

Burrup gets minor warning

By Ben Cranston

AN investigation into Burrup Fertilisers has led to a slap on the wrist, but no action will be taken against the company.

An investigation by the Department of Consumer and Employment Protection found the company did not immediately notify the Resources Safety agency of an ammonia-release incident last month.

As a result, the newest player on the Burrup will upgrade its communication procedures with its neighbours and the regulator.

The department's resources safety director of major hazard facilities, Richard Craddock, and senior inspectors visited the site to investigate the source of emissions reported by personnel in the Mermaid Marine Base on August 8.

The investigation found, as a result of water cooling problems, ammonia from the refrigeration process was being transferred to the flare at high pressure in addition to ammonia being vented at low pressure from the storage tanks.

"The reasons for the ammonia release and apparent flare failure needed to be

identified and corrective actions implemented before the Burrup Fertilisers plant would be permitted to continue operations," Mr Craddock said.

"The safety of both workers and the local community is paramount.

"The department is concerned that the company did not immediately notify Resources Safety of the ammonia incident as is required under the Explosives and Dangerous Goods Act 1961."

Burrup Fertilisers corporate director Wolfgang Jovanovic said it was unfortunate unnecessary concern had been sparked in the community.

"The controlled discharge was in accordance with standard procedures, carried out well within prescribed limits, and there was never any danger to personnel or the environment," Mr Jovanovic said.

"I would like to assure the community that our plant has been subjected to intense scrutiny from external regulators prior to and since commencing production.

"Our team is committed to operating the plant in accordance with comprehensive

government regulations designed to minimise the likelihood of any serious occurrence happening at the plant."