

SUMMARY OF KEY IMPACTS

This section summarises the key impacts identified in the above discussion as flowing out of the adoption of the proposed NPI Measure.

The key benefits anticipated relate to the fact that implementation of the proposed NPI programme will be a key factor in achieving the Goals outlined in the draft Measure:

- the key benefits anticipated are outlined in Table A;
- the key costs anticipated are outlined in Table B; and
- tables C and D identify estimated financial impacts on governments and reporting facilities (respectively).
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Table A
Key benefits anticipated from implementation of the draft Measure

- The Measure will play an important role in meeting the Goals of maintaining and, where appropriate, improving ambient air and water quality, reducing the release of hazardous wastes to the environment and expanding the re-use and recycling of materials.
- NPI will provide an improved information base of emissions and their impacts, enabling stakeholders to more effectively plan future developments and develop policies for environmental management.
- NPI will allow more robust public debate resulting from improved community access to information about influences on the environment, enabling more informed involvement in planning, development and policy debates.
- NPI will provide an improved ability for the community and all governments to identify areas of serious environmental degradation and subsequently develop programmes and strategies to address those problems.
- The NPI programme involves a recognition that such information is an important public good which would not otherwise be publicly available in a comprehensive and integrated fashion that ensures that it is able to be used by all sectors of the community.
- Members of the community (individuals, industry and governments) will have an improved ability to assess the impact which their own activities have on the environment, and promote more careful consideration of the environmental impacts of their actions.
- NPI will provide improved information to the community about the sources and effects of substances on the environment. This should lead to a number of changes in behaviour and markets as the community is able to assess the true impact of particular activities and the consumption of particular goods and services.
- NPI will empower members of the community to reward firms which are good environmental performers, and identify firms which are poor environmental performers. This will lead to improved economic and environmental outcomes.
- The trials of the NPI being undertaken in 1998 will provide valuable information and experience on overall implementation issues for the review of the Measure which will commence in October 1999.

Table B
Key costs anticipated from implementation of the draft Measure

- The estimated financial impacts imposed on governments and reporting facilities are identified in tables C and D respectively.
- Costs faced by governments (and included in the financial estimates in table C) include administering the collection of information from reporting facilities, estimation of aggregated emissions (from sources other than reporting facilities), assessment of the integrity of data provided, development of the information presentation systems, and provision of the NPI to the community.
- Some facilities will face costs to assess whether reporting is required under the Measure. The extent of these costs is unknown, but is expected to be small in the vast majority of cases.
- Reporting facilities may face additional costs as part of the process of data integrity assessment by jurisdictions. Although a process for assessing the integrity of data by jurisdictional governments is yet to be finalised, it is anticipated that these costs would be minor except in cases where facility reports are found to be inadequate or misleading.
- Jurisdictional governments will face additional costs if they choose to provide further information to the NPI database. Such information could include ambient monitoring information and more sophisticated modelling of aggregate emissions.
- Stakeholders will incur some costs in nominating and justifying nominations for amendments to the reporting list contained in the Measure. These costs are expected to be small.
- Where variation of the Measure's reporting list is recommended, this will be taken through the NEPC process and jurisdictional governments may face costs.
- Stakeholders will incur some costs in applying to have their reports treated confidentially. Jurisdictions will face costs in assessing such claims.

Table C
Summary of estimated implementation costs to Governments
 (figures based on funding estimates identified by Commonwealth in 1996/97 budget for development and implementation of the NPI)

Elements	1997/98 \$ million	1998/99 \$ million	1999/00 \$ million
Information collection- Reporting facilities	1.3	1.3	1.3
Estimation of emissions from aggregate sources	1.2	1.2	1.2
Information storage	0.3	0.3	0.2
Information provision/promotion	0.5	0.5	0.5
Administrative costs (NPI programme development and maintenance)	0.7	0.7	0.7
Programme review and evaluation	0.0	0.0	0.1
TOTAL	4.0	4.0	4.0

Notes: Table may not add due to rounding. This table excludes costs which will be faced by government owned reporting facilities, those reporting costs are included in table D.

Table D
Summary of estimated annual implementation costs to reporting facilities

- It is anticipated that approximately 3,000 facilities will be subject to reporting requirements under the proposed Measure for the initial reporting period (i.e. first two years of reporting) and that a total of 3,300 facilities will be subject to reporting requirements after that time.
- The average reporting cost per facility will be approximately \$1,690 in the first year, and \$1,500 in the second year. The higher first year costs reflect the additional costs of familiarisation with, and establishment of systems for, NPI reporting obligations. It is estimated that the average annual reporting cost per facility will be \$2,000 once the full reporting list has been implemented (subject to the outcome of the review proposed to begin in October 1999).
- The estimations noted above are based on the assumption that under the initial reporting list, reporting facilities will report on an average of three substances each year (rather than the average of four anticipated for the full reporting list).
- Facilities will not be required to report unless government provides that industry with an industry handbook on how to estimate their emissions. These handbooks will provide the information the facility needs to report under the NPI and will help minimise costs to industry.
- The total annual cost to reporting facilities is therefore estimated at \$5.07 million in the first year and \$4.5 million in the second year and \$6.6 million in the third and subsequent years.
- These estimates should be viewed as being in the higher range estimations, as they are based on the assumption that NPI reporting will be separate from existing environmental reporting and that will not be the case in many jurisdictions.

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