

# Environmental assessment & approvals

This fact sheet has been prepared to help explain the EES process, and the investigations which are being undertaken to inform our EES submission.

## What is an Environment Effects Statement?

An Environment Effects Statement (EES) is an assessment of the potential environmental impacts of a project, under the Victorian Environment Effects Act 1978. It is requested by the Minister for Planning and allows a government to make decisions about whether a project should proceed.

The EES is a detailed study into the potential impacts of the Terminal project. As part of the EES process, PoHC is undertaking extensive technical studies including field surveys and investigations to understand current land and water conditions as well as potential impacts to the nationally significant Western Port Ramsar wetlands, business and local community.

### Commonwealth approvals

The Project must obtain both State and Commonwealth approvals before construction can commence.

Given there are potential impacts on Commonwealth protected matters, such as the Ramsar Wetland, we have also been required undertake an environmental assessment under the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act).

This is being done under a bilateral agreement between the State and Federal governments, meaning the EES process also addresses the requirements of the EPBC Act.



You can learn more about our updated EPBC submission by scanning the QR code or visiting our website.



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# The EES process

## COMPLETED

### Referral and determining the need for an EES

PoHC has confirmation that an EES is required for the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal project.

## COMPLETED

### Scoping requirements

- A Technical Reference Group (TRG) was convened in late 2023, to provide advice to the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning and the proponent during the EES.
- The Scoping Requirements set out the proposed specific matters to be investigated and documented in the EES.
- The Final Scoping Requirements have been updated following two rounds of public comment (November - December 2024 and September 2025).

To access the Final Scoping Requirements, visit: [www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/referrals/victorian-renewable-energy-terminal](http://www.planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/referrals/victorian-renewable-energy-terminal)

## IN-PROGRESS

### EES preparation

The EES will outline:

- Project rationale and objectives
- Location and design of project
- Project alternatives
- Site characteristics and surroundings
- Impacts of the project on the environment
- Process and results of stakeholder engagement
- Methods to avoid or mitigate environmental effects
- Framework for managing project environmental effects and any risks
- Program and timelines for the project.

## UPCOMING

### Public exhibition

The EES will be exhibited for at least 30 business days, allowing for public review of the EES and the opportunity to provide public submissions.

## UPCOMING

### Inquiry recommendations to Minister

An inquiry will be appointed to consider submissions and inquire into the environment effects of the project. The Minister will set the terms of reference for the inquiry. The report is provided to the Minister for Planning.

## UPCOMING

### Minister's assessment

The Minister's assessment will determine whether the likely environmental effects of the project are acceptable.



If you have questions relating to the administration of the EES process for the project, you can contact the Department of Transport and Planning's Impact Assessment Unit (IAU) by emailing [environment.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au](mailto:environment.assessment@transport.vic.gov.au) or calling (03) 8572 7980.

## Outcomes of the EES process

The key outcome of the EES process is the Planning Minister's Assessment of the project under the Environment Effects Act 1978.

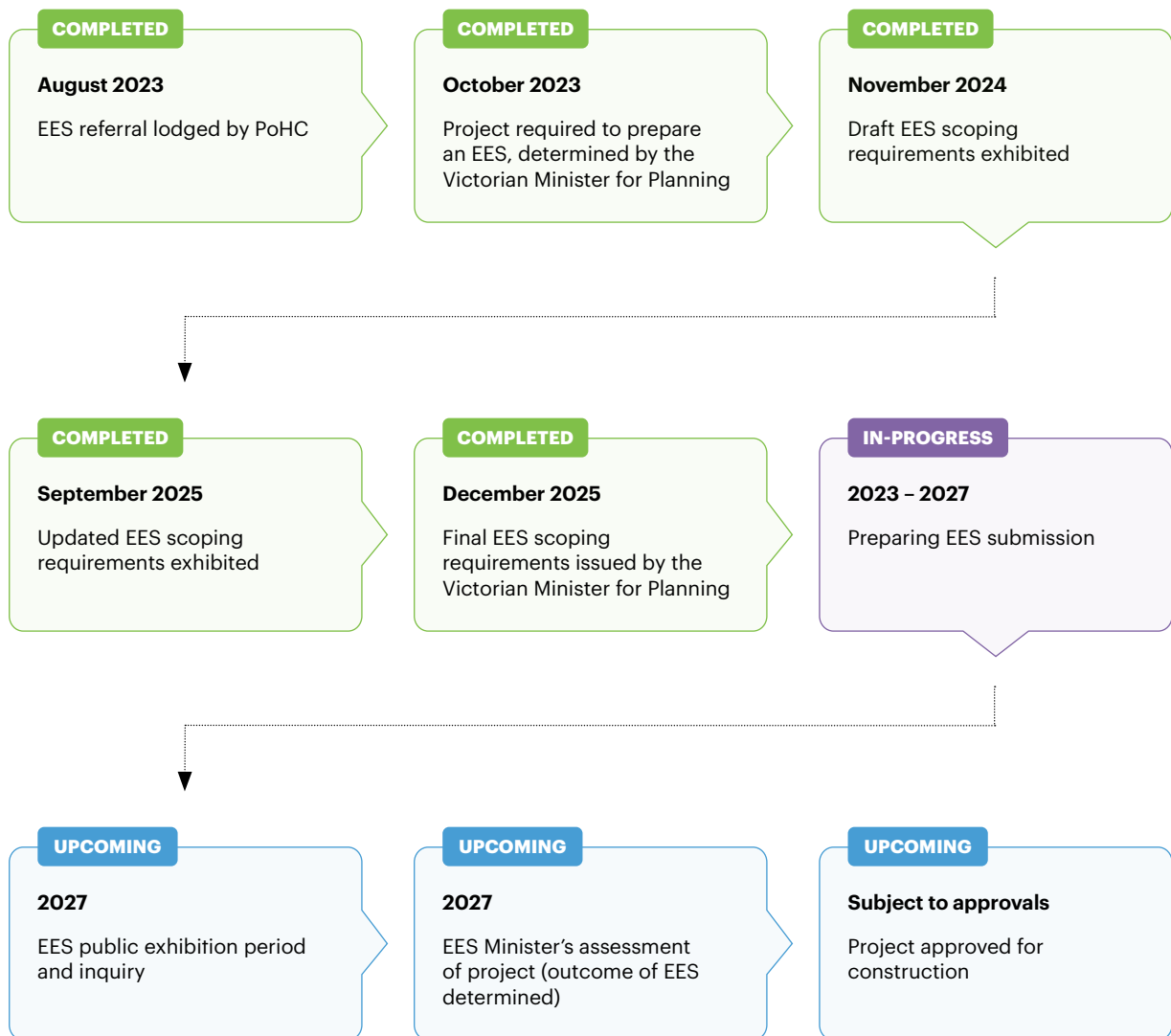
The Assessment:

- Evaluates the environmental effects of the project
- Determines whether those effects are acceptable
- Identifies environmental outcomes and requirements
- Sets expectations for mitigation, management and offsets.

Following the assessment of the EES, a range of comprehensive management plans will be developed for both the construction and operation phases of the Terminal to manage environment, construction, stakeholder engagement, safety and cultural considerations.

These documents will consolidate the findings of the EES process into clear action plans that set out mitigation measures, performance standards and targets as well as monitoring and reporting requirements to ensure appropriate safeguards are in place throughout the life of the project.

## Indicative environmental approvals timeline



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## Learn about our EES study areas

During the preparation of the EES, PoHC has been undertaking environmental investigations to understand potential impacts from the project and identify how impacts can be avoided, minimised or managed.

We have grouped our technical studies into five categories:



Image: Artist's impression of the proposed Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal.



### Flora and Fauna

#### Technical Studies:

- Onshore Ecology
- Marine Ecology (including Offshore Noise and Vibration)
- Waterbirds

These studies explore the potential impacts to the flora (plants, trees, and seagrasses) and fauna (birds, mammals, skinks, fish, and marine invertebrates) in and around the project area.

Western Port is home to many plant and animal species, including threatened and migratory species. As these species can be affected by new infrastructure projects, we are required under the Environment Effects Act and Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act to assess our potential impacts.



Scan to find out more about our **Flora and Fauna** studies in our fact sheet.



### Environment and Water

#### Technical Studies:

- Coastal Processes
- Surface Water
- Groundwater
- Contaminated Land, Soils and Waste
- Climate Change (including Greenhouse Gas)

These studies explore the potential impacts of the project on coastal processes such as tides, currents, and erosion, surface water and groundwater conditions, as well as soil and sediment quality and any contamination risks.

Western Port is an environmentally unique and sensitive area, and it is important that we fully understand ground and marine conditions and potential impacts so that we can ensure the proper mitigation measures are put in place.



Scan to find out more about our **Environment and Water** studies in our fact sheet.



## People and Places

### Technical Studies:

- Social and Business
- Land Use Planning
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage
- Historic Heritage

These four studies explore potential impacts to local communities (commercial, recreational, residential), Historic and Aboriginal Cultural Heritage, and Land Use Planning.

Major projects, such as the Victorian Renewable Energy Terminal, can have an influence on the way we live, work and play in the local community. We need to assess how construction and operational activities affect areas like recreation, business, residences, and economic growth in the region.



Scan to find out more about our **People and Places** studies in our fact sheet.



## Liveability and Amenity

### Technical Studies:

- Onshore Noise and Vibration
- Landscape and Visual
- Air Quality
- Lighting (considered in other reports)

These four studies explore the potential impacts of noise, vibration, visual amenity, and air quality as a result of the project.

Constructing new infrastructure can cause noise, visual and other impacts, so we need to assess how these will affect the area surrounding the Project both during construction and ongoing.



Scan to find out more about our **Liveability and Amenity** studies in our fact sheet.



## Traffic, Transport and Aviation

### Technical Studies:

- Traffic and Transport
- Aviation

These studies explore the impacts of additional traffic volumes on local road networks, as well as the potential impacts of the project on local aviation.

Trucks will be needed to bring materials to site, and construction worker vehicles will need to access site via local roads. It's important to assess any potential impacts this could have on the local road network, and ensure roads are safe and traffic is managed appropriately during this time.

From an aviation perspective, offshore wind towers will be up to 200m tall when assembled at the Terminal.



Scan to find out more about our **Traffic, Transport & Aviation** studies in our fact sheet.

## Technical Reference Group (TRG)

The Department of Transport and Planning has convened an inter-agency Technical Reference Group at the request of the Minister for Planning to advise the department and the Port of Hastings Corporation on scoping and adequacy of the EES studies and documentation, as well as coordination of the EES process with other statutory processes for the project.

The TRG's membership is drawn from government agencies, regional authorities, municipal councils and Registered Aboriginal Parties (RAPs) that have a statutory, policy or technical interest in relation to the project.

### The organisations represented on the TRG are:

- Department of Transport and Planning (Impact Assessment Unit)
- Department of Transport and Planning (Freight Victoria)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Marine Knowledge Unit)
- Melbourne Water
- Offshore Wind Energy Victoria
- Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation
- Mornington Peninsula Shire Council
- Safe Transport Victoria
- Department of Transport and Planning (State Projects Facilitation)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Land and Environment Policy)
- Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (Port Phillip Region)
- Environment Protection Authority Victoria
- First Peoples - State Relations
- Heritage Victoria
- Ports Victoria
- Victorian Fisheries Authority

## Upcoming Exhibition of the EES (2027)

The project EES will be available for public review and comment for at least 30 business days.

The EES will include supporting technical documentation, including a detailed consultation report outlining how the project engaged with stakeholders and the community, and considered feedback as part of preparing the EES.

During this time, there will be an opportunity to review the full suite of technical studies and EES reports and make a submission to the Planning Minister in response to the project.

Details about the exhibition, how to access documents and how to make a submission will be published closer to the time. At this stage, EES public exhibition is expected to occur in 2027.

### Stay informed and up to date about the EES exhibition process

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**Project website**  
[renewableenergyterminal.com.au](https://renewableenergyterminal.com.au)

**Phone**  
03 5979 5500

**Email**  
[engage@portofhastings.vic.gov.au](mailto:engage@portofhastings.vic.gov.au)

