

# REALIGNMENT OF N8 TO MASERUBRIDGE FROM N8/R26 INTERSECTION

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION DOCUMENT



<b>Environmental Assessment Practitioner</b>	Enviroworks & NSVT (JV)
<b>Project Name</b>	Environmental Impact Assessment and Water Use for the Proposed Realignment of National Route 8 Section 12 (KM52.96) to Section 13 (KM 11.12) between the R26/N8 Intersection and Maseru Bridge
<b>Applicant</b>	SANRAL
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<b>Enviroworks Reference:</b>	N8 Realignment
<b>Document</b>	Background Information Document
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## Overview of the proposed development

SANRAL proposes to realign an alternative route for a portion of the N8 in order to improve the entry and exit conditions at the Maseru border which will result in a shorter and safer route between Maseru and Bloemfontein by approximately 13 kilometers. The project is located in the Free State Province. It is predicted that the realignment will start at the existing N8/R26 intersection in the east – which is to be upgraded to a grade separated interchange- and tie in on the western end along the portion of N8 between Ladybrand and the Maseru Bridge.

The proposed roadway will consist of an undivided 4 lane carriageway facility with 11,4m surfaced width and a road reserve width of 80m and will be classified as “green-fields” construction .All new streams and river crossing will require new structures. A new interchange is envisaged at the N8/R26 interchange.

Three alternative routes have been identified as follows:

**1. Route 1-** This is a slight deviation to Route 2 below in that it remains on the N8 slightly longer before deviating off into the greenfields similar to route D in the PDNA report. The tie-in configuration on this western end is still under investigation. Once the route has crossed over the railway line it follows Route 2 described below.

**2. Route 2-** This route has been investigated as a combination of the Route B described in the PDNA report and a new alignment off the N8 at the vicinity of the R26 intersection. At this point this new alignment will facilitate a new interchange of the N8/ R26 comfortably. Once the new route has moved off the existing N8, it turns northwards to cross over the railway line and then turns towards the south. From here the route basically follows the old Route B mentioned above, until it crosses the stream at km 9,35. From here the route turns further southwards in order to tie back into the existing N8. This tie in point is located further north than the tie-ins indicated in the PDNA report in order to facilitate the new truck Stop facility near the border post. The tie-in configuration at the eastern end is still under investigation.

*(Route B per PDNA Report- This route runs to the north of the existing gravel road (Road S836) and has been aligned to optimize stream crossings. The route can be designed to 120 kph. The new construction length of this road is 10,4 km, travel length from A to C is 13,4 km and will shorten the present tarred route between Tweespruit and Maseru by 9,8 km.)*

**3. No-go Alternative** – The proposed realignment will not go ahead, meaning the N8 to Maseru bridge from N8/R26 intersection remain as it is.

These permits are:

1. Environmental Authorization from the Free State Department of the Economic, Tourism and Environmental Affairs.
2. Water Use license from Free State Department of Water Affairs
3. Mining Permit Free State Department of Mineral Resources

To obtain an environmental authorisation, an Environmental Impact Assessment is required to be undertaken, in order to ascertain whether the impacts of the proposed development on the affected environment are significant and can be effectively mitigated or reduced.

To obtain a water use license in terms of Section 21 of the National Water Act, (Act 36 of 1998), a water use license application will be required to ensure that the development won't have considerable damage to the aquatic system and water resource is properly managed.

To obtain a mining permit in terms of the Mineral Resources and Petroleum Development Act, (Act No. 28 of 2002) an environmental management plan should be completed as part of the mining permit application to ensure that environmental impacts resulting from sourcing of material from the borrow pit are mitigated to a greater extent and rehabilitated to a suitable end use.

The following Specialist Studies will be undertaken as part of environmental assessment for the Realignment of Nation Route between the R 26/N8 intersection and Maseru bridge.

- ✓ Aquatic Assessment/Wetland Delineation Study
- ✓ Ecological Assessment
- ✓ Heritage Assessment
- ✓ Palaeontological Assessment

### **The Environmental Impact Assessment Process**

In the South African legislative framework, the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (No. 107 of 1998) regulates development activities which may pose a risk to the integrity of the ecological and human environment.

Coupled with NEMA, listed activities are given, which describe the types of development, limits, expanse and nature where an environmental impact assessment (EIA) will be needed. These are referred to as the NEMA 2010 EIA Regulations.

An initial review of the proposed development activity identified the following regulation and activity to be triggered:

#### **Activity 11: Listing Notice 1, GR 544 of 19 June 2010**

The construction of-

- (iii) Bridges;

(xi) Infrastructure covering 50 square meters or more where such construction occurs within a watercourse or within 32 meters of a watercourse, measured from the edge of a watercourse, excluding where such construction will occur behind the development setback line.

**Activity 18: Listing Notice 1, GR 544 of 19 June 2010**

The infilling or depositing of any material of more than 5 m<sup>3</sup> into, or the dredging of excavation, removal or moving of soil, sand, shells, shell grit., pebbles or rock from –

(i) A watercourse

**Activity 18: Listing Notice 2, GR 545 of 19 June 2010**

The route determination of roads and design of associated physical infrastructure –

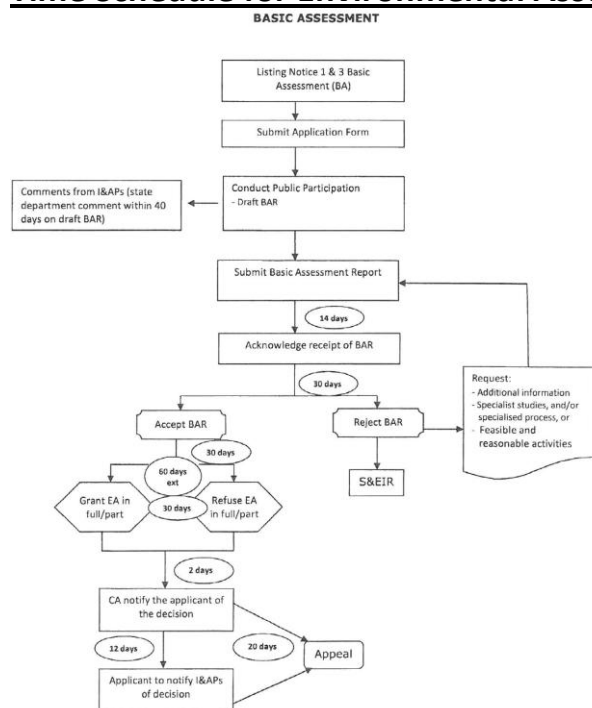
(i) It is a national road as defined in section 40 of the South African National Road Agency limited and National Road Act, 1998 (Act No. 7 of 1998);

(iii) the road reserve is wider than 30 meters; or

(iv) the road will cater for more than one lane of traffic in both directions

Enviroworks and NSVT (JV) (Independent Environmental Consultants), were appointed as the project Environmental Assessment Practitioners (EAP) to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment to address this impact of the proposed activity, which entails site surveys, a public participation process, stakeholder engagement, as well as impact rating and review.

**Time Schedule for Environmental Assessment**



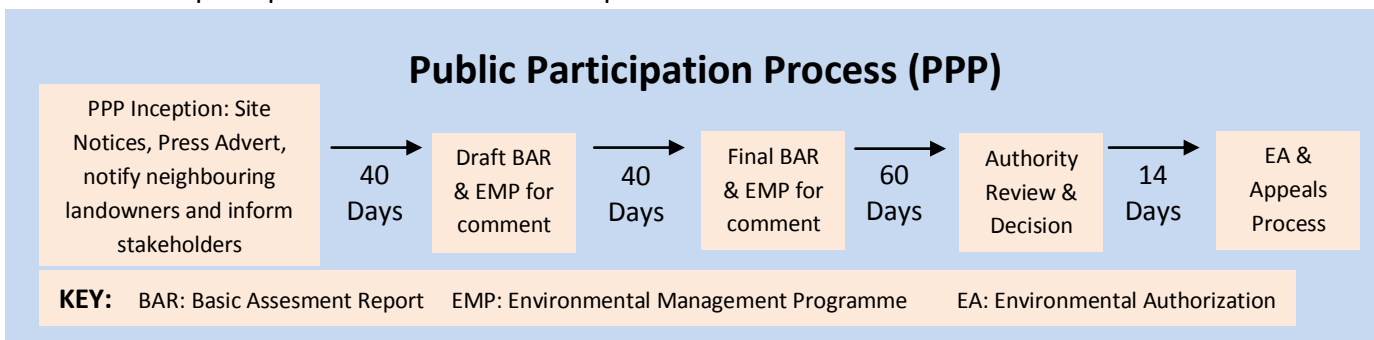
**Figure 1: Basic Assessment Flow Chart**

## Public Participation

For effectiveness, Environmental Assessment Practitioners are legally required to engage stakeholders and Interested and Affected Parties as part of the EIA process.

The benefit of engaging the public and stakeholders can be:

- Identifying the values and needs of the public;
- Debating issues and finding solutions;
- Soliciting “hidden” knowledge of the wider community and their key concerns;
- Encouraging transparency and accountability;
- Achieving development of an integrative, inclusive nature in alignment with the principles of sustainable development.



## Route Plan

See the attached for Route Plan for N8/R26 Realignment, indicating Route 1 and 2.