

MINUTES OF THE ESKOM NORTHERN KZN STRENGTHENING PROJECT EIA: MOOLMAN'S FARMERS ASSOCIATION FOCUS GROUP MEETING

Venue	Wittenberg, Mpumalanga	Date	22 November 2017	Time	16h00
Chairperson	Mr Hendrik Klopper		Minutes prepared by	Zwanga Ram	adolela

PRI	APOLOGIES	
N	ame	
Zwanga Ramadolela (ZR)	Terry Calmeyer (TC)	Bongi Shinga (BS)
Hendrik Klopper (HK)	P. Joubert (PJ)	Arthur Smith (AS)
Andre de Waal (ADW)	Uwe Bohmer (UB)	
G.W. Bohaie (GWB)	Berno Bohmer (BB)	
F.T Weyer (FTW)	Eckard Heistermann (EH)	
E.H Bolma (EHB)	Rainer Bohmer (RB)	
Wolfgang Bohmet (WB)	Johan Schlitnz (JS)	
Ludwig Hithstermaus (LH)	R.E. Reinstall (RER)	
G. Thesbort (GT)		

Item	Description	Action	
1.	Welcome Mr Hendrik Klopper welcomed everyone to the meeting.		
2.	Purpose of the Meeting The purpose of the meeting was to provide information on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for Eskom's proposed Northern KwaZulu-Natal Strengthening Project, specifically the proposed Normandie-Iphiva 400 kV powerline, and to hear and record concerns and issues from Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), specifically, farmers in the Piet Retief to Paulpietersburg area who may be potentially affected by the Normandie-Iphiva 400 kV powerline.		
3.	Presentation Ms Terry Calmeyer (TC) presented on the regulatory requirements of the Environmental Assessment Practitioner (EAP), the EIA process, and the need for the project. Her presentation highlighted the following key information: • The project has been divided into four (4) applications, namely, the Iphiva Substation, Normandie-Iphiva 400 kV Powerline, Iphiva-Duma 400 kV		

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	Powerline, and the Distribution Powerlines.	
	 A full EIA is being undertaken. The EIA has two (2) phases, namely, the Scoping Phase and then the Impact Assessment Phase. During the Scoping Phase, issues pertaining to the project are identified, and specialist studies relevant to the identified potential issues are undertaken to investigate alternatives and mitigation measures were necessary. 	
	The Scoping Report has been compiled and was made available for public comment. It has been finalised and submitted to the competent authority which is the National Department of Environmental Affairs.	
	Although the comment period for the Scoping Report is closed, the public participation process is still ongoing.	
	The map of the study area was presented and discussed.	
	Sugar cane farming, forestry, protected areas and residential areas were avoided when identifying possible corridors for the powerlines.	
	The possible varieties of towers that will be used for the powerlines were presented and it was noted that most farming activities can continue under the powerlines, except for sugar cane farming and forestry.	
	The identification of alternatives is a critical element of the EIA process.	
	It was noted that Iphiva Substation Sites 3 and 6 have been recommended for further assessment.	
	• In terms of the Normandie-Iphiva corridor, four (4) alternatives were identified and assessed comparatively in terms of various criteria such as: length, cost, relocation of structures and ecological sensitivity.	
	The Public Participation Process (PPP) undertaken included identifying Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs), establishing and maintaining an I&AP database, onsite notices, newspaper advertisements, and landowner notifications.	
	It was noted that Specialists are currently compiling their Specialists Reports.	
	The Department of Environmental Affairs has until 5 December 2017 to accept, reject or request additional information on the Scoping Reports that have been submitted. Thereafter, the EIA Report and Environmental Management Programmes (EMPr) will be made available for public comment and then submitted to the competent authority – National DEA.	
	 A Specialists' Integration Meeting has been scheduled for 07 December 2017. At this meeting, each of the specialists will present on their findings and recommendations in line with their area of expertise. 	
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4.	Discussion and Questions Session	
	a) Mr Klopper said that the farmers have a good working relationship with Eskom regarding maintenance.b) The impact of a powerline on forestry is severe because the entire servitude is lost, and there are additional impacts such as visual, fires, safety of small aircraft, access roads, etc.	
	c) How will the proposed project impact protected areas? Response: The project will attempt to completely avoid protected areas.	
	d) HK recommended that the existing formal channels be used to identify and consult with the potentially affected farmers. Response: This suggestion was noted, with thanks.	
	e) HK explained that powerlines through forestry areas impact on the fire breaks that are required. Most farmers do not get compensated for additional fire breaks. The area has a Forest Protect Organisation (FPO) and he requested that Eskom be a contributing member of the FPO. Response: This comment was noted for forwarding to Eskom.	Eskom
	f) What is the process that should be followed by farmers in maintaining contact and with whom should we liaise with? Where should comments be sent to and what issues should be raised? Response: TC advised that the contact person is Mr Joseph Masilela and his contact details were provided. Comments can be sent via e-mail or any other means of communication. All parties that have signed the attendance register for the Focus Group Meeting will be registered on the I&AP database, and will receive all future project communication. Individual farmers were encouraged to submit any comments by 7 December 2017 to be considered in the integration process and included in the Draft EIA report.	
	TC encouraged the farmers to raise any matters of concern to them. She stated that although potential impacts on forestry such as fires and the obstruction to the use of small aircrafts are thought to be understood and have been documented on the Scoping Report, it is still recommended that farmers record their individual concerns and issues.	
	g) PJ asked whether the power supply in the area will be affected when the new powerline is connected to the Normandie Substation. Response: TC indicated that she will engage with Eskom and provide feedback.	Eskom

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	 h) Mr Eckard Hiestermann referred to a meeting that was held at his farm in September 2017. He indicated that he is still waiting for feedback on two (2) issues that were discussed at that meeting. Response: TC undertook to follow up on those issues. i) Mr Klopper asked for a map of their area with the proposed corridors so that they can confirm who is potentially affected by the project. Response: TC undertook to provide a map for Mr Klopper. 	TC TC
5.	Closure Mr Klopper thanked everyone for attending the meeting.	

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