services include:

- electricity distribution and transmission lines;
- water and sewer; and
- pipelines carrying flammable product including distribution and transmission pipelines.

A large network of pipelines carrying flammable products are constructed within operational rail corridors or interface directly adjacent to VicTrack land throughout the state.

These pipelines interface with metropolitan, regional passenger and freight lines and the interstate freight lines and can be located above ground along or crossing under the rail corridors or placed underground either in culverts, encasements or directly buried to a minimum depth of 1200mm. They can also be located in open culverts crossing under the rail lines.

As land is re-zoned to accommodate residential developments, there are many instances of large scale developments that have been developed or are in the planning phase for development next to operational railway lines.

VicTrack

The major issue arising involves:

- (i) the impact on the adjoining development in the case of a train derailment. Should, as a consequence of the derailment the pipeline be punctured causing the product to ignite, the impacts of the scale of the flashpoint must be considered as part of the overall site planning proposal.

VicTrack is aware of a recent example where a large scale development proposed the introduction of a child care facility on the property boundary line directly abutting the operational freight line where the Somerton pipeline is located.

While it is recognised that the pipeline has legislative protection that requires a 3 meter buffer zone, in the event of an incident that causes the pipeline to ignite and depending on the pressure at which the pipeline is operating, the 3 meter buffer can potentially be inadequate insofar as the protection of the residents is concerned. It is noted that in recent discussions with some of the pipeline operators, they are now seeking a far greater easement than the 3 metre statutory requirement.

We look forward to the release of the discussion paper and participating in any meetings or workshops to help inform the Committee's recommendation.

Please continue to direct all future correspondence to me. I can be contacted on 9619 8641 or via email sue.lowther@victrack.com.au

Yours sincerely



SUE-ANN LOWTHER
Manager Third Party Access & Licensing

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