



NEPC Report on the Implementation of the
National Pollutant Inventory NEPM

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*'The National Pollutant Inventory
is the major source of information
about pollutant emissions from
Australian industry and other sources.'*



PART 1 — GENERAL INFORMATION

NEPM details

Title: National Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Measure

Made by Council: 27 February 1998

Commencement Date: Clauses 1 and 2 of the Measure commenced on the date of gazettal 4 March 1998 (advertised in Commonwealth of Australia Gazette No S89, 4 March 1998, p 1) with the remaining provisions of the Measure commencing on 1 July 1998.

NEPM goal (or purpose)

The environment protection goals are established by clause 6 of this Measure as follows:

6. The national environment protection goals established by this Measure are to assist in reducing the existing and potential impacts of emissions of substances and to assist government, industry and the community in achieving the desired environmental outcomes set out in clause 5 by providing a basis for:

- (a) the collection of a broad base of information on emissions of substances on the reporting list to air, land and water; and
- (b) the dissemination of information collected to all sectors of the community in a useful, accessible and understandable form.

In summary, the National Pollutant Inventory NEPM provides the framework for the development and establishment of the National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) which is an Internet database designed to provide publicly available information on the types and amounts of certain chemicals being emitted to the air, land and water.

Desired environmental outcomes

The desired environmental outcomes, as set out in clause 5 of the Measure, are:

- (a) the maintenance and improvement of:
 - (i) ambient air quality; and
 - (ii) ambient marine, estuarine and fresh water quality;
- (b) the minimisation of environmental impacts associated with hazardous wastes; and
- (c) an expansion in the re-use and recycling of used materials.

Evaluation criteria

The assessment of the effectiveness of the National Environment Protection (National Pollutant Inventory) Measure is based on the following criteria:

General criteria (Specified in the NEPC Implementation Reporting Protocol)

- progress in implementing the NEPM
- compliance by parties bound by the NEPM with NEPM protocols and/or other NEPM reporting requirements
- progress toward achievement of the NEPM goal, the desired environmental outcomes and any NEPM standards
- issues arising that reflect on the efficiency and simplicity of NEPM administration.

Specific criteria

Longer term performance indicators relating to the effectiveness of the NPI have been listed in some Memoranda of Understanding between the Commonwealth and the states and territories for the years 2001–04. They have been included to provide jurisdictions with a guide to the type of information that could be reported. Indicators could include:

- number of 'hits' on database
- number of facility reports on the database
- feedback/data from industry that indicates that the process of emission estimation and reporting from the NPI has led to increased consideration of waste minimisation and cleaner production initiatives
- feedback from users of the database on its usability and on the relevance of the information for their needs
- total number of reporters in comparison to 2000–2001
- range of industry sectors reporting
- number of new reporters
- new industry sectors reporting
- any other indicator identified.

Jurisdictions should report on those specific criteria that are appropriate for their responsibilities under the NPI NEPM.



PART 2 — IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEPM AND ANY SIGNIFICANT ISSUES

This part provides a summary of jurisdictional reports on implementation, discussion of any issues of concern raised by jurisdictions, and Council's overall assessment of the implementation of the NEPM.

Legislative, regulatory and administrative framework

Table (3): Summary of Implementation Frameworks

Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Frameworks
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is being implemented administratively until a regulation (or declaration) is prepared under the <i>National Environment Protection Measures (Implementation) Act 1998</i> (Cwlth).
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented through the NSW Protection of the Environment Operations (General) (National Pollutant Inventory) Regulation 1998.
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented through the Industrial waste management policy (National Pollutant Inventory) 1998 under the <i>Environment Protection Act 1970</i>.
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented under the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1994</i> and the Environmental Protection Regulation 1998.
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented by the Environmental Protection (NEPM–NPI) Regulations 1998, under the <i>Environmental Protection Act 1986</i>.
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented under s.28A of the <i>Environment Protection Act 1993</i>.
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented under s.12A of the <i>State Policies and Projects Act 1993</i> and enforced under the <i>Environmental Management and Pollution Control Act 1994</i>.
Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is implemented by the <i>Environment Protection Act 1997</i>.
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The NEPM is currently implemented through administrative arrangements. An Environment Protection Objective to be made under the <i>Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998</i> has been drafted to provide the legislative basis for the NPI in the Northern Territory.

Council Assessment of Implementation Frameworks

Most jurisdictions now have legislative arrangements in place for implementation and enforcement of the NEPM.



Implementation activities

Table (4): Summary of Jurisdictional Implementation Activities

Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commonwealth activities focused on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – publishing year four (2001–02) facility data and other information on the Internet – publishing the summary report for 2000–01 – improving the presentation of NPI information on the Internet – supporting the National Reporting Tool (NRT) – commencing development of online reporting for facilities – updating emission estimation technique handbooks – convening three meetings of the Implementation Working Group – the upgrading of the NPI ‘Make a Map’ Tool. • The Australian Government as part of its Sustainable Cities Program has allocated funding to extend the NPI. • External market research of the NPI highlighted low community awareness and the need to improve the presentation of National Pollutant Inventory information. • A consultant examined NPI aggregated emissions data and provided a series of recommendations to be considered by jurisdictions in 2003–04.
New South Wales	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NSW has focused on improving the accuracy of individual facility reports and on identifying potential new reporters particularly those in the intensive livestock industry. This focus has proved successful as reporter numbers have increased and the accuracy of the estimations has improved. • Work has begun on the aggregated assessment for the Shoalhaven and Macleay catchments for publication in January 2004. Collection of the aggregated emissions for these catchments will complete a comprehensive data set of aggregated emissions for eastern NSW. • Minor upgrades to the electronic database have improved data entry and compliance with the electronic transfer protocol for delivery of the data to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage. • 627 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 461 the previous reporting year.
Victoria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The EPA with the support of the Commonwealth Department of the Environment and Heritage has continued to manage the nationally consistent electronic reporting system for the NPI. • To assist the understanding within participating jurisdictions of the electronic reporting system and data storage processes, a training session was hosted by the EPA in December 2002. • At the state level, the EPA continued to develop the capability of its electronic reporting system to incorporate another industry reporting obligation known as the Waste Producer’s Annual Return of Prescribed Industrial Waste. The Waste Producer’s Annual Return shows annual amounts of hazardous (or prescribed) industrial waste generated and, as such, is similar to the NPI’s concept of ‘transfers’.



Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Victoria (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To assist NPI reporters in estimating and reporting emissions, the EPA has developed a number of methodologies and tools, including Excel spreadsheets and detailed step-by-step guides for various industry sectors. • Aggregated estimates for the Ballarat and Mildura airsheds and Mitchell-Tambo catchment were incorporated into the 2001–02 emissions profile. • 627 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 462 the previous reporting year.
Queensland	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nine public awareness seminars/workshops and six training workshops for the NRT and reporting were held throughout the state. • Individual site visits were made to 25 reporters. • Compilation and submission of updated air emissions data was completed for the South East Queensland airshed. A project to examine techniques to cost-effectively broaden aggregated emissions data coverage also commenced. • Improvements to the jurisdictional website, particularly the data upload and checking tools, have resulted in a considerable improvement in data handling and checking functions conducted by Queensland. • Queensland developed a simplified reporting form for feedlots and pig farms for which there are a large number of facilities reporting. • 746 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 632 the previous reporting year.
Western Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aggregated emissions data studies focused on the Bunbury regional airshed, and the Blackwood-Scott and Vasse-Wonnerup water catchments. • Five industry training workshops were held covering NPI reporting, the application of the NPI guide and handbooks to facilities, and electronic reporting of data. • Updated reporting instructions were provided to the industry and consultant client base in December 2002 and March 2003. • 459 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 381 the previous reporting year.
South Australia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A key task has been to follow up on reporters that had previously reported to the NPI program but failed to report for one or more subsequent reporting periods. • 262 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 221 the previous reporting year.
Tasmania	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eight site visits were conducted to review the NPI reporting process used at those reporting facilities. • Tasmania also completed an aggregate emission study for the Launceston airshed during this period. • 128 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 102 the previous reporting year.



Jurisdiction	Summary of Implementation Activities
Australian Capital Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The ACT conducted an informal education process providing ‘one-on-one’ education for facility operators. • 22 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 23 the previous reporting year.
Northern Territory	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Northern Territory coordinated the preparation of the manual <i>Emission Estimation Technique Manual for Aquaculture of Barramundi, Prawns, Crocodiles, Pearl Oysters, Red Claw and Tropical Abalone in Tropical Australia</i>, by the Northern Territory University. The manual was used to estimate aggregated emissions from the aquaculture facilities for barramundi and prawns in Darwin Harbour and surrounding subcatchments. • Additional hydrographic infrastructure was also installed in one of the Darwin Harbour subcatchments to assist future refinement of emission estimations of diffuse source discharges to the harbour. • A presentation introducing the NPI database and how it can be incorporated into various learning activities in schools was given at a Minerals Council of Australia workshop in Darwin in February 2003. • 83 NPI facility reports were received for 2001–02 compared to 87 the previous reporting year. This slight decrease is due to changes in reporting periods for some facilities, facility closures, and reporting thresholds not being triggered at some facilities that had reported previously.

Council evaluation and assessment of Jurisdictional Implementation Activities

The 2001–02 NPI reporting period was the first year that facilities had to collect data for reporting on the extended list of 90 substances. This period has shown a marked increase in the number of facilities and sectors reporting.

The priority areas continued to be:

- ensuring that industry was well informed about NPI processes and their obligations to report estimated emissions
- improving the presentation of NPI information so that it is more useful and interesting for different community sectors
- encouraging industry to improve emissions estimation techniques
- streamlining data processing for facility reports from the fourth NPI reporting year (2001–02).

National Reporting Tool databases were distributed to facilities in all participating jurisdictions in time for reporting of 2001–02 data.

EPA Victoria continued to play a major role, under contract, by providing support and quality control of interstate facility administrative data to meet National Data Warehouse Standards for Electronic Reporting. All participating jurisdictions have an important role in facilitating the use of the current electronic reporting tool.

PART 3 — ASSESSMENT OF NEPM EFFECTIVENESS

The NPI is the major source of information about pollutant emissions from Australian industry and other sources. Market research conducted by the Commonwealth showed that since the introduction of improvements to the presentation of NPI information on the Internet, information derived from the NPI is clearer and easier to access. At the same time the research indicated low community awareness of the NPI and the need to further improve presentation of NPI information.

The National Reporting Tool now used by the majority of jurisdictions will assist in accurate and consistent reporting that will allow future analysis of trends in pollutant emissions.



In the past year, improvements to the current NPI website have led to a more 'user friendly', interactive service for the education sector, industry and the general public. In particular, the 'Make a Map' Tool has been well received. Access to Internet reports has been simplified so that users are now able to search the database to get reports based on location, substance, source, or facility name.

Industry feedback regarding the use of the electronic reporting tool continued to be positive. The majority of comments expressed a demand for a nationally consistent reporting tool.

Anecdotal evidence from reporters continued to suggest that the National Pollutant Inventory is contributing to the awareness and uptake of cleaner production technologies.

PART 4 — REPORTING REQUIRED BY THE NEPM

This report relates to activities in the 2002–03 period, which for the National Pollutant Inventory relates mainly to the collecting, assessing and publishing of estimated emissions of pollutants from industrial facilities that reported for the 2001–02 reporting year. The timing of these activities is stipulated in the NEPM for the National Pollutant Inventory.

Reporting information is available on the NPI website <www.npi.gov.au>.

PART 5 — REPORTS ON IMPLEMENTATION BY JURISDICTIONS

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