

MONASH INDUSTRY TEAM INITIATIVE (MITI)

Development and Improvement of the Saputo Cobram site Environment Management and Monitoring Plan

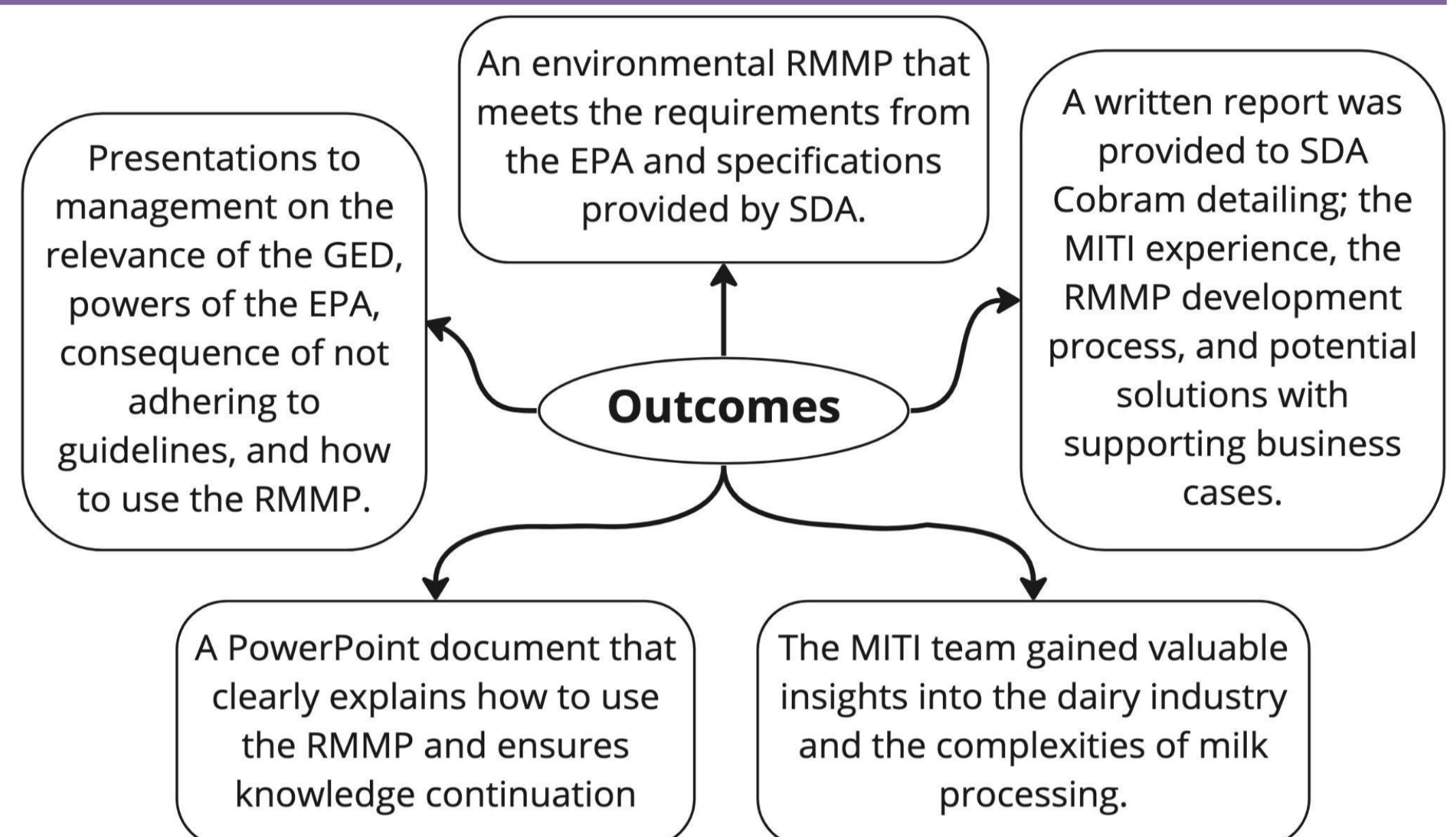
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Background:

Saputo Inc. is a Canadian-based dairy processor and its Australian branch, Saputo Dairy Australia (SDA), is the largest dairy processor in the country. The SDA Cobram site produces dairy products such as powders and retail cheeses. The Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is an independent authority responsible for environmental regulation in Victoria. The Environment Protection Act 2017 (the Act) came into effect on July 1st 2021; this new framework considers environmental protection from a proactive perspective emphasising risk assessment and management. The Act places responsibility on corporations and individuals to manage their environmental impact, as every Victorian has a General Environmental Duty (GED).

Project Scope:

The initial aim of this project was to develop and improve the SDA Cobram site's Environmental Management System and ensure it aligned with the Act. After SDA Cobram received feedback from the EPA, the team decided that creating a new Risk Management and Monitoring Plan (RMMP) was the most appropriate course of action. In addition, high-level conceptual models for each department on-site were produced to increase understanding of the site. Upon completion of the models, the team worked to create a RMMP format that aligned with the requirements of SDA and the EPA. The MITI team consulted with staff members and went on site walks to determine the risks to the environment, existing controls, and monitoring regimes. For some risks identified in the RMMP, the team proposed solutions with brief business cases that could lead to reduced environmental risk levels on site.



Future work:

- ↓ An authorised officer must sign the completed RMMP and upload it to a location that all staff may access.
- ↓ Relevant SDA documents, such as monitoring documents need to be attached to the RMMP once SDA has finalized the storage location of the RMMP
- ↓ The RMMP must be reviewed and updated at set intervals by staff on-site.
- ↓ The EPA requires all manufacturing facilities to have a decommissioning plan. This plan must state how to bring the land back to its original state upon the cessation of site operations. Due to a lack of resources from the EPA, the development of decommissioning plans had to be excluded from the project scope

Our Experience:

Each member of the MITI team had different expectations of what life would be like in rural Victoria. Everyone grew to enjoy the country lifestyle and felt grateful for the adventure. Working in the dairy industry was a new experience for the whole team. It was thought-provoking to see first-hand how dairy processing occurs, with operations being more innovative and elaborate than first anticipated.

Acknowledgements:

Thank you to the MITI team for providing this opportunity and ensuring we were as prepared as possible for the experience. Thank you to the Gardiner Dairy Foundation for enabling us to have a valuable and rewarding experience in the dairy industry.

Finally, to the team at SDA Cobram, thank you for making us feel so welcome and always finding an answer to our questions!

