

## **DECISION ON PROJECT: Star of the South Offshore Wind Farm**

### **Decision under section 8B(3)(a) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978***

Assessment through an environment effects statement (EES) under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* **is required** for the reasons set out in the attached Notice of Reasons for Decision.

### **Procedures and requirements under section 8B(5) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978***

The procedures and requirements applying to the EES process, in accordance with both section 8B(5) of the Act and the *Ministerial guidelines for assessment of environmental effects under the Environment Effects Act 1978* (Ministerial Guidelines), are as follows:

- (i) The EES is to document investigations of potential environmental effects (direct and/or indirect) of the proposed project, including the feasibility of associated environmental mitigation and management measures, in particular for:
  - a. effects on biodiversity and ecological values within and near the project area including native vegetation, listed communities and species (flora and fauna) under the *Flora and Fauna Guarantee Act 1988* and DELWP advisory list, such as through loss, degradation or fragmentation of habitat, as well as related ecological effects;
  - b. effects on freshwater and marine environments and related beneficial uses, including as a result of any required dredging due to selection of the preferred port option, any changes to stream flows and/or discharge of sediment or waste through waterway crossings;
  - c. effects on Aboriginal cultural heritage values;
  - d. effects on the socioeconomic environment, at local and regional scales, including increased traffic movement and direct and indirect effects of construction of onshore assets; and
  - e. effects on existing landscape values.
- (ii) The matters to be investigated and documented in the EES will be set out more fully in scoping requirements. Draft scoping requirements will be exhibited for 15 business days for public comment, before final scoping requirements are issued by the Minister for Planning.
- (iii) The proponent is to prepare and submit to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) a draft EES study program to inform the preparation of scoping requirements.
- (iv) The level of detail of investigation for the EES studies should be consistent with the approach set out in the scoping requirements and be adequate to inform an assessment of the significance and acceptability of its potential environmental effects, in the context of the Ministerial Guidelines.
- (v) DELWP will convene an inter-agency technical reference group (TRG) to advise DELWP and the proponent, as appropriate, during the preparation of the EES on the scoping requirements, the design and adequacy of the EES studies, and coordination with statutory approval processes.
- (vi) The proponent is to prepare and implement an EES consultation plan for informing the public and consulting with stakeholders during the preparation of the EES, having regard to advice from DELWP and the TRG.

- (vii) The proponent is also to prepare and submit to DELWP its proposed schedule for the completion of studies, preparation and exhibition of the EES, following confirmation of the scoping requirements. This schedule is intended to facilitate the alignment of the proponent's and DELWP's timeframes, including for TRG review of technical studies for the EES and the main EES documentation.
- (viii) The proponent is to apply appropriate peer review and quality management procedures to enable the completion of EES studies to a satisfactory standard.
- (ix) The EES is to be exhibited for a period of not less than 30 business days for public comment, unless the exhibition period spans the Christmas–New Year period, in which case 40 business days will apply.
- (x) An inquiry will be appointed under the *Environment Effects Act 1978* to consider environmental effects of the proposal.

### **Notification**

The following parties (proponent and relevant decision-makers) are to be notified of this decision in accordance with sections 8A and 8B(4)(a)(i) of the *Environment Effects Act 1978*:

- Star of the South Wind Farm Pty Ltd (proponent);
- Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change;
- Minister for Water;
- Secretary of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning;
- Mayor of Latrobe City Council;
- Mayor of Wellington Shire Council;
- Mayor of Mornington Peninsula Shire Council;
- Mayor of South Gippsland Shire Council;
- CEO of the West Gippsland Catchment Management Authority;
- CEO of the Environment Protection Authority;
- Executive Director of Aboriginal Victoria;
- Executive Director of Heritage Victoria;
- CEO of Gurnaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation; and
- CEO of Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation.



**HON RICHARD WYNNE MP**  
**Minister for Planning**

Date: 11 / 05 / 2020