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At the MEEPPA Meeting on February 2nd. 2009 the following Policy, originally dated January 4th. 2009, was formally adopted and ratified by Formal Resolution.

**The Mount Evelyn World War 2 Military Bunkers .
Formal Permission to be sought to do Test Drilling at this Sensitive Site.**

Preamble:

For years rumours have abounded about the Lost Military Bunker/s (?) of Mount Evelyn supposedly constructed by a Unit (?) of the U.S. Army which was camped at the Mount Evelyn Reserve during WW 2. Over the years we have heard a great deal of conjecture and theories without a great deal of 'solid' evidence which Mr. Mark Rawson now says is .."fairly solid".(?) It is conjectured that there were many sites throughout Australia where Allied forces stored weapons, tanks, guns, airplanes and also stockpiled Ammunition in purpose made bunkers in sides of hills valleys and under natural formations.

The site they believe now is directly under or adjacent to the Mount Evelyn Football Ground and they now wish to drill a 'Test Bore' to find out. This request has been referred to Cr. Tim Heenan – Ward Councilor (SYR) who does not wish to make any decisions until he has engaged thoroughly with the Community (which was somewhat difficult over this Christmas/ New Year season (2008 – 2009) MEEPPA concurs that some form of direct mandate is needed directly from the Mount Evelyn Community and that their views be actively sought by way of a Public Meeting that has now been arranged on February 16th. 2009 at the Football Club rooms at 7.30 P.M.

- In Mr. Rawson's formal Request first made to Council on 18 December 2008 in regard to this issue an attached letter in the correspondence is dated 29th September 2008 of which we have had no knowledge until the receipt of the latest request? If we had been asked our opinion at that time it would have been much easier to arrange more effective Community Engagement. In view of this, this policy cannot be completely defined until we have the answer to a number of questions. Why were MEEPPA not appraised of this letter at that time as it refers to the ..."*fragile ecology of (Olinda) Creek Bank and surrounds*"..? As Olinda Creek and the Mount Evelyn Reserve remain one of MEEPPA's Key Areas of Strategic Interest in relation to the provision of Melbourne Water Grants and as a 'POMA' (*Powerful Owl Management Area*) both under the FFG Act and the '*Owl Lands Core Nesting Protocol*' (SYR & DSE 2008) MEEPPA should have been immediately notified along with Melbourne Water and the DSE on September 29th. Why was this not observed?

- From the outset one of the most important considerations must be the safety and amenity of residents who live in nearby houses and streets. For this reason MEEPPA believes that formal notification must be given to all residents who abut the Reserve whenever the activity/ies commence?
- The request is made by a ..'small group of professionals'... and consistently refers to 'we' in the third person and as ..'our group' (?) without specifically naming who or what the group is and just what level of expertise they actually have? MEEPPA therefore requires that the Group be named and just who are their members and what ..'professional'.. attributes they actually have for such an undertaking?
- MEEPPA requests that before any attempt is made to investigate this area in the manner described that this new ..'fairly solid evidence'" should be made immediately available to MEEPPA , the M.E. Football Club, the M.E. Cricket Club, The Local Police and Emergency Services including the CFA.
- MEEPPA needs to be satisfied that drilling the Football Oval at the proposed site is the best method of appraisal? We need to be satisfied that if a Bunker, Cave or Tunnel is present that it would not be collapsed by the Drilling Process or it's formation compromised. In addition to that it is highly probable that if a Bunker (s) is/are discovered there is the ...'possibility of stored weapons, ammunitions and/or other explosive materials".. For that reason concern has been expressed that by striking any underground formations with a drill head 3 to 4" in diameter.. (the letter states ..'deep' (?) that any dislodged rock or 'roofing' timbers, metal etc. that forms the top of the Bunker may impact on 60+ year old munitions or ordnance which may not have remained stable due to 'sweating', oxidization or decay and that there remains the chance of an explosion.
- In the event of there being UXO (Unexploded Ordnance) (*which is anticipated in the proposal*) what role does the ADF play at the time of the drilling if this new(?).. 'fairly solid evidence' is realized? There are protocols and regulations in place that demand a proper response rather than this apparent *ad hoc* approach. Reference → Commonwealth & Australian Defence (ADF) Dept. Policy (UXO = Un- eXploded Ordnance) → http://www.defence.gov.au/uxo/UXO_Website/site_information.htm
Also a Public Warning here → http://www.defence.gov.au/uxo/UXO_Website/index.htm
We would, in any event, expect the ADF to be fully involved in any attempts to extricate any 'materials' if the site exhibits any of the features that Mr. Rawson alleges.
- In the letter of 29th. September , which we have just been made aware of(?), it states that'test results indicated shale oil solids and oxides and possibly other substances draining from the site'.. MEEPPA immediately requests a copy of those 'Test results',

which laboratory prepared them, and how many other conclusions (apart from military hardware etc.) can be extrapolated from such 'results' ?

- Further it states that ..*"we have worked in co-operation with them in the past and they have always shown a keen interest in our activities"*... Who is referred to as '*them*' and '*they*' and what was the level of ...*"co-operation?"* MEEPPA has no record of this happening or of ever being formally approached on this subject?
- Further to this the September 29th.Correspondence suggests*'entering into an Agreement.....essentially (to) be 50/50 in any profit derived from the site'....* At this stage MEEPPA takes the view that through it's '*Progress Association*' it has had a proven interest in this area *since 1929* and *should any 'site' be discovered* that any historical artifacts, items of any heritage value military or otherwise form part of the valuable Social History and Heritage Fabric of this town and area and are not '*For Sale*'. We do not sell '*our history*' we appreciate it and preserve it. We simply cannot give our history '*away*' to the highest bidder. For that reason all stable materials, machinery or disabled military equipment should remain within the precincts of this town until a balanced and informed proposal for it's preservation can be agreed on. Tourism is only one aspect of this as any increase in visitors to the area could also increase the profitability of existing businesses.
- Whilst*"the site itself remains under the control of Council"*... that Council jurisdiction would not extend below the surface ground level of the area and from opinion that we have gained it suggests marine salvage rights do not apply to subterranean cavities and that whilst a '*Joint Legal claim can be made to the Attorney General*, – that does not guarantee that it can be enforced due to the problems of ownership and jurisdiction? The owner under International Treaty would still be the ..*'adjoined military force/s' who in all probability excavated the original bunker/s'* which in this case was probably (?) the *American Military Forces* through the ADF as ...*'they were co-joined (as signatories) in a Formal alliance at that time'*.
- MEEPPA is of the view, given the current timing, that a meeting be arranged between the Mount Evelyn Community (As Suggested Above) , Mr. Rawson and his 'Group' and to be chaired by the Ward Councilor to further investigate the possibilities as well as to table ALL of the evidence requested above to assess the veracity of the claim with a view to having the site competently and professionally assessed in a way that is amenable to all parties and which will *not in any way* have a deleterious effect on this extremely sensitive area and with a view to preserving the valuable heritage of this town *before* any 'works' are undertaken.
- Finally, MEEPPA Inc. and this policy at the time of writing seeks only facts and valid evidence to clarify and present a responsible, regulatory approach and response to the request as outlined only to date.

However hypothetical this claim may appear this Policy is based on the following assumptions-

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(1)

A policy in the event that any attempt/s is/are made to undertake any activities that have will have an impact on the amenity of a sensitive Environmental area (Floral and Faunal) and Heritage Area that remains one of MEEPPA's Key Strategic areas of interest. We would also monitor any impacts on the Recreational Amenity of the area.

(2)

Concerns that need to be addressed BEFORE any activities are undertaken.

(3)

A policy basis in the event of any discovery/ies that may be made and issues attending this/these ?

By formulating this Position Statement and developing this Policy *MEEPPA DOES NOT -:*

(a)

Imply that any such Bunker/s actually exist,

(b)

DOES NOT imply that any permits or formal permission have been granted or agreed on by the preparation of this Position Statement and policy,

(c)

Does NOT (and cannot) in any way indemnify any other Group or Groups from Injury or Damage to other persons or structures,

(d)

Does NOT compensate such group/s from any loss arising from expenses in drilling or associated activities nor any other costs arising out of wages, expenses or intervention costs from third

parties whether solicited or not, including any remedial works that may be ordered after the site has been assessed in a regulatory and satisfactory manner.

Francis M. Smith

On behalf of MEEPPA Executive. (Moved Jan 4 2009 – Ratified by Formal Resolution 2nd. February 2009)