



Media Release

19 October 2007

Treasurer Visits Newcastle Company as Major Contract Win Announced

NSW Treasurer and Minister for the Hunter, Hon Michael Costa, has visited a Newcastle company which has won a contract to decontaminate a landmark commercial site in Victoria.

During the visit to the Innova Soil Technology plant on the former BHP site at Port Waratah, the Treasurer learned that the multi-million dollar contract was a significant step for Innova's world's-best technology and could lead to further contracts to clean up sites around Australia.

The Victorian Environment Protection Authority has given the go-ahead for Innova to remediate an eight-hectare site in Melbourne, which will be the location of a major commercial development.

Innova – a winner of the National Environmental Engineering Excellence Award from Engineers Australia – was formed to capitalise on research carried out at the University of Newcastle.

The Victorian contract is its first major project outside of the Hunter region and gives Innova the opportunity to prove the effectiveness of its world's-best soil decontamination technology.

Innova CEO Dr John Lucas said the Innova technology had been tested and proven in extensive trials in Newcastle, including the clean-up of more than 5,000 tonnes of contaminated soil from the Koppers facility in Mayfield.

Dr Lucas said the Innova equipment was designed to be moved so remediation could take place on site.

"It makes far more sense to address contamination now rather than leave the problem for future generations to handle."

Innova's Direct-heated Fast-quenched Thermal Desorption (DFTD) process allows the safe, reliable and efficient on-site treatment of hydrocarbon contaminated soils. The innovative features of the process include increased energy efficiency, significantly reduced operating costs and superior control of emissions.

Dr Lucas explained to the NSW Treasurer that the Victorian project will allow Innova to prove its system can be of benefit to the owners of many similarly contaminated sites, and welcomed the scrutiny of the EPA and other authorities.

"We've shown that the Innova DFTD system is efficient and reliable in terms of performance, safety, emissions monitoring and control. Once treated the contaminated material is suitable for beneficial re-use, and the only by-products are carbon dioxide and water!"

Professor Barney Glover, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research) at the University of Newcastle, said Innova was an example of successful research commercialisation.

"Innova Soil Technology was established in 1995 from research and development conducted at the University and Newcastle Innovation (formerly The University of Newcastle Research Associates - TUNRA) remains a shareholder," he said.

"One of the most appealing things to partners working with Innova is its close alignment with the University and access to the latest research and development through that relationship."

John Lucas said the Innova decontamination equipment would be moved from the former BHP site in Newcastle to Melbourne later this year.

"It will take about six weeks to set up and pre-commission and prove the plant before the remediation begins. It is expected to take 12 weeks to complete the project"

For more information, please contact Chris Ford on 4929 2063 or 0411 423272.

