

Public Comment Invited

Echuca Moama Bridge Project

Environment Effects Statement (EES), Review of Environmental Factors (REF) and Preliminary Documentation

Written submissions on the Environment Effects Statement, Review of Environmental Factors and Preliminary Documentation are now invited. Submissions close at 5:00pm on Friday 9 October 2015

The Project

VicRoads and Roads and Maritime Services New South Wales (NSW) propose to develop a new crossing of the Murray and Campaspe Rivers, including an elevated roadway and extensive bridging and/or culverts across the Murray and Campaspe River floodplains, and improvements to existing approach roads in Victoria and NSW. The new crossing connects the Murray Valley Highway at Echuca in Victoria with the Cobb Highway at Moama in New South Wales.

As the project affects both Victoria and NSW, environmental factors have been considered for both States.

Environment Effects Statement

The former Victorian Minister for Planning determined on 14 June 2013 that an Environment Effects Statement (EES) was required for the project under the *Environment Effects Act 1978*. The EES process will inform decision-making on the project under Victorian law.

The EES has considered four options:

- The Mid West Option (the preferred alignment);
- The Mid West 2A Option;
- The Mid West 2B Option; and
- The 'no project' scenario.

Draft amendment

The EES includes a draft planning scheme amendment known as Amendment C103 to the Campaspe Planning Scheme for the Mid West Option. This draft amendment would facilitate acquisition of private land and the construction of the Mid West Option without the need for a planning permit.

The public review of the EES provides the public with an opportunity to comment on the project and the draft amendment.

Review of Environmental Factors

A Review of Environmental Factors (REF) has also been prepared under part 5 of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979*. The REF documents all matters affecting or likely to affect the environment in NSW as a result of the proposal.

The REF has considered one option. The alignment in NSW is the same for the Mid West, Mid West 2A and Mid West 2B Options.

Preliminary Documentation

Preliminary Documentation has been prepared and this notice is also published pursuant to Section 95A of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act)*. The proposed action, identified as a second Murray River crossing at Echuca-Moama based on the Mid West Option (EPBC 2013/6850), is to be developed by VicRoads and Roads and Maritime Services. The proposed action is a controlled action under the *EPBC Act*. The controlling provisions are Sections 18 and 18A (threatened species and ecological communities).

Exhibition

The EES, draft amendment, REF and Preliminary Documentation have been placed on exhibition for public comment from **27 August 2015 until 9 October 2015** and may be examined during normal business hours at the following locations:

- Campaspe Shire Council, corner of Hare & Heygarth Streets, Echuca
- Campaspe Regional Library, 310 Hare Street, Echuca
- Murray Shire Council, Moama Branch Office, 6 Meninya Street, Moama
- Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, Loddon Mallee Region, Level 1, 56-60 King Street, Bendigo
- State Library of Victoria, 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne
- Department of the Environment, 33 Allara Street, Canberra, ACT (Preliminary Documentation only. Please email EPBC.Refererrals@environment.gov.au to arrange to view a copy)

Viewing the EES, draft amendment, REF and Preliminary Documentation

The EES, draft amendment and Preliminary Documentation can be viewed and downloaded from the VicRoads website at www.vicroads.vic.gov.au. The REF can be viewed and downloaded from the Roads and Maritime Services website www.rms.nsw.gov.au.

If you experience any problems downloading any of the exhibited documents or have special needs and require assistance accessing the EES, draft amendment or Preliminary Documentation, please contact VicRoads on the phone number or email below or RMS in relation to the REF on the phone number or email below.

Community information sessions

VicRoads and Roads and Maritime Services will conduct community information sessions at St Mary's Hall (Southern 80 Shop), 224 Anstruther Street Echuca from **12.00 noon to 5.00pm on Tuesday 1 September 2015** and **2.00pm to 7.00pm on Thursday 3 September 2015**.

Obtaining copies of the EES, REF and Preliminary Documentation

Free copies of the EES Summary Brochure and a CD of the complete EES Main Report, Technical Reports, draft amendment and Preliminary Documentation are available at display locations and from VicRoads. To access a copy, email nr.mailbox@roads.vic.gov.au or call (03) 5434 5024. Hard copies of the EES Main Report and Technical Reports are available for purchase at \$75 each.

A CD/USB of the complete REF Main Report and Technical Reports is available for purchase at \$10 each from Roads and Maritime Services. To access a copy, email timothy.v.wilson@rms.nsw.gov.au or call (02) 6937 1604. Hard copies of the REF Main Report and Technical Reports are available for purchase at \$25 each.

How to lodge a submission

Submissions on the EES, REF and Preliminary Documentation can be made online at:

www.delwp.vic.gov.au/echuca-moama-bridge-ees

You must complete the online submission coversheet and indicate whether your submission relates to the EES, REF or Preliminary Documentation (or all three). Parties wishing to post in a written submission will need to contact Planning Panels Victoria on (03) 8392 6393 to obtain a hard copy of the submission coversheet.

All submissions must state the name and address of the person making the submission. Anonymous submissions will not be considered.

Submissions will be treated as public documents. Please read the privacy notice on the submission coversheet to see how submissions may be used.

EES submissions will be made available for any person to inspect at the following locations:

- Campaspe Regional Library, 310 Hare Street, Echuca. - Tel: (03) 5481 2400
- By appointment at: Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning, Level 1, 56-60 King Street, Bendigo. For appointments, please call (03) 4433 8056.

All REF submissions will be addressed by Roads and Maritime Services with responses published in a submissions report.

All submissions to the Preliminary Documentation will be addressed by VicRoads and Roads and Maritime Services and provided to the Commonwealth Department of the Environment.

EES Inquiry process (Vic. only)

A combined Inquiry and Advisory Committee (the Inquiry) will be appointed by the Minister for Planning under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* and the *Planning and Environment Act 1987* to consider the exhibited documents and public submissions relevant to Victoria.

The Inquiry will hold a Directions Hearing in the week commencing 27 October 2015 in Echuca. At this hearing, the Inquiry will establish the necessary arrangements and a timetable for the public hearings.

Public hearings are expected to begin the week commencing 16 November 2015 in Echuca. Requests to be heard by the Inquiry must be received prior to or at the Directions Hearing. All submitters who wish to present to the Inquiry are asked to note these arrangements and commence preparations in advance.

Information on the Inquiry process and hearing timetable will be published online as it becomes available:
www.delwp.vic.gov.au/echuca-moama-bridge-ees

REF Process (NSW) and Preliminary Documentation

No Inquiry will be held.

Questions

Questions about the Echuca Moama Bridge Project should be directed to Donna Clusker, VicRoads Tel: (03) 5434 5180 or Tim Wilson, Roads and Maritime Services Tel: (02) 6937 1604 depending on the jurisdiction.

Questions about the EES process should be directed to Fiona Murray, Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning. Tel: (03) 4433 8056.

Questions about the REF process should be directed to Tim Wilson, Roads and Maritime Services. Tel: (02) 6937 1604.

Questions about the Preliminary Documentation process should be directed to Helen Searle, Commonwealth Department of the Environment. Tel: (02) 6275 9119.

Questions about the Inquiry process should be directed to Greta Grivas, Planning Panels Victoria. Tel: (03) 8392 6393 or email planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au.