

**BACKGROUND
INFORMATION DOCUMENT
AND
INVITATION TO COMMENT**



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ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT ----- SCOPING PHASE

**PROPOSED ARIES - HELIOS 765 KV TRANSMISSION POWERLINE AND
SUBSTATIONS UPGRADE, NORTHERN CAPE PROVINCE.**

NEAS REFERENCE: DEA/EIA/0001556/2012

DEA REFERENCE: 14/12/16/3/3/2/441

PURPOSE OF THIS DOCUMENT

This document provides an overview of the proposed project, and indicates how interested and affected parties can become involved in the project, and contribute to the Environmental Impact Assessment process.

INTRODUCTION

Mokgope Consulting cc has been appointed by Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd to conduct an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in a form of a full EIA

for a linear activity of the proposed Aries-Helios 765kV transmission powerline, which also entails the upgrade of the substations

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd is currently proposing to construct a 765kV transmission powerline from Aries substation (near Kenhardt in the Northern Cape Province) to Helios substation (near Loreisfontein in the Northern Cape Province). The total length of the proposed transmission powerline would be

approximately 175km. A general locality map of the study area is attached. Both Aries and Helios are existing substations which would require technical upgrades to accommodate the new powerline.

Based on the anticipated growing demand of electricity in the Northern Cape Province, there may be a risk that the demand exceeds the supply. Consequently, the risk of load shedding would not be avoided. As a result, Eskom

identified the need to strengthen the existing transmission system between the Aries and Helios substations by means of constructing a 765kV transmission powerline and the upgrade of the substations.

The aim of the newly proposed Aries-Helios 765kV transmission powerline is to ensure that adequate and reliable electricity supply in the Northern Cape Province is achieved. Furthermore, the proposed transmission line would: avoid current and future possible voltage

collapse; contribute to a more flexible electrical network; improve the overall reliability of the electrical systems, which would benefit electricity users in the region; and sustain economic growth in the Northern Cape Province.

The proposed linear activity is located in the Hantam Local Municipality and Nama Khoi Local Municipality, both within the jurisdiction of Namakwa District Municipality; as well as in the Kai Garib Local Municipality within the jurisdiction of

Siyanda District Municipality in the Northern Cape Province. The proposed transmission powerline would possibly run through various farms and/or private properties, of which most of them have been identified through a deeds search.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

In accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Management Act (NEMA) (Act No 107 of 1998, Amended 2 August 2010), the applicant, Eskom Holdings SOC Ltd, requires the approval from the Competent Environmental Authority, which is the National

Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA). The proposed development will undertake activities as listed in Government Notice No. Listing notice 1 R 544, Listing notice 2 R 545 and Listing notice 3 R 546 and summarised below:

The number of the relevant notice:	Activity No and relevant Notice:	Description of each listed activity:
No R 544	22 (ii): of Listing Notice 1 of 2010	The proposed development would involve construction of a road wider than 8m for the construction and maintenance of the proposed powerline.
No R 544	23 (ii): of Listing Notice 1 of 2010	Temporal transformation of land would be required by the construction team for placement of their construction camps in strategic positions along the proposed powerline.
No R 544	24: of Listing Notice 1 of	A precursory assessment on the proposed areas for the proposed development indicated that some of the areas where the powerline would be

The number of the relevant notice:	Activity No and relevant Notice:	Description of each listed activity:
	2010	constructed are zoned agriculture. Therefore, it will be important to change the zoning to accommodate the proposed development.
No R 544	38: of Listing Notice 1 of 2010	The proposed development would involve expansion of facilities for the transmission that amongst others include the substations.
No R 544	47: of Listing Notice 1 of 2010	The proposed development would involve widening of existing access roads to ensure the ease of construction and maintenance of the powerlines.
No R 545	8: of Listing Notice 2 of 2010	The proposed development involves the construction of approximately 175km, 765kV transmission powerline from Aries substation near Kenhardt to Helios substation near Loeriesfontein both in the Northern Cape Province.
No R 546	3 : of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	The proposed development would also involve the installation of a telecommunication mast that would be used for communication purposes.
No R 546	4 (a & d)(ii) : of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	The proposed development would require the construction of a road that would be used both in construction and operations of the proposed powerline.
No R 546	9 (a) (ii) : of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	The proposed construction of a 765kV powerline would inherently involve the use of above ground cableways for electricity transmission between the Aries substation and Helios substation.
No R 546	10 (a) (ii) : of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	Construction of storage facilities may be required by the construction team. These would be utilised for Diesel storage and possible spillages.
No R 546	14 (3) (a) (i): of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	Although most part of the area of the proposed development is dry and limited plants are expected, it is envisaged that the proposed development would involve clearance of an area of 5 hectares for the construction of the proposed power line, where 75% or more of the vegetation cover constitutes indigenous vegetation.
No R 546	16 (a & d) (ii): of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	The construction camp and other associated infrastructure might be situated within 32m of water
No R 546	19 (a & d) (ii): of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	The proposed development would involve widening of the existing access routes to facilitate the construction and operations of the proposed powerlines.
No R 546	23 (a & d) (ii): of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	Expansion of spillage collection dams at the substations which would be upgraded. The collected spillage might be situated within 32m of watercourses.
No R 546	24 (a & d) (ii):	Final position of construction camps and project related infrastructure might

The number of the relevant notice:	Activity No and relevant Notice:	Description of each listed activity:
	of Listing Notice 3 of 2010	require upgrade closer to a watercourse.

PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT PROCESS

An Environmental Impact Assessment process is being conducted for the proposed project to:

- Determine the need of the proposed development;
- Investigate possible alternatives for the proposed development and propose recommended alternatives to the Department of Environmental Affairs (DEA);
- Determine the feasibility of the proposed development;
- Determine environmental impacts that may be associated with the proposed development;
- Identify any mitigation measures to mitigate, treat or avoid the envisaged impacts to make the proposed development more environmentally viable;
- Determine if adequate services are available for the development;
- Identify any Interested & Affected Parties (I&APs) and provide them with adequate time and information to comment (provide concerns and / or suggestions) on the proposed development; and
- Provide the competent Authority (DEA) with sufficient information to make an informed decision.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

The following objectives are applicable:

- Informing I&APs of the proposed development;
- Providing I&APs with an understanding of the project and its consequences;
- Providing the I&APs an opportunity to comment on the proposed development;
- Providing a structure for communication of project information and any comments associated with the project; and
- Providing a channel to gather information relevant to the project.

The public participation process aims to promote the project in a socially acceptable manner. All parties must feel free to discuss any and all matters with the Public Participation contact.

OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE

Interested and Affected Parties (I&APs) are invited to provide **written comments** regarding this project. Please refer to the relevant NEAS Reference and DEA Reference number and provide your name, contact details (preferred method of

notification) and an indication of any direct business, financial, personal or other interest which you may have in the application to the contact person indicated below within 30 days from the date of this notice (22 April to 21 May 2013).

The Draft Scoping Report (DSR) is in the process of being compiled. Once completed, the DSR will be available for review in March / April 2013. Furthermore, final dates for public meetings are yet to be confirmed.

Should you wish to attend the upcoming meetings, please contact the person indicated below for further information. Please also complete the registration form in the next page and return to us.

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