

COPPERSTRING

Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement

Part A | Introduction

September 2011



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Introduction 01

01 Overview

The CopperString Project (the Project) involves the development of a high voltage electricity transmission line to connect electricity users in the North West Minerals Province (NWMP) and the Mount Isa region to the National Electricity Market (NEM) at Woodstock, near Townsville. The NEM is the name of the Australian wholesale electricity market and the associated synchronous and asynchronous components of the electricity transmission grid.

The Project will increase the supply and significantly improve the reliability and cost competitiveness of electricity for the general public as well as the major energy users in North West Queensland (NWQ). The Project will also provide opportunities for future renewable energy generators located in the corridor between Townsville and Mount Isa to supply electricity to both the NWQ region as well as the NEM.

The timeline for the delivery of the Project is driven by the identified need for a long-term solution to the electricity supply for the NWMP. The Project is planned to be fully commissioned by Q4 2014.

On 18 June 2010, the Coordinator-General declared the Project to be a 'significant project for which an environmental impact statement is required' under section 26(1)(a) of the *State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971* (SDPWO Act). This declaration initiates the statutory environmental impact assessment process of Part 4 of the SDPWO Act, which requires CopperString to prepare an environmental impact statement (EIS) for the Project.

On 19 August 2010, the Commonwealth Minister for Environment Protection, Water, Heritage and the Arts determined that the Project is a 'controlled action' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) due to the potential impact on matters of national environmental significance (MNES). The controlling provisions under the EPBC Act are:

- Sections 18 and 18(a) (listed threatened species and communities).

As a consequence, the Project requires assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. The Australian Government has accredited the EIS process, to be conducted under the SDPWO Act, under a bilateral agreement between the Australian and Queensland Governments. This will enable the EIS to meet the impact assessment requirements under both Commonwealth and Queensland legislation. The Project will require approval from the responsible Australian Government Minister under Part 9 of the EPBC Act before it can proceed.

On 29 October 2010, the terms of reference (TOR) for the Project were finalised by the Coordinator-General. CopperString then prepared an EIS in accordance with the TOR, which was released for public comment from 13 December 2010 to 7 February 2011. Fourteen submissions were received by the Coordinator-General during the submission period.

The Coordinator-General has reviewed the submissions received on the EIS and requested on 12 May 2011 that CopperString prepare this supplementary report to address the issues raised in the EIS submissions.

1.1 Purpose of the supplementary EIS

The supplementary EIS (SEIS) for the Project has been prepared to take into account issues raised in the submissions received by the Coordinator-General following the public notification period of the EIS.

The SEIS also provides an opportunity to detail developments in the Project's design. These modifications and developments generally relate to the progression of the detailed design of the Project that allows CopperString to present more specific information on the Project's components.

Any legislative amendments, errors and changes to the EIS as a result of ongoing stakeholder consultation that were not raised in the submissions to the EIS are also detailed in the SEIS.

The Coordinator-General will consider the EIS and SEIS, as well as any other information considered appropriate, when preparing the Coordinator-General's Report. As the SEIS has been developed to respond to specific issues raised in the submissions to the EIS, it is important that both documents are read in conjunction, in order to fully understand the responses presented in the SEIS. The SEIS does not seek to duplicate information that has previously been presented in the EIS.

1.2 Consultation undertaken for the EIS

The EIS for the Project was placed on public exhibition for a 10-week period between 13 December 2010 and 7 February 2011. This period was extended for a further two weeks to accommodate public and agency submitters that were adversely affected from flooding and cyclones that occurred during the submission period.

During this time and since, the EIS has been available electronically through both the CopperString and Office of the Coordinator-General's websites and a number of hard copy viewing locations in the region, Brisbane and Canberra. Hard copies of the EIS were made available during the submission period at:

- Townsville City Council Customer Service Centres at Thuringowa and Townsville;
- Whitsunday Regional Council Customer Service Centre;
- Burdekin Shire Council Customer Service Centre;
- Charters Towers City Hall;
- Flinders Shire Council Chambers;
- Richmond Shire Council Chambers;
- McKinlay Shire Council Chambers;
- Cloncurry Shire Council Chambers;
- Mount Isa City Council Customer Service Centre;
- State Library of Queensland in Brisbane; and
- National Library of Australia in Canberra.

A public notice was placed in local, State and National newspaper publications prior to the release of the EIS. The notice gave information on how to access the EIS and details of the public locations where copies of the EIS were available. It also provided information on how to make a submission to the EIS. Further, CopperString notified the release of the EIS to all impacted landholders, as well as other interested stakeholders, and produced a factsheet on how to prepare a submission to the Coordinator-General.

CopperString produced DVD copies of the EIS free of charge and participated in agency briefings, held in Mount Isa, Townsville and Brisbane during the submission period. A summary of all community consultation activities during the period of the EIS review and since the release of the EIS (October 2010) is provided in **Appendix 1**.

02 Submissions on the EIS

Fourteen formal submissions were received on the EIS, eight from advisory agencies, four from members of the public and impacted landholders and two from private organisations. The identities of the individual submitters have not been disclosed in this document to protect their privacy.

A summary of the submissions is provided below in **Table 2.1**. These submissions have been provided to the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPaC) by the Office of the Coordinator-General.

Table 2.1: Submission summary

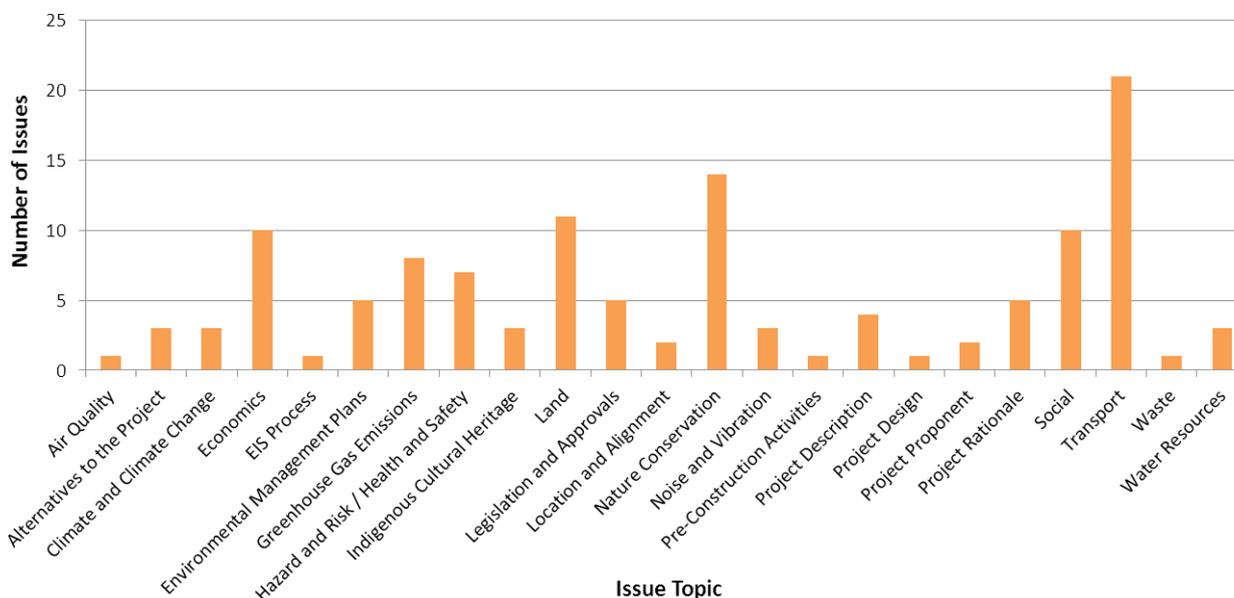
Submission Number	Submitter	Submission Date
1	Individual Submission A	02/02/2011
2	Mount Isa City Council	07/02/2011
3	APA Group	07/02/2011
4	McKinlay Shire Council	07/02/2011
5	Guildford Coal Ltd	07/02/2011
6	Department of Communities	08/02/2011
7	Department of Community Safety	08/02/2011
8	Department of Transport and Main Roads	09/02/2011
9	Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation	11/02/2011
10	Queensland Health	11/02/2011
11	Individual Submission B	15/02/2011
12	Individual Submission C	22/02/2011
13	Department of Environment and Resource Management	21/03/2011
14	Individual Submission D	03/03/2011

2.1 Submission Analysis

Upon receipt of a submission, the Office of the Coordinator-General recorded the submission in a database and reviewed the submission to identify each issue contained within the submission. Issues are a collective term referring to comments, questions and suggestions contained within a submission. Each issue recorded was allocated an individual identification number.

Of the 14 submissions received the Office of the Coordinator-General identified 124 individual issues. A summary of the matters raised in the submissions is visually represented below in **Figure 2.1**.

Figure 2.1: Summary of EIS submission issues



A detailed breakdown of each submission is provided in **Appendix 2**, which presents a comprehensive list of the issues raised and a cross-reference to where the issue is addressed in the SEIS. Some submissions to the SEIS provided comment for the benefit of CopperString without requesting additional information or a response. Where this is applicable it has been identified in **Appendix 2**.

The submissions did not focus on a single area of the EIS and provided a wide-ranging selection of matters for CopperString to address in the SEIS. Submissions received from individuals reflected the perspective of landholders and generally sought further information on property management and the impact to existing land uses, whereas the submissions from regulatory agencies reflected the primary interest of the individual agency.

From evaluation of the submissions, the Coordinator-General SEW PaC and CopperString have interpreted the key issues to be:

- Conducting further targeted flora and fauna field surveys to inform the impact assessment to State and Commonwealth listed species. Providing greater information on the impact assessment and proposed mitigation measures to limit impact to listed species and ecologically sensitive areas;
- Providing more detailed information on the road transport movements associated with the Project’s construction consistent with the relevant Department of Transport and Main Roads road impact methodologies and guidelines to inform the development of the Transport Management Plan;
- Presenting more suitable information for impacted landholders to make a reasonable assessment of the potential for the Project to impact on existing property management practices and business operations of landholders;
- Providing further information on the location and requirements of the workforce accommodation in order to assess the impacts to regional communities and community infrastructure, as well as conducting further assessment to ensure the health and safety of the public and workforce during construction;
- Conducting a flood modelling assessment of critical and permanent infrastructure to confirm if an appropriate level of flood immunity is achieved at these sites; and
- Identifying and summarising the consultation and consideration CopperString has given to underlying mining and petroleum tenure holders. Structure of the SEIS

03 Structure of the SEIS

The SEIS has been structured in four Parts, these being:

- Part A – Introduction;
- Part B – Modification of the Project description and detailed design;
- Part C – Response to submissions; and
- Part D – Appendices.

Part B of the SEIS provides an overview of the Project's refinements since the release of the EIS. This Project description generally presents additional detailed design and minor modifications of the Project as major changes to the Project's design have not been proposed. It includes greater detail on alignment changes, substation design requirements, construction workforce accommodation, access tracks, controlled environment vault (CEV) huts (optical fibre ground wire repeater stations) and the operations and maintenance phase that were not detailed in the EIS.

Part C of the SEIS presents responses to the submissions received on the EIS. The responses in Part C have been prepared in a manner that reflects the report structure of the EIS, allowing a simple means of accessing and comparing EIS and SEIS information on the same issues. Where appropriate some of the specific issues raised have been grouped into broader topics so that related issues can be addressed in a coordinated manner. Submissions and issues are summarised in **Appendix 2** with cross-references to where the response is addressed in the SEIS.

As required by SEWPaC, Part C: Section 19 of the SEIS, which refers to MNES has been presented as a stand-alone assessment report.

Where further detailed information and additional studies were required, CopperString has presented this information as appendices in Part D of the SEIS. Some additional studies and finalisation of management measures are ongoing as part of the Project's development and where appropriate CopperString has made further commitments to complete the required work prior to construction (in consultation with regulatory agencies).

A consolidated list of commitments from the EIS and SEIS has been provided in **Appendix 14**.

