



**MINUTES OF MEETING  
SOUTHERN PORTS - ESPERANCE  
PORT COMMUNITY CONSULTATION COMMITTEE**

**Date:** Wednesday, 29 October 2025  
**Venue:** Southern Ports – Esperance Administration Boardroom  
 Cnr Bower Avenue and the Esplanade, Esperance WA 6450  
**Time:** 1230 hours

<b>Attendees:</b>	Stephen Francis Stephen Schmedje Malcolm Heasman Rob Horan Rod Taylor David Swan Murray McGregor Scott Bates Greg Solly Alex Leonard Alana Monaghan Michelle Spicer Emma Sticken	Committee Member & PCCC Chair Committee Member & PCCC Deputy Chair Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Committee Member Interim Chief Operating Officer Interim Regional Manager Esperance Environmental Manager, Esperance Corporate Affairs Manager Committee Secretary Esperance Business Administration Trainee, SPA Esperance
<b>Apologies:</b>	Keith Wilks Wayne Walter Ron Chambers	Chief Executive Officer, SPA Committee Member PCCC Shire Rep

Meeting opened at 12:34 by Chair Stephen Francis.  
 Apologies were noted.

#### **1. DECLARATION OF INTEREST FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

- None

#### **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

- The minutes of the previous Committee meeting held on 30 July 2025 were noted as approved via circular resolution. The circular resolution is ratified by the Committee.

#### **3. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES**

- Port Tour for committee members was conducted prior to today's meeting.

#### **4. SOUTHERN PORTS UPDATE**

Interim COO Scott Bates provided the following update:

##### **Industry Awards:**

- Southern Ports were finalists in two categories at the National Safety Awards in Sydney, regarded as the top safety awards.
- Competed against major organisations including national-level companies.

- Achieved success by winning the Safety Field Leadership Award, recognising the transformation and leadership in safety practices across the organisation.
- This recognition builds on the organisation's achievement of ISO accreditation earlier in the year, highlighting continued progress in safety.

**Trade:**

- Strong start to the financial year across Albany, Bunbury, and Esperance.
- Grain season expected to exceed records in Albany and Esperance, subject to CBH capacity.
- Close to finalising agreements for Yilgarn Iron to trade through the port.
- Anticipated employment growth and opportunities, including potential traineeships and apprenticeships.

**Projects and Infrastructure:**

- Hughs Road has reached practical completion, improving truck safety and traffic separation.
- Esperance Electrical Workshop has been completed and will provide an ideal learning environment for apprentices and employees, supporting training and professional development.
- Turkey Point bridge opened in August, largest capital spend in 10-15 years, improving public access and safety in Bunbury.
- Albany Berths 1 & 2 replacement progressing. Business case being developed for multi-user Berth at Berth 3.
- Esperance Container Crane remediation works completed, securing asset longevity.
- Operations Building for Esperance in detailed design phase, funded in the last state budget. The aim being to consolidate staff and provide community benefits during construction.

**Staff:**

- Interim COO (Scott Bates) and Interim Regional Manager (Greg Solly) continuing in six-month secondments, with finalisation of permanent appointments expected before the next PCCC meeting.

*Committee Discussion:*

- Members raised the importance of awareness around lithium battery fire hazards, which are on the rise.
- Emphasis placed on ensuring safety protocols and preventative strategies are in place across facilities.

*Scott Bates left the meeting.*

## **5. TRADE FACILITATION & SUPPLY CHAIN UPDATE**

Interim Regional Manager Esperance, Greg Solly provided an update on current and new trade for the Port of Esperance:

- Iron Ore:
  - Yilgarn Iron: negotiations to finalise access arrangements progressing well.
  - Expressions of Interest for additional personnel to be released around mid-November. Recruitment will prioritise operators and general hands.
  - Ongoing engagement with Union and workforce to ensure fair process.
  - Gold Valley: aiming to expand production from 3 mtpa to 4 mtpa.
  - Market risks acknowledged due to iron ore price fluctuations, but outlook remains positive.

- Record Fertiliser imports last year, with discussions underway with a new customer for access to Shed 5 storage, potentially increasing trade volumes.
- Seasonal increases expected in fertiliser and grain.
- Northern Star to export bulk iron concentrate from Kalgoorlie in 5,000 tonne shipments commencing January.
- Pacific Lime and Cement: lime imports via bulk bags expected to commence Dec-Jan. Volumes are modest but represent positive new trade opportunities.

*Committee Discussion:*

- The committee discussed recruitment processes for additional personnel, noting questions around the eligibility of former employees who had taken voluntary redundancies. Recruitment will be merit-based with former employees welcome to apply; though uptake is expected to be limited given workforce demographics.

## **6. CORPORATE AFFAIRS UPDATE**

Corporate Affairs Management provided the following update:

**Industry Engagement:**

- Annual stakeholder function held at Cannery Arts Centre, co-hosted for the first time with Esperance Chamber of Commerce and Industry; excellent turnout with great feedback received from stakeholders.
- Connecting with Industry:
  - CEO Keith Wilks spoke at Converge Esperance
  - Ports Australia Biz Ops conference in Gladstone
  - CEO took part in a panel BDO in Australia Navigating the Future lunch hosted by Business News
- National Safety Award nominations as mentioned in item 4. as well as nomination for Golden Gecko Award.
- CEO Keith Wilks nominated for Leader of the Year award.
- Finalist in four categories at the Maritime and Shipping awards in Sydney.

**Community Engagement:**

- Boat Tours
  - Held Friday 10 and Saturday 11 October
  - Total of 16 tours in Esperance with 432 attendees
  - Feedback extremely positive
- Esperance Show (17–18 October): Southern Ports hosted a stall featuring interactive activities that encouraged community engagement.
- Community Investment Program included 17 recipients with \$45,630 funding received in the local community.

**Staff Engagement:**

- Staff contributed to gardening and Christmas preparations at Esperance Care Services.
- Volunteering at the Esperance Show stall.
- Participated in meaningful conversations and activities for RUOK? Day.

**Media:**

- Turkey point bridge opening
- Community Boat Tours
- Community Investment Program
- Award nominations
- Foodbank partnership

- Port of Esperance
  - Cruise Season commencing with Esperance expecting five visits
  - Fertiliser import record
  - Berth 2 hardstand renewal and stormwater filtration system received a nomination for the Golden Gecko Award.
  - Port of Esperance calls for apprenticeship applications

**Upcoming:**

- Announcements for Hughes Road and electrical workshop completions
- Esperance Christmas Pageant

## **7. PROJECTS UPDATE**

Management provided an update on port development and projects in Esperance:

- Tug jetty in design stage
- Container crane winch house improvements and remediation of brackets and surrounding support structures are underway
- Soffit repairs on Berth 1 commenced in early November; all operations on Berth 1 will continue during this period.
- CV40 trestle leg replacement works scheduled to begin in early December and continue through January–February 2026.
- Berths 1 & 2 pile wrapping contract is in the process of being awarded, with works likely to commence early in 2026.

*Committee Discussion:*

- Discussion around Taylor St Jetty and design options.

## **8. ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT UPDATE**

Environmental Management provided the following update:

**New Business:**

- Increase in shearwater fledglings: SPA and CBH have been taking around 20 fledglings per week to the Seabird Rescue Centre, where they are cared for and later released from Observatory Point when strong enough.
- Berth 2 first filter media successfully changed out; early indications show the media is performing well.
- Formal response pending from DWER for submitted paper on mine site licences.
- Approvals:
  - Licence amendment for increased fertiliser volumes
  - Yilgarn Iron product quality information
  - Dredging approvals

*Committee Discussion:*

- Harbour water quality: it was noted as pristine by attendees during the community boat tours, reflecting positively on the port environmental team's efforts.

## **9. MEMBER DISCUSSION/FEEDBACK & COMMUNITY QUESTIONS**

- Discussion around the port seeking a consistent, state-wide standard for product quality regulation across WA, noting potential implications for mine site export options.
- Mission to Seafarers Centre is seeking interest for committee members. It was noted that having a representative from this committee would strengthen connections.

#### 10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Rob Horan has been renominated for a further 2-year term.
- PCCC is still seeking new members, with an emphasis on broadening representation within the committee.
- The committee expressed appreciation to the port for the tour and the day's events.

***Meeting Closed:*** 1323 hours

***Date of Next Meeting:*** 2026 dates TBC