Your ref: SSI-70610456
Our ref: DOC24/417043

Ms Lauren Clear
Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure

Submitted via Major Project Portal

29 May 2024

Dear Ms Clear

EPA's Recommended Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements
Hunter Transmission Project – SSI-70610456

I refer to your request for Secretary's Environmental Assessment Requirements (SEARs) for the proposed Hunter Transmission Project - SSI-70610456, received by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) on 15 May 2024.

The EPA understands the proposed Hunter Transmission Project (HTP) is a critical State significant infrastructure (CSSI) and in summary involves:

- a new overhead 500 kilovolt (kV) double circuit transmission line of around 100 kilometres
- 2 new substations (Bayswater and Olney)
- associated works, including upgrades to the existing Bayswater and Eraring substations, adjustments to existing transmission lines, road upgrades, access tracks, temporary construction facilities such as laydown areas, stringing sites, construction support sites and workers accommodation.

The proposal states that project may require an environment protection licence under *Protection of the Environment Operations Act* 1997 (the Act) for temporary construction activities (concrete works, crushing, grinding or separating, and helicopter related activities), however it also states it appears to be unlikely given none of these activities are expected to exceed the relevant thresholds in Schedule 1 of the Act. It is also noted that the proponent is a public authority and therefore the EPA may be deemed the appropriate regulatory authority for works associated with the proposal. In this regard, the EPA has identified the information it requires to assess the proposal which is contained in Attachment 1. Guidance material is also provided in Attachment 2 to assist with the preparation of the Environment Impact Assessment (EIS).

In summary, the EPA's key information requirements for the proposal include an adequate assessment of:

- Air quality impacts
- Noise impacts
- Water management
- Waste management and disposal

Phone 131 555
Phone 02 9995 5555
(from outside NSW)

TTY 133 677, then
ask for 131 155

Locked Bag 5022
PARRAMATTA
NSW 2124

6&8 Parramatta
Square 10 Darcy
Street
PARRAMATTA NSW
2150

info@epa.nsw.gov.au
www.epa.nsw.gov.au
ABN 43 692 285 758

If you have any specific questions regarding this matter, please contact me on (02) 4908 6822 or via email at info@epa.nsw.gov.au.

Yours sincerely,

KAREN GALLAGHER
Unit Head – Operations
Environment Protection Authority

Attachment 1

EPA EIS Requirements – Hunter Transmission Project

The EIS should address the specific requirements outlined under each heading below and assess in accordance with the relevant guidelines mentioned.

Air quality

The EIS should include a detailed air quality impact assessment (AQIA). The AQIA should:

1. Identify all potential discharges of fugitive and point source emissions of pollutants including dust for all stages of the proposal and assess the risk associated with those emissions. All processes that could result in air emissions must be identified and described. Sufficient detail to accurately communicate the characteristics and quantity of all emissions must be provided. Assessment of risk relates to environmental harm, risk to human health and amenity.

2. Justify the level of assessment undertaken on the basis of risk factors, including but not limited to:
   a. proposal location;
   b. characteristics of the receiving environment;
   c. type and quantity of pollutants emitted.

3. Describe the receiving environment in detail. The proposal must be contextualised within the receiving environment (local, regional and inter-regional as appropriate). The description must include but need not be limited to:
   a. meteorology and climate;
   b. topography;
   c. surrounding land-use;
   d. ambient air quality.

4. Include a consideration of 'worst case' emission scenarios and impacts at proposed emission limits.

5. Account for cumulative impacts associated with existing emission sources as well as any currently approved developments linked to the receiving environment.

6. Include air dispersion modelling where there is a risk of adverse air quality impacts, or where there is sufficient uncertainty to warrant a rigorous numerical impact assessment. Air dispersion modelling must be conducted in accordance with the Approved Methods for the Modelling and Assessment of Air Pollutants in NSW (2005).
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/air/ammodelling05361.pdf

7. Demonstrate the proposal's ability to comply with the relevant regulatory framework, specifically the Protection of the Environment Operations (POEO) Act (1997) and the POEO (Clean Air) Regulation (2022).

8. Detail emission control techniques/practices that will be employed by the proposal. Consideration should be given to dust management techniques where water is unavailable or limited and the development of a Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP).

Noise and vibration

In relation to noise impacts, the following matters should be addressed (where relevant) as part of the Environmental Assessment.

1. Construction noise associated with the proposed development in accordance with the *Interim* Construction *Noise Guideline* (DECC, 2009).

2. Operational noise from all industrial activities proposed (including private haul roads) to be undertaken on the premises should be assessed in accordance with the *Noise Policy for Industry* (EPA, 2017).

3. Noise from existing or upgraded or new public roads from increased road traffic should be assessed in accordance with the *NSW Road Noise Policy* (DECCW, 2011).

In relation to blasting and vibration, the following matters should be address (where relevant) as part of the Environmental Assessment:

- Vibration from all activities (including construction and operation) to be undertaken on the premises should be assessed using the guidelines contained in the *Assessing Vibration: a technical guideline* (DEC2006).
- If blasting is required for any reasons during the construction or operational stage of the proposed development, blast impacts should be demonstrated to be capable of complying with the guidelines contained in *Australian and New Zealand Environment Council – Technical basis for guidelines to minimise annoyance due to blasting overpressure and ground vibration* (ANZEC, 1990).

Waste and stockpile management

The EIS should:

1. Identify, characterise and classify all waste that will be generated onsite through excavation, demolition or construction activities, including proposed quantities of the waste. All waste must be classified in accordance with EPA*'s Waste Guidelines*.

2. Identify, characterise and classify all waste that is proposed to be disposed of to an offsite location, including proposed quantities of the waste and the disposal locations for the waste. This includes waste that is intended for re-use or recycling. All waste must be classified in accordance with the EPA*'s Waste Guidelines*.

3. Provide details of how waste and product stockpiles will be handled and managed onsite to minimise pollution, including:

- Labelling of stockpiles for identification, ensuring that all waste is in clearly identified stockpiled from other types of material (especially the separation of contaminated and non-contaminated waste).
- Proposed height limits for all waste and product stockpiles to reduce the potential for dust.
- Procedures for minimising the movement of waste and products around the site to avoid the need for double handling.
- Where relevant, measures to minimise leaching from stockpiles into the surrounding environment, such sediment fencing, geofabric liners etc.

4. Provide details of how the waste will be handled and managed during transport to a lawful facility. If the waste possesses hazardous characteristics, the Proponent must provide details of how the waste will be treated or immobilised to render it suitable for transport and disposal.

Water

The EIS should:

1. Describe water usage for the proposal including the position of any intakes and discharges, volumes, water quality and frequency of all water discharges.

2. Describe existing surface and groundwater quality. An assessment needs to be undertaken for any water resource likely to be affected by the proposal.

3. State the Water Quality Objectives for the receiving waters relevant to the proposal. These refer to the community's agreed environmental values and human uses endorsed by the NSW Government as goals for ambient water. http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/ieo/index.htm Where groundwater may be impacted the assessment should identify appropriate groundwater environmental values.

4. State the indicators and associated trigger values or criteria for the identified environmental values. This information should be sourced from the ANZECC (2000) Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality.
http://www.environment.gov.au/water/quality/publications/australian-and-new-zealand-guidelines-fresh-m arine-water-quality-volume-1.

5. State any locally specific objectives, criteria or targets which have been endorsed by the NSW Government.

6. Provide a water balance for the development including water requirements (quantity, quality and source(s)) and proposed storm and wastewater disposal, including type, volumes, proposed treatment and management methods and re-use options.

7. Demonstrate that all practical options to avoid discharge have been implemented and environmental impact minimised where discharge is necessary.

8. Describe the nature and degree of impact that any proposed discharges will have on the receiving environment.

9. Assess impacts against the relevant ambient water quality outcomes. Demonstrate how the proposal will be designed and operated to:

- protect the Water Quality Objectives for receiving waters where they are currently achieved; and
- contribute towards achievement of the Water Quality Objectives over time where they are not currently being achieved.

10. Where a discharge is proposed that includes a mixing zone, the proposal should demonstrate how wastewater discharged to waterways will ensure the ANZECC (2000) water quality criteria for relevant chemical and non-chemical parameters are met at the edge of the initial mixing zone of the discharge, that any impacts in the initial mixing zone are demonstrated to be reversible.

11. Describe how predicted impacts will be monitored and assessed over time.

12. Assess potential impacts on groundwater and groundwater dependent ecosystems.

13. Detail the erosion and sediment controls to be implemented to minimise erosion and sediment mobilisation at the site which have been designed in accordance with the requirements of the publication *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction* (Landcom 2004). The EIS should show the location of each measure to be implemented for the construction and operational phases of the project. The measures to be considered include:

- Sediment traps
- Diversion banks
- Sediment fences
- Bunds (earth, hay, mulch)
- Geofabric liners
- Other control measures as appropriate

ATTACHMENT B: GUIDANCE MATERIAL

Air

Approved methods for modelling and assessment of air pollutants in NSW (2005)
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/air/ammodelling05361.pdf

POEO (Clean Air) Regulation 2022
http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/maintop/view/inforce/subordleg+642+2002+cd+0+N

Noise and Vibration

Interim Construction Noise Guideline (DECC, 2009)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/09265cng.pdf

Noise Policy for Industry (EPA 2017)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/noise/industrial-noise/noise-policy-for-industry(2017).pdf

Implementation and transitional arrangements for the Noise Policy for Industry
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/publications/noise/17p0293-implementation-transition-noise-pol-industry.pdf

Assessing Vibration: a technical guideline (DEC, 2006)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/vibrationguide0643.pdf

Australian and New Zealand Environment Council – Technical basis for guidelines to minimise annoyance due to blasting overpressure and ground vibration (ANZEC, 1990)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/ANZECBlasting.pdf

NSW Road Noise Policy (DECCW, 2011)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/2011236nswroadnoisepolicy.pdf

Rail Infrastructure Noise Guidelines (EPA, 2013)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/resources/noise/20130018eparing.pdf

Environmental assessment requirements for rail traffic-generating developments
http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au/planningsystem/pdf/guide_infra_orridors_interim.pdf

Waste, Chemicals and Hazardous Materials and Radiation Waste

Environmental Guidelines: Solid Waste Landfills (EPA, 1996)
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/waste/envguidlns/solidlandfill.pdf

Draft Environmental Guidelines - Industrial Waste Landfilling (April 1998)
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/waste/envguidlns/industrialfill.pdf

Waste Classification Guidelines (EPA, 2014)
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/classify-guidelines.htm

EPA Resource recovery exemptions
http://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/wasteregulation/recoveryexemptions.htm

Soils

Soil and Landscape Issues in Environmental Impact Assessment (DLWC 2000)Available for purchase at - http://www.shop.nsw.gov.au/pubdetails.

Managing urban stormwater: soils and construction, vol. 1 (Landcom 2004) and vol. 2 (A. Installation of services; B Waste landfills; C. Unsealed roads; D. Main Roads; E. Mines and quarries) (DECC 2008) Vol 1 -
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/water/BlueBookVol1.pdf
Vol 2 -
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/stormwater/08208soilsconststorm2e.pdf

Landslide risk management
http://www.australiangeomechanics.org/resources/downloads/

Site Investigations for Urban Salinity (DLWC, 2002)
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/salinity/booklet3siteinvestigationsforurbansalinity.pdf

Local Government Salinity Initiative Booklets
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/salinity/solutions/urban.htm

Water

Water Quality
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/ieo/index.htm

ANZECC (2000) Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality
http://www.environment.gov.au/water/quality/publications/australian-and-new-zealand-guidelines-fresh-marin e-water-quality-volume-1

Applying Goals for Ambient Water Quality Guidance for Operations Officers –Mixing Zones
http://deccnet/water/resources/AWQGuidance7.pdf

Approved Methods for the Sampling and Analysis of Water Pollutant in NSW (2004)
http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/legislation/approvedmethods-water.pdf