

# Media release

From the Office of the Environmental Monitor

---

Wednesday, 19 August, 2009

## **SOUND SAND CAPPING LAYER FOR BUND SEDIMENT**

A layer of sand capping placed over the 1.38 million cubic metres of contaminated sediment held in the Port Phillip Bay bund was spread correctly, an independent audit has found.

Releasing the findings from a targeted audit today, Victoria's Environmental Monitor Mick Bourke said the clean sand had been applied in a minimum of two layers and was at least half a metre thick.

"The Environmental Management Plan (EMP) has strict rules on how sand capping of the bund must be done. These rules exist to ensure the contaminated sediment held in the bund is adequately separated from the marine environment," Mr Bourke said.

"The independent audit commissioned by the Office of the Environmental Monitor examined a wide range of information on the sand capping process and the finished product to ensure it met all the rulebook's requirements.

"The auditors inspected hydrographic surveys to confirm capping thickness and sediment samples to confirm that a clear and well-defined boundary was present between the sand capping and the underlying sediment.

"The audit found the sand capping layer had been spread over the bund in accordance with all of the EMP's rules around its application, equipment used and thickness," he said.

Mr Bourke said the bund and its sand capping layer would be regularly monitored by the Port of Melbourne Corporation.

"Ongoing monitoring of the bund's integrity will occur over the coming years and the Office will continue to scrutinise information on the bund as it becomes available, and will report its findings to the project's regulators and community promptly," Mr Bourke said.

Today Mr Bourke also said dredging and strong winds in the Mornington Peninsula area affected turbidity levels in the south of Port Phillip Bay on 16 August 2009.

"Most of the turbidity monitoring buoys located across the Bay recorded low turbidity levels but a monitoring buoy located south of the South East Dredge Material Ground recorded a turbidity level above Response Level 2.

"While none of the Channel Deepening Project's environmental limits were exceeded at this monitoring buoy, strong winds reaching up to 90 kilometres an hour contributed to an increased amount of suspended sediment in the water," Mr Bourke said.

-ENDS -