

What do you think are the key environmental challenges which will impact the EPA in the future?

a. Disposal of the increased electronic items being used by society. b. Disposal of “exotic” materials, metals and chemicals” required to make “environmentally friendly” devices or equipment. c. Education of small unlicensed companies on disposal of waste, water and air emissions. d. Reduction in unnecessary packaging, even if materials are recyclable.

What aspects of the EPA’s work do you value and wish to preserve in the future?

a. In-house Scientists and specialists b. Educational teams for Industry in particular c. Research and development teams, working towards better solutions. d. Reference Groups with Government Authorities, Business and the community. e. Regional Forums, or quarterly head office forums on activities under review.

How can the EPA effectively work in partnership with other government agencies to meet the environmental challenges of the future?

a. Cross-pollinating with other relevant authorities. This would mainly be (but not limited to) junior staff doing a stint at other authorities such as SV, MWRRG, VLAA, as well as Public health section of the Health Department, Australian Packaging Covenant and Melbourne Water if relevant to the tasks that the person is working in. b. Continue with having an overlap in responsibilities, with boundaries.

How can the EPA’s role in safeguarding the community against the health impacts of pollution be clarified or strengthened?

a. Give the EPA more authority to take penal action against polluters.

How could statutory frameworks more effectively prevent future environmental risks and land use conflicts?

a. To require a much earlier and significant role in planning decisions, especially with Council, Government Departments and VCAT. b. Provide overriding responsibility to act in case of environmental hazardous situations. (not too sure how much authority is current held)

What role should the EPA play in emergency management?

a. Depending on the situation, the EPA could be a lead role to avoid anyone being placed in dangerous/hazardous situations. b. Advisor for management of hazardous materials/vapours. c. Involve local communities for long term of situations like the Hazelwood problems, including getting all stakeholders into discussions. d. Ensure that all cleanup operations are finalised to a standard the EPA considers safe.

How can the EPA better identify and, where necessary, address problems that are the result of past activity?

a. Make licences for facilities, subject to review at least every 5 years, to ensure that best practice processes are being used by companies. b. For historically bad industries, more

frequent licence reviews. c. Where an incident occurs suddenly or is caused by nature or others, create an alternative for PAN's for situations where a company alerts the EPA and is immediately taking appropriate action.

What role should the EPA play in improving environmental outcomes beyond those necessary to safeguard human health?

a. Any environmental problem should involve the EPA, then in association with other authorities, work towards managing such situations.

What role should the EPA play in reducing greenhouse gas emissions?

a. Many more Air Monitoring Stations are required. Many are located so far away from potential sources for hazardous emissions that we really do not know what is being pumped into the atmosphere. b. Provision of the acceptable limits of polluting gases. c. Investment of penalties in this area into carbon sinks etc.

How do you see environmental justice being applied to the work of the EPA?

a. The use of Enforceable Undertakings is a good move and should be used more often. b. Penalties should be higher in general, but taking into account any extra cost undertaken by the polluter to stop the reoccurrence of the incident. Any work that would or should be done not to be counted. c. To make the polluter feel see how those affected by their actions have been impacted.

What can we adopt from other regulators and regulatory models to implement best-practice approaches and ensure that the EPA can rise to key future challenges?

a. EPA needs to firstly find out if there is any other regulators with better practices then bring it forward and see if the model fits.

Are there any other issues relevant to the Terms of Reference that you would like to raise?

a. Staffing needs to be increased, in keeping with the growth in pollution issues and process. b. Staffing to allow for more engagement with the community. Currently EPA staff cannot attend Community Reference Groups as much as the CRG's would like.

What can the EPA do to avoid potential future problems?

a. Make sure all controlling publications are up to date, ensuring Best Practice processes are covered. b. Monitoring developments in waste treatment and updating documents when the new processes become available. Then follow through to ensure the new practices are imposed on companies.