

Overview

Marinus Link Pty Ltd (the proponent) has prepared a combined Victorian Environment Effects Statement (EES) and draft Commonwealth Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Marinus Link project (the project).

The combined EIS/EES and a draft Planning Scheme Amendment (PSA) to facilitate the project are now available for public comment for a period of 30 business days.

This notice and invitation to make submissions is provided pursuant to the *Environment Effects Act 1978* (Vic) (EE Act) and under section 103(1)(c) of the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) (EPBC Act).

Written submissions can be made via the process set out below between **Friday 31 May and 11:59pm on Friday 12 July 2024**.

Project description

Marinus Link is a proposed undersea and underground electricity and telecommunications interconnector between North West Tasmania and the Latrobe Valley in Victoria.

The project comprises high voltage electricity cables, fibre optic cables, and converter stations in both Tasmania and Victoria. The converter stations will connect directly into the transmission networks in both Tasmania and Victoria.

The cables will total about 345 kilometres long, including 255 kilometres of undersea cables across Bass Strait and 90 kilometres of underground cables between Waratah Bay and Hazelwood in Victoria.

The project will be delivered in two stages. Initially as a 750 megawatt (MW) project (Stage 1) with a second 750 MW link to follow at a later date (Stage 2).

Marinus Link's 1500 MW capacity is equal to the power supply for 1.5 million Australian homes.

EIS/EES process

EE Act process

The Victorian Minister for Planning determined in December 2021 that the project requires assessment through an EES under the EE Act (Referral 2021-R04). In February 2023 the Minister for Planning issued final scoping requirements setting out the matters to be investigated and documented in the EES.

The key approvals required under Victorian legislation include the PSA to amend the Latrobe and South Gippsland Planning Schemes to apply a Specific Controls Overlay to areas where the project is proposed within Victoria (on land), consent under the *Marine and Coastal Act 2018* for use of marine and coastal Crown land in Victoria and approved cultural heritage management plans under the *Aboriginal Heritage Act 2006*.

EPBC Act process

A delegate of the former Commonwealth Minister for Environment determined in November 2021 that the project (EPBC 2021/9053) required assessment under the EPBC Act due to the potential for significant impacts to: Listed threatened species and communities (section 18 & section 18A); Listed migratory species (section 20 & section 20A);

and the environment of the Commonwealth marine area, or the environment as the proposal would take place in a Commonwealth marine area (section 23 & section 24A).

As the project includes action within both Victorian and Commonwealth jurisdictions, the EES process cannot be applied to assess matters of national environmental significance under the EPBC Act. As such, a delegate of the former Commonwealth Minister for Environment determined that the project would be assessed through an EIS. The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) developed EIS Guidelines for the preparation of a draft EIS which included guidance on the extent of studies and investigations required to adequately assess the impacts of the project.

Combined EIS/EES and next steps

Preparation of the combined Victorian EES under the EE Act and draft Commonwealth EIS under the EPBC Act has been undertaken through a coordinated process, resulting in the combined draft EIS/EES now on exhibition. This documentation addresses the assessment requirements of Victorian and Commonwealth legislation and now invites public comments for the purposes of the EE Act (in respect of the EES) and the EPBC Act (in respect of the draft EIS).

Separate EISs for the Heybridge Converter Station and Heybridge Shore Crossing in Tasmania are being prepared to address requirements under Tasmanian legislation. Public comment will be sought on the assessment of these components through the statutory process in Tasmania.

The Victorian Minister for Planning will provide an assessment of the environmental effects of the project in Victoria following public exhibition of the EIS/EES and a subsequent inquiry. The Victorian Minister's assessment will then inform Victorian statutory decision-makers for the project approvals required under Victorian legislation.

Procedures and requirements for the EES and Victorian process are available on the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning website at: planning.vic.gov.au/environmental-assessments/browse-projects/marinus-link.

Under the separate process under the EPBC Act, following receipt of public submissions the proponent will finalise the EIS and provide the Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water with the EIS, submissions received on the draft EIS, and Marinus Link's response to those comments. The Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water will decide whether the project is approved, approved with conditions, or refused under the EPBC Act.

Public notices under the EPBC Act will be available on the EPBC Portal (project reference 2021/9053) at epbcpublicportal.awe.gov.au/all-referrals/.

How to make a submission

Anyone can make a submission on the Victorian and Commonwealth aspects of the combined EIS/EES and the draft PSA.

Submissions must be made in writing and received by **11:59pm on Friday 12 July 2024**.

Submissions can be lodged via the Victorian Government's Engage Victoria website:

engage.vic.gov.au/MarinusLink-IAC.

Submissions do not need to identify whether they are directed to the Victorian or Commonwealth process, or both.

If you do not have internet access and are unable to lodge a submission online, contact Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) through the Customer Call Centre on 136 186 (select Option 6) and request a hard copy submission coversheet.

Submissions will be treated as public documents. Unless you tell PPV otherwise, your name and a copy of your submission or any other material you provide will be published on the Engage Victoria website (all other personal information such as address and phone number will be removed first).

A Privacy Collection Statement is available on the Engage Victoria website at engage.vic.gov.au/MarinusLink-IAC. The Privacy Collection Statement sets out in plain terms how your submission and personal information will be used, distributed and published.

The submission collection process is independently managed by PPV and any enquiries regarding privacy and making a submission should be directed to PPV through the contact details provided at the end of this notice.

How to access the EIS/EES and exhibited documents

The EIS/EES documents and the draft PSA are now available to read and download, free of charge, at marinuslink.com.au/assessment.

The full EIS/EES and the draft PSA will be made available in hard copy at the following locations during the exhibition period:

- ◇ **Burnie Future Energy Hub** - 1 to 3 Spring Street, Burnie TAS 7320
- ◇ **Marinus Link Traralgon Office** - 28-30 Kay Street, Traralgon VIC 3844
- ◇ **State Library of Victoria** - 328 Swanston Street, Melbourne VIC 3000

Selected information of the EIS/EES and the draft PSA will be made available in hard copy at the following locations during the exhibition period:

- ◇ **Churchill Community Centre** - 9/11 Phillip Parade, Churchill 3842
- ◇ **Latrobe City Council Offices** - 141 Commercial Road, Morwell 3840
- ◇ **Mirboo North Library** - 34 Ridgway, Mirboo North 3871
- ◇ **Sandy Point Community Centre** - Church Parade, Sandy Point 3959
- ◇ **South Gippsland Shire Offices** - 9 Smith Street, Leongatha 3953
- ◇ **Traralgon Library** - 32 Kay Street, Traralgon 3844

For those who may have accessibility issues, or where electronic options are impracticable, hard copies of some documents, or other assistance, may be requested by phoning Marinus Link on 1300 765 275 or emailing team@marinuslink.com.au.

Please note, the EIS/EES is a large document, and we encourage the use of electronic versions.

Inquiry and Advisory Committee process (Victoria)

The Victorian Minister for Planning will appoint an independent Inquiry and Advisory

Committee (IAC) to consider the EIS/EES, public submissions and to conduct a public hearing regarding the EES and draft PSA commencing in the week beginning **Monday 16 September 2024**. The Hearing is expected to run for up to nine weeks.

The IAC will hold a Directions Hearing on **Tuesday 6 August 2024** to consider the arrangements and timetable for the public hearing.

If you want to present to the IAC regarding Victorian matters you will need to make a written submission, and mark on the online submission form that you would like to be heard.

The IAC will review all submissions made on the exhibited EES and draft PSA documentation. It will provide a report at the conclusion of its hearing to the Minister for Planning on the effects of the project on the Victorian environment.

The IAC will be guided by Terms of Reference issued by the Minister for Planning.

The IAC will not be examining impacts to the Tasmanian environment, Commonwealth marine areas, or Matters of National Environmental Significance (whether located in Victoria or elsewhere). That said, there are likely to be interactions, overlaps or combined effects of works in Victoria and works outside of Victoria on the Victorian environment.

Information on the hearing process and timetable will be published as it becomes available at <https://engage.vic.gov.au/MarinusLink-IAC>.

Questions

If you have any questions regarding the Marinus Link EIS/EES, the EIS process, the EES process or how to make a submission, please contact:

Questions about the project and about the EIS/EES documentation and draft PSA Marinus Link

Marinus Link Pty Ltd

2/30 Kay Street, Traralgon, VIC 3844
Phone: 1300 765 275
Email: team@marinuslink.com.au

Questions about the EES Process under the Environment Effects Act

Department Transport and Planning

Impact Assessment Unit
Phone: (03) 8622 7633
Email: environment.assessment@delwp.vic.gov.au

For questions about privacy and making a submission or the Victorian Inquiry and Advisory Committee process

Planning Panels Victoria

Phone: 136 186 (select option 6)
Email: Marinus.IAC@delwp.vic.gov.au

For questions relating to the EIS under the EPBC Act

Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water

Victoria and Tasmania Assessments Sections
Phone: 1800 920 528
Email: EPBC.VicTas@dceew.gov.au