

### **Your role in the Basic Assessment Process**

Your involvement will enhance the applicability and completeness of the BA process.

Your involvement in the Basic Assessment process is fourfold:

1. To ensure that your interests/concerns in the proposed activity are recorded and/addressed, you need to register with Nsovo as an Interested & Affected Party.
2. To raise public awareness of activities taking place within your surroundings and to ensure inclusion of any issues, suggestions or comments you may be aware of regarding proposed activities.
3. To provide participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
4. To utilise opportunities provided to raise issues and provide comments throughout the process.

### **How to become Involved and Register as an I&AP?**

Your participation in this process is valuable and is encouraged, therefore you are invited to register as an I&AP and contribute by written submissions by fax, post, email or telephone through any one of the details overleaf.



## **BASIC ASSESSMENT PROCESS FOR THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF THE NEW TRANSNET RIETKUIL SUBSTATION IN RIETKUIL, MPUMALANGA PROVINCE**



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## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT MAY 2015**



*From the world we live to the world we seek*

Please Quote REF: F005-15 in all correspondence

## PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

The aim of this document is to provide an overview of the proposed project and study area; to provide information of the Basic Assessment (BA) process to be followed prior to the development of the proposed substation and associated infrastructure as per the National Environmental Management Act (Act 107 of 1998); and indicate how you, as an Interested and Affected Party (I&AP), can become involved in the BA process.

## PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS (PPP)

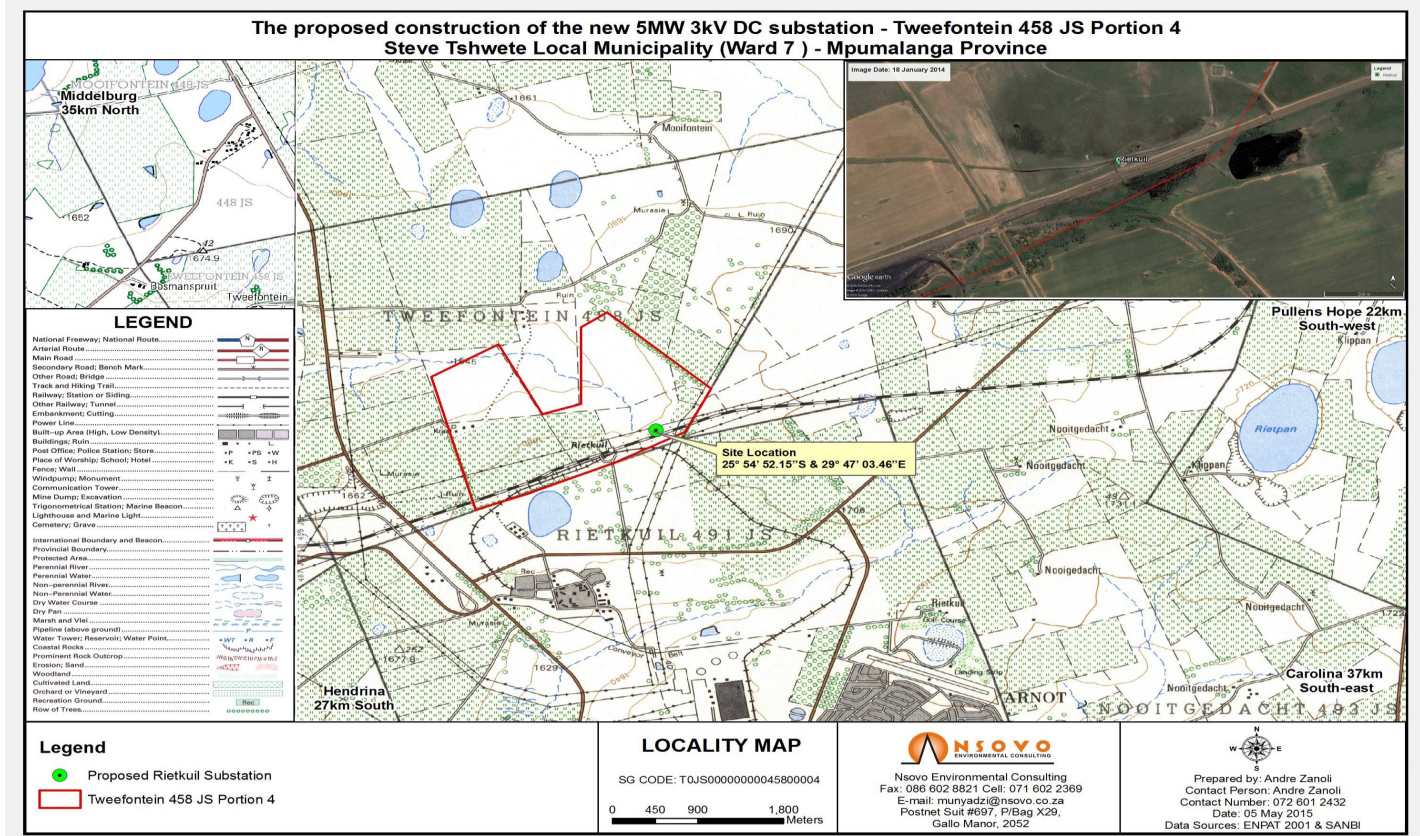
Public Participation Process (PPP) is any process that involves the public in problem solving or decision-making and forms an integral part of the BA process. The PPP provides Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP) with an opportunity to comment and/or make suggestions on the proposed project. The PPP will be undertaken in terms of Chapter 6 of Regulation 39 through 44 of the EIA Regulations of December 2014.

## NEED AND DESIRABILITY

The Transnet 81 million tonnes per annum (mtpa) rail expansion programme is designed to meet the increasing international market demand for export coal. The coal line currently delivers close to 70mtpa of export coal from about 48 mine loading sites situated mainly in Mpumalanga province to the Richards Bay Coal Terminal. Further, the coal line is composed of two electrification systems namely the 3kV DC and 25kV DC from Blackhill to Ermelo and Ermelo to Richards Bay respectively. Hundreds of wagon trains operate between these locations, hence the program aims to increase rail capacity of the coal line and to address the bottleneck which impact on the stable flow of train traffic.

The program provides for the following:

- An increase in the wagon and locomotive fleets to cater for higher volume and improve locomotive operational and maintenance effort efficiencies.
- Strengthen the traction power supply on both the Eskom delivery side and within Transnet's substation and overhead Track Equipment (OHTE) network.
- Improvement in reliability of electricity systems will benefit export capacity and subsequently improve the economic status of the country.



## PROPOSED PROJECT

Transnet Freight Rail (TFR) has appointed Transnet Capital Projects (TCP) for provision of a new substation and associated infrastructure. The proposed project entails the development of a new Transnet Rietkuil 5MW 3kV DC Traction Substation wherein Eskom will provide 132kV AC which will be stepped down to 3kV DC.

## LEGAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BA

In accordance with the requirements of the NEMA, Transnet requires approval from the Competent Authority i.e. the Department of Environmental Affairs in order to undertake the proposed project. The proposed project is listed under Government Notice R983 (Listing Notice 1) Activity 11(i), 12(a) and 19(i) as activities that cannot commence without approval.

## LOCALITY

The proposed project is located on Farm Tweefontein 458JS, Portion 4 in Rietkuil within the jurisdiction of Steve Tshwete Local Municipality in the Mpumalanga Province, South Africa. The proposed site is approximately 5600m<sup>2</sup>.

## CONSIDERATION OF ALTERNATIVES FOR THE PROJECT

Another key driver towards a successful BA process is the thorough identification and investigation of feasible alternatives. The selection of potential alternatives will be informed by input received from the I&APs, authorities as well as the EAP. Alternatives will be considered and discussed in terms of their practicality and feasibility. It is important to note that the definition of alternatives includes all aspects of the proposed activity including, activity alternatives, process alternatives, scheduling alternatives, demand alternatives; design alternatives and the No-go alternative.