



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Agriculture,  
Water and the Environment**

Senator the Hon David Fawcett  
Chair  
Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Fawcett

On 2 March 2020 I appeared as a witness before the Senate Environment and Communications Legislation Committee Estimates Hearing.

At that Hearing, the following discussion took place.

*“Ms Darwell: In terms of our lands, the remediation of contamination has been undertaken. I might just clarify a few points. Remediation specifically describes work that deals with in-ground contamination, generally either by the removal of contaminants such as capping contaminated areas of clean soil. That type of remediation will depend upon a number of factors such as the nature of the contamination, typography, cost and planned use. We've completed the remediation work at our sites. What remains to be done is work in relation to buildings that are currently closed because of unsafe structures or potential hazardous material. In that process of completing that work, that may reveal more hazardous materials.*

*Senator McALLISTER: Okay, but as far as you are aware there are no present remediation liabilities outstanding that are known to the trust?*

*Ms Darwell: As far as I am aware, the gross decontamination work has been completed on all sites. For example, we received Sub Base Platypus a number of years ago. The Department of Defence made an allocation of \$46 million for significant decontamination work. That work has now been completed. There's a range of capped and contained strategies in place, so should we wish to change uses, that will give rise to a further investigation of contaminants.”*

I wish to clarify this answer.

Remediation has taken place across Harbour Trust sites using a range of strategies, including removal, capping and containment of known areas of contamination. However, whilst remediation works have been undertaken, there remain a number of derelict vacant buildings on Harbour Trust land that are yet to be restored for new uses. Any restoration works are likely to encounter remnant hazardous materials in the buildings and contaminants in the immediate land footprint, including further remediation.

The 2015 JLL Valuation Reports now provided to the Senate Committee contains estimates of outstanding contamination as of 30 June 2015. The ANAO audited Harbour Trust's 2018/19 Financial Statements reflect the 2015 valuation's estimate in the Statement of Financial Position's Land and Buildings fair values. As part of the Harbour Trust's periodical valuation work, new valuation reports are currently being produced, including consideration of potential contamination.

I apologise for the need for clarification and trust this further information will be of assistance to the Committee.

Yours sincerely

Mary Darwell  
Executive Director  
Sydney Harbour Federation Trust

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