



Hon Andrew Powell MP  
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection

Ref CTS 18883/14

14 AUG 2014

Level 13  
400 George Street Brisbane 4000  
GPO Box 2454 Brisbane  
Queensland 4001 Australia  
**Telephone +61 7 3719 7330**  
**Facsimile +61 7 3220 6231**  
**Email environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au**

Mr Jan Arens  
President  
Gladstone Conservation Council Inc.  
PO Box 127  
Gladstone Mail Exchange  
GLADSTONE QLD 4680

Dear Mr Arens

Thank you for your letter of 31 July 2014 concerning the release of coal dust to the waters of Gladstone Harbour.

The release of coal fines from the Port Area to Gladstone Harbour in September 2012 resulted in the issue of a penalty infringement notice to Gladstone Ports Corporation (GPC) for the unauthorised release. Subsequently, GPC initiated a capital works program to address the design of the wharf and other operational issues which have been identified as the underlying cause of the release of fines from these loading facilities. This program of works has not yet been finalised.

The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection regularly liaises with GPC regarding development and implementation of effective environmental management strategies, including upgrades to the coal conveyer systems and ship loader wash-down waters, to minimise the risk of environmental harm from the release of coal fines to the waters of Gladstone Harbour. The department will continue to monitor the impacts of the load out facilities and respond to non-compliance in accordance with the department's Regulatory Strategy.

With respect to your question about the risk of coal transfers at sea, new activities are assessed on the proponent's ability to identify suitable controls to adequately manage risk and their commitments to implement them. While the risk between industry types may be similar, the control measures employed can differ greatly from activity to activity.

I hope this information has been of assistance to you. Should you have any further enquiries, please contact my Chief of Staff, Mr Troy Collings on 3719 7330.

Yours sincerely



**ANDREW POWELL MP**  
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection