

Board of the EPA

Environmental Impact Assessments

Notes for reviewers

Environmental Effects Report (EER)

For low risk proposals, an Environmental Effects Report (EER) will be submitted to the Board of the Environment Protection Authority (the Board). The EER provides information on the proponent, proposal, potential environmental impacts and how any impacts will be managed. The Guidelines are prepared on the basis of a Notice of Intent, proposal or application for an environmental licence submitted by the proponent or a development application referred by a Council.

The EER is used by the Board to make its determination on the assessment. It also provides a source of information for public and agency consultation during the assessment process and is a reference document for later regulation of the activity, if it is approved.

Proposals for which an EER is required are considered to have potential environmental impacts that are minor in scale or consequence and which can be readily avoided or mitigated through appropriate management measures.

At the start of the environmental assessment, the Board issues EER guidelines to proponents to specify the information required for assessment. [Generic EER Guidelines](#) are available, but are usually modified by the Board to suit individual proposals.

Environmental Impact Statement (EIS)

For large scale and higher risk proposals, an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is the key document submitted by a proponent to the Board. The EIS also forms part of an application for a planning permit submitted to the local Council. The Board will use the EIS to make its determination on the assessment, and it is also a source of information for public and agency consultation during the assessment process. In the event the proposal is approved, the EIS will be used as a reference document for regulation of the activity.

The [EIS General Guidelines](#) is a generic document produced by the Board, which contains the general information requirements for an EIS. Project Specific Guidelines are prepared by the Board for each proposal to supplement the General Guidelines. They provide case-specific guidance on the key environmental issues that must be addressed by the proponent in the EIS. The Project Specific Guidelines also identify the minimum survey requirements and studies required as part of the EIS.

The EIS must comply with the Project Specific Guidelines and the relevant sections of the General Guidelines. While the EIS should evaluate all potential impacts of the proposal, it should focus on the key environmental issues identified in the Project Specific Guidelines or during the course of the assessment.

Proponents are asked to submit a draft EER or EIS to EPA Tasmania for review prior to its finalisation. Typically, several drafts of an EIS are submitted before the document is considered satisfactory.

Notes for reviewers of EER or EIS Guidelines

When reviewing draft Guidelines, reviewers should consider the following questions:

- Have all key environmental issues been identified? Key issues are those environmental issues that are to be the focus of the assessment.
- Are the survey and study requirements for the key issues appropriate?
- Do you have recommendations for any other environmental issues to be included, that are not adequately covered by the generic EER/general EIS or draft project specific guidelines referred for comment?

Reviewers should concentrate on issues for which their agency has a statutory responsibility, or which are otherwise of particular interest to the agency and relevant to the Board's assessment.

Notes for reviewers of a draft EER or EIS

Key agencies may be requested to review and comment on a draft EER or EIS before it is finalised.

As outlined above, the EER/EIS must comply with the Guidelines issued for the proposal. The principal objective of draft EER/EIS review is to identify areas where these requirements have not been satisfied. If new issues are identified during the review process, these can also be raised and incorporated into the comments.

When reviewing an EER or EIS, reviewers should consider the following questions:

- Does the EER/EIS satisfy the requirements of the Generic EER, General EIS and any Project Specific Guidelines issued? If not, what additional information is required?
- If comments were provided on the guidelines, have these been sufficiently addressed?
- Is the document logically structured? Are there any improvements that could be made to make it more readable to the general public?
- Have all relevant environmental impacts been identified (and in particular any key impacts)?
- Have the impacts identified been adequately assessed (and in particular the key impacts)? Is additional information or clarification required?
- Does the information in the demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation, standards and policies?
- Are the proposed avoidance, mitigation and/or management measures clearly defined and considered satisfactory?
- Do you have any recommendations for additional mitigation measures and permit conditions that may be necessary for the residual impacts of the project to be acceptable?
- Should the proposal proceed, and if so do you recommend any conditions of approval?

Reviewers should concentrate on issues for which their agency has a statutory responsibility or which are otherwise of particular interest to the agency and are relevant to the Board's assessment.

Notes for reviewers of a final EER or DPEMP

Agencies with a potential interest in a proposal will be formally invited to comment on the final EER/EIS during the public consultation phase. For key agencies that have already commented on the draft EIS, this will involve:

- noting whether earlier comments have been satisfactorily addressed;

- reiterating those comments that have not been addressed; and
- recommending whether or not the proposal should proceed, and if so provide any recommended conditions of approval.

Agencies that have not previously commented on a draft of the EER/EIS should follow the guidelines above for reviewing a draft EER/EIS. They should also recommend whether or not the proposal should proceed and provide any recommended conditions of approval.

Where a draft of the EER/EIS has been previously reviewed, no new issues should be raised at the final EER/EIS stage, as all issues should have been identified at the draft EER/EIS stage.

Reviewers should concentrate on environmental issues for which their agency has a statutory responsibility, or are otherwise of particular interest to the agency.

EER or EIS Supplement

Where significant issues have been raised in public representations, or by agencies that commented on an EER/EIS, the proponent will be required to prepare additional information in form of a Supplement to the EER/EIS. The Supplement should address the public and agency comments and respond to specific requirements by the Board.

Notes for reviewers

Agencies with an interest in the content of a Supplement, due to comments they submitted on the EER/EIS, may be requested to review and comment on a draft EER/EIS Supplement. This review should consist of an evaluation of the document against comments made on the final EER/EIS.

Environmental Assessment Report

An Environmental Assessment Report (EAR) is prepared by EPA Tasmania for each proposal assessed by the Board. The report is considered and adopted by the Board (or its delegate) and issued to the proponent and the Council (where relevant), and is made available to representors and the general public. It contains an evaluation of the environmental issues associated with the proposal. The report forms the basis of the Board's decision on the proposal and provides the reasons for the decision. A copy of the conditions of approval is appended to the report in the event that the proposal is approved.

The report is based on the information provided by the proponent in the EER/EIS, the Supplement and in other relevant documentation. It also draws on information and advice from EPA Tasmania, other Divisions of DPIPWE and other agencies.

Notes for reviewers

Key agencies may be requested to comment on a draft report, or relevant sections of it before it is considered by the Board. The report has sections dealing with each relevant environmental issue with a focus on key issues.

When reviewing the draft report, reviewers should focus on the relevant 'evaluation' and 'conclusions' subsections of the report. The 'evaluation' subsections are a critique of the information provided in the EER/EIS and Supplement (if applicable) and evaluate whether the studies, identified impacts, and proposed avoidance, mitigation and compensation measures are adequate and the proposed conditions of approval. The 'conclusions' subsections lists the proposed conditions of approval.

Reviewers should concentrate on environmental issues for which their agency has statutory responsibility or which are otherwise of particular interest to the agency.
