



MOSSEL BAY OCGT ADDITIONAL UNITS: EIA

NOTES FROM MEETING WITH ELC

<i>Date</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Venue</i>
12 October 2006	11:00	Mossel Bay public library

Context

The EIA team, i.e. practitioner and proponent, for the proposed additional units at the OCGT plant in Mossel Bay were allocated time for a presentation to the ELC during their monthly meeting. The team comprised:

- Brett Lawson, Environmental Practitioner, Ninham Shand
- Nico Gewers, Environmental Management, Eskom Generation
- Reggie Chippe, Client Representative, Eskom Generation

The presentation comprised the three components described below and Brett Lawson facilitated the related discussions. These notes are to be read in conjunction with the attendance list and minutes of the ELC meeting.

1. Needs and desirability (Nico Gewers)

Nico Gewers described the needs and desirability of the proposal, with reference to peaking capacity shortfalls, rapid growth in electricity demand nationally and the factors that were considered in pursuing additional units at Mossel Bay.

- Johan du Preez queried the desirability of heavy, dirty industry in the area and the resultant discussion touched on issues of common good versus individual concerns, the imperative of economic development and the need to rely on regulatory processes to exert control over such activities.
- Danie Swanepoel queried the rate of increased electricity demand and this was confirmed to have been based on 2,6% per annum when the reality was 4%.

2. Technical description (Reggie Chippe)

Reggie Chippe provided a technical description of the proposed project, which included an animated 3D presentation of an OCGT installation.

- Johan du Preez sought confirmation on the number and height of exhaust stacks (one per unit and 30m high) and whether amending the technology would be possible when more advanced technology became available. In answer to the issue of advancing technology, it was pointed out that the OCGT plant comprises the most modern technology available but that Eskom would keep track of such advances and their applicability for energy generation in South Africa.
- Joe van Wyk queried “combined” cycle as opposed to “open” cycle gas turbine technology and whether alternative fuels could be used. Reggie Chippe described the difference between the cycle types, i.e. that combined cycle reuses exhaust gas, and confirmed that PetroSA could not supply all the kerosene needed. However, the plant could also run on diesel. The implications of burning diesel would be addressed by the air quality specialist during the assessment phase of the EIA process.



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3. EIA process and assessment (Brett Lawson)

Brett Lawson described the envisaged process, under the new NEMA requirements and with specific reference to opportunities for public participation, and illustrated the specialist studies identified as being necessary during the assessment *per se*. The last-mentioned comprise air quality, noise impact, visual intrusion and ecological concerns. It was noted that the ecological health of the Blinde River drainage line was of concern as a result of recent episodic floods and that the specialist ecologist should include such implications in their study.

- Beryl Blaeser and Johan du Preez raised the issue of traffic impacts presently being felt on the access points to the N2 National Road. It was suggested that larger volumes are being experienced than predicted in the traffic study for the OCGT and that the matter be further investigated during the EIA for the additional units, i.e. a specialist traffic study will also need to be undertaken.
- Tonia Schonken and Beryl Blaeser expressed concern that the envisaged means of managing work seekers, skills transfer and commercial expectations was not functional. It was requested that a social scientist be appointed to undertake another specialist study in this regard, as part of the EIA for the additional units.
- Johan du Preez expressed scepticism about the envisaged EIA process, in terms of perceived national imperatives overriding equitable environmental decision-making.

Way forward

Brett Lawson indicated that the comment period for the draft Scoping Report ends on 6 November 2006. He described the assessment phase to follow, during which specialist studies would be undertaken and the necessary documentation compiled for release into the public domain. Reference was also made to the further opportunities for public participation. He thanked the ELC for the chance to share information with them and for their valuable inputs, and ended the presentation.

Notes taken by Brett Lawson
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