**MASA-NGWEDI TRANSMISSION POWER LINES**

**SOCIAL SPECIALIST INPUT**

On the

**ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN**

For the

**CONSTRUCTION PHASE**

**DRAFT REPORT**

**SECTION C**

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

[1. INTRODUCTION 4](#_Toc378343677)

[2. Objectives 4](#_Toc378343678)

[3. approach and methodology 4](#_Toc378343679)

[4. Assumptions and limitations 5](#_Toc378343680)

[5. management of sensitive areas 5](#_Toc378343681)

[6. general management 5](#_Toc378343682)

[7. Conclusions 6](#_Toc378343683)

# INTRODUCTION

Eskom Holdings Limited (Eskom) is aiming to construct the Masa-Ngwedi transmission power lines, which include 1x765kV and 1x400kV transmission power line that are under scrutiny in this report. In preparation for the construction of these lines, the proposed tower positions and route alignment have to be assessed from a heritage, avifauna, visual, social, and biophysical perspective.

This report records the findings of the social assessment for the first 80-120km of the route, from Mecklenburg to Vlakpoort farm portions (approx. 35km): the start and end towers for the 765kV transmission power lines are towers 180 and 258 respectively; the start and end towers for the 400kV power line are towers 176 and 252 respectively.

# Objectives

The primary objectives of the social assessment are to ensure that potential social issues, that may delay the physical construction of the power lines, are identified and addressed. To answer these primary objectives, the secondary objectives are to:

* Identify sensitive areas from a social perspective;
* Determine the status quo of these sensitive areas;
* Determine the potential impact of these sensitive areas on the physical construction of the lines; and,
* Develop management strategies to ensure these potential impacts are mitigated.

# approach and methodology

The tower point positions and the proposed route of the Masa-Ngwedi transmission power lines were received from Eskom in Google Earth format (\*.kml). The social specialist then did a virtual walkthrough of the proposed route to identify sensitive areas from a social perspective. Satellite imagery from 2008 was used.

A field trip to get a better understanding of the complexities of the alignment from a social perspective was then conducted. The field trip did not include formal visits to any of the farm portions, but consisted of a vehicle trip following public roads in proximity to the route alignment.

The social specialist also assessed the documents provided by Eskom, including the Social Impact Assessment (SIA) conducted by said specialist in 2009. (A complete list of documents is provided in the main report). Based on the Social Impact Assessment of 2009, the criteria for an area to be considered sensitive from a social perspective were identified as follows:

* Human settlement within the servitude;
* Mining operations within the servitude;
* Agricultural areas (mostly cultivated and irrigated land) within the servitude; and
* Current or possible settlement encroachment on the servitude area.

Feedback from the relevant Eskom representative was sought to discuss the identified social sensitive areas to determine the status quo in terms of servitude negotiations on these points. Unfortunately, no feedback was received yet at the time of writing this report.

# Assumptions and limitations

* This study was carried out with the information available to the specialist at the time of executing the study, within the available period and budget. The sources consulted are not exhaustive, and additional information that might strengthen arguments or contradict information in this report might exist.
* It was assumed that the motivation for, and the feasibility studies for the project were done with integrity.
* This report should be considered in the context of the Social Impact Assessment Report that was compiled for the Delta-Epsilon project (2009). The mitigation measures for construction, as identified in the social impact assessment and the environmental management plan will be implemented during construction.
* The proposed mitigation measures contained in the social impact assessment and the social impacts addressed in the social management plan have been considered in the final route alignment, the placement of towers and the negotiations with farmers.
* It is not possible to, at this stage, propose alternative route alignments or tower positions, since these have been determined.
* The resettlement of people and compensation of structures and land have been negotiated with relevant project affected people.

# management of sensitive areas

No sensitive points from a social perspective were identified, i.e. no structures occur within the servitude.

# general management

General mitigation measures that should be considered along the first 40km length of the route are discussed in this section.

**Communication**

* Inform landowners timeously when construction will take place on their property, the duration of construction and what sort of construction activities to expect during this time.

**Animals**

* Landowners should be consulted regarding the measures needed to ensure safety of their animals during the construction period. These measures should be implemented as agreed.

**Roads**

* Access gates on private property must be used with consent from the landowner.
* Roads should be maintained.
* Speed limits should be adhered to.
* Roads should be rehabilitated after construction.
* Existing road infrastructure should be used as far as possible.
* Should it be necessary to construct new access roads to the servitude, the landowners will be consulted to determine the preferred site for the access road.

**Noise, Safety and Economic impacts**

* Landowners should be consulted and informed about construction times and activities, especially those with structured within 1 km of the servitude although they do not fall within the servitude:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Nearest 400kV Tower** | **GPS points of structures** |
| Tower 228, 1x400kVClose to mining activities (within 500m) | 24°43'21.14"S27°14'38.27"E |
| Towers 190-191, 1x400kVClose to centre pivot irrigation (within 150m) | 24°34'53.89"S27°15'4.37"E |
| **Nearest 765kV Tower** | **GPS points of structures** |
| Tower 249, 1x765kVClose to structures (within 300 m, approximately 4 clusters) | 24°47'41.24"S27°14'6.72"E |

# Conclusions

No sensitive points within the servitudes were identified, but sensitive structures within 1 km of the servitudes were identified. Landowners thus affected will require a more intensive consultation process during construction, compared to those without sensitive structures.