



# SITE CONTAMINATION PRACTITIONERS AUSTRALIA CERTIFICATION SCHEME: THE FIRST 10 MONTHS

Paul Saeki, Executive Officer, SCP Australia

## INTRODUCTION

Ten months have passed since the launch of Site Contamination Practitioners Australia (SCP Australia), and the certification scheme it manages. SCP Australia is the direct result of calls from the contaminated site sector for a benchmarked accreditation process across Australia to improve the quality of work being delivered by practitioners. The scheme has been made possible through the financial and operational contributions made by the Cooperative Research Centre for Contamination, Assessment and Remediation of the Environment (CRC CARE). The aim of certification is to augment and support the accredited auditor scheme operating in various Australia states and to encourage continuing professional development in the area of contaminated site assessment and management.

The launch of the scheme in late November 2014 was the culmination of two years consultation led by CRC CARE with industry, regulators and consultants on why certification is needed, and the types of competencies contaminated land practitioners should demonstrate to achieve certification.

## WHO, WHAT, WHY?

Contaminated site assessment and remediation in Australia is a substantial and important economic activity. It now turns over more than \$3 billion annually with annual growth of about 20% in recent years. Employment in the sector has also grown to about 10,000 people currently and up to 1,000 are contaminated site practitioners providing professional advice. Various stakeholders have identified the value certification can play to underpin the future of the sector in Australia, and have contributed to the development of the SCP Australia certification scheme. While the National Environment Protection (Assessment of Site Contamination) Measure (NEPM) recommends a reasonable level of competence for contaminated land practitioners, sector consumers are concerned about the variable and sometimes poor quality of service provided by practitioners, which does not always meet their needs. This demonstrates a clear need to benchmark, maintain and improve the standard of professional services provided by contaminated site practitioners at a national level. Following feedback and support from sector stakeholders, CRC CARE has taken a leadership role in developing the Site Contamination Practitioners Australia (SCP Australia) certification scheme with the objective of creating a financially self sustaining not-for-profit scheme.

## OBJECTIVES

Establish a nationally consistent professional standard for contaminated site practitioners recognised by regulators and industry

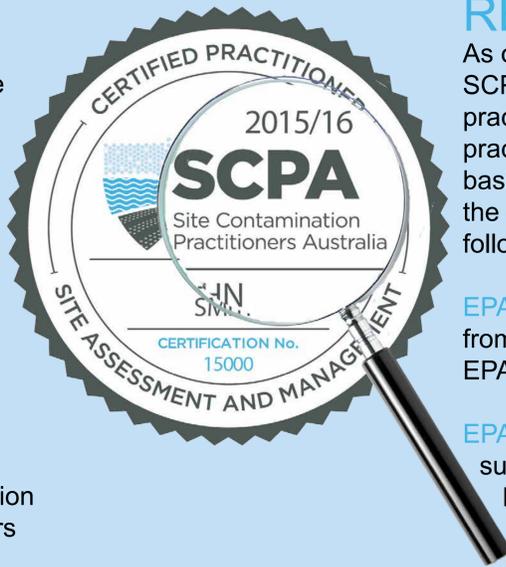
Establish a framework for promoting best practice standards for service excellence amongst contaminated site practitioners.

Promote the establishment and use of training resources to support practitioner development.

## SCP AUSTRALIA GOVERNANCE

SCP Australia is governed by a National Executive comprising of;

- 1 x Independent chair
- 1 x Regulator representative
- 2 x Industry representatives
- 2 x consultant representatives
- 1 x CRC Representative



## RESPONSE TO SCP AUSTRALIA

As of August 2015, after less than ten months since its launch, SCP Australia has over 100 hundred subscriptions, with 26 certified practitioners listed on the SCP Australia Directory of certified practitioners. Communications with regulators occurs on a regular basis and Australian regulators in all jurisdictions have supported the development of the SCP Australia certification scheme, with the following having endorsed it;

**EPA Tasmania-** SCP Australia certified practitioners to be used from July 1st, 2015 when contaminated site assessments require EPA input or approval.

**EPA NSW-** from July 1st, 2017 the EPA will require all reports submitted to EPA complying to The Contaminated Land Management Act 1997 (CLM Act) to be prepared, or reviewed and approved by a certified consultant from one of two currently recognised schemes, which includes a SCP Australia certified practitioner (CP SAM).

## SIX KEY COMPETENCIES

Certified practitioners demonstrate proficiency in six competencies in relation to contaminated sites.

### 1. The nature, causes and significance of site contamination.

- Types of industries, and uses and contaminants.
- The effect of geological, hydro-geological, and environmental settings. The significance built environments on for site contamination.
- The fate and transport of common contaminants.
- The primary sources for assessing significance of contamination.

### 2. Preliminary site assessment of contamination.

- Planning and contextualising assessments.
- Site inspection and assessment practices.
- Conduct of a site history.
- Conceptual Site Model incorporating all environmental settings.
- Provision of advice on contamination risk.

### 3. Detailed site assessment involving the characterisation of contamination.

- Data Quality Objectives, and QA practice.
- Sampling methodology, design for contamination in soils, groundwater, vapour (soil and indoor), surface water and sediments.
- Documentation and management of data.
- Quality assurance of data.
- Assessing the significance of contamination.
- Validation of a site following remediation works.

### 4. Risk assessment of site contamination.

- Criteria and legislative requirements.
- Risk assessment framework.
- Ecological and human health risk assessment.
- Understanding of use and limits of risk assessment models.

### 5. Remediation and management approaches.

- Remediation and management options.
- Remediation/management frameworks.
- Developing site specific remediation/management objectives.
- Handling wastes remediation generated waste.

### 6. Professional practice relevant to consulting on contaminated site issues.

- Adherence to ethical obligations and standards.
- Sound project management practices.
- Legislation relating to contaminated sites.
- Health and safety management.
- Writing complete, relevant and understandable technical reports.
- Risk communication with all stakeholders.
- Basics of contract law and contract management.



www.scpaaustralia.com.au

E:admin@scpaaustralia.com.au

P:(08) 8302 3933