

Community Advisory Group – Meeting #2



Date:	Thursday 3 December 2020	Time:	4-6pm
Place:	Ship Inn Yarram / Zoom	Meeting number:	Two
Chair:	Ian Gibson	Minutes:	Martina Gassner

Attendees:

Members - Rick Rutjens, Darren McCubbin, Jane Oakley, Tony Wolfe, Jessica Young, Peter Mooney, Wendy Farmer, Travis Dillow, Deb Lucas, Jenny Smith, Matt Langdon, Caleb Barlow, Susan McMillan, Julianne Peavey, Glenn Stagg, Dane Heinrich, Jack Winterbottom, Jonathan Pintus, Mary-Lou Dixon, Allan Rogers, Cr Marcus McKenzie

Star of the South - Erin Coldham, Naomi Campbell, Martina Gassner, Sarah Altmann

Apologies: Harry Mitchelson, Shannan Little

Minutes

#	Key discussion points and notes
1	<p>Acknowledgement of Country and welcome</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction of new member Cr Marcus McKenzie, representing Wellington Shire Council. • Endorsement of minutes for CAG meeting #1. • No potential conflicts of interest declared.
2	<p>Recap actions and questions from previous meeting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach to managing potential conflicts of interest has been documented. No feedback from the group. The proposed approach will be adopted. • Response to previous query regarding Indigenous representation on the group. Dr Rohan Henry is the project's Indigenous Engagement Adviser and works with Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation (GLaWAC) and Bunurong Land Council Aboriginal Corporation (BLCAC). GLaWAC is also represented on the State Government's Technical Reference Group (TRG) for the project. • Response to previous query regarding payment of the chairperson. It was confirmed that the Chairperson receives an allowance to prepare for and chair meetings as well as respond to member queries as they arise. • Group communication tool established on the project 'Get Involved' website - https://getinvolved.starofthesouth.com.au/cagmember - only members can access this page. Anyone with queries or having trouble accessing to contact project team. Chair encouraged members to use it to share information, ask questions and stay in touch between meetings.
3	<p>Terms of Reference</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct were endorsed by the group. • Endorsed Terms of Reference to be uploaded to project website – publicly accessible.
4	<p>What's happening on the project</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project office at 310 Commercial Road, Yarram, is re-opening to the public from 7 December and will be open Mondays and Thursdays 10am-4pm. The office will be closed over the holiday period from 22 December, re-opening on 11 January. • A new project website has been created to make it easier to find information about the project www.starofthesouth.com.au – feedback from the group was invited. • Site investigations are continuing at sea and on land: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing wind, wave and environmental monitoring ○ Naomi provided an update on the most recent Marine Ecology Survey Program activities including collecting bird data, marine mammal visual aerial surveys, underwater acoustic monitoring for sharks and marine mammals, fish surveys and a

benthic survey completed in early December. Updates about latest site investigations including Notice to Mariners are provided on the project website:

<https://www.starofthesouth.com.au/project-investigations>

- Some images, videos and key findings from site investigations are shared in e-news updates and on the project's Facebook page.
- When will findings be public? Once investigations are complete and all data collected, results will be used to inform detailed environmental reports which will be made public in an Environment Impact Statement (EIS) / Environment Effects Statement (EES). This is expected around 2022.
- How has the offshore wind industry evolved internationally with respect to impacts on the environment? Main impacts are well understood and tried and tested mitigation measures can be applied where needed. Studies on birds, marine mammals and fish post-construction largely indicate co-existence of offshore wind farms and marine life. Star of the South will apply experience from overseas, study the local environment and obtain advice from local experts.
- An information and safety notice has been prepared for mariners. It provides an overview of offshore monitoring equipment and is available online: <https://www.starofthesouth.com.au/s/Safety-info-offshore-monitoring-equipment.pdf>
- The first TRG meeting for the project will be held on 9 December. This group is convened by the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning (DELWP) to provide advice to the project team during preparation of the EIS/EES.
- An ICN (Industry Capability Network) Gateway has been established for the project. This provides a way for Australian businesses to register their interest in the project and tell the project team about their products or services. Over 300 businesses have registered so far. The project team will use this information when looking to procure goods and services and to provide to contractors.
- The Victorian budget included commitments to support the development of clean energy innovations such as offshore wind and to create a Renewable Energy Zone in Gippsland.

Focus on: Transmission

5

- Erin Coldham provided an overview of the project transmission system, corridors being considered and how work to investigate and select a route is progressing – refer to presentation supplied.
- The project's transmission system would include onshore and offshore cables and substations.
- An initial study was completed in 2019 to identify possible route options.
- A commitment to use underground cables where technically feasible narrowed possible options down to three.
- The three corridors being considered are 3-5 km wide, however the final easement would only be up to 30 metres wide.
- The area between the coast and the Latrobe Valley is highly constrained by natural and man-made features.
- Each corridor has pros and cons. Studies for each corridor are being completed, but at a high level the main key pros and cons for each are:
 - Corridor A – Shortest, most direct route but highly vegetated and likely to require more vegetation removal.
 - Corridor B – Longest onshore route with most private landholders affected, but as it goes through mostly cleared agricultural land there would be less impact to vegetation.
 - Corridor C – It may be possible to reduce impacts by co-locating with Basslink but there are a number of technical challenges associated with this option, and it has the longest offshore route.
- Each corridor option is being assessed through a Multi Criteria Analysis (MCA), with consideration of affected landholders, community values, environment, technical, land use, cost, heritage, safety, and constructability.
- Studies and consultation have been undertaken across the year to collect inputs to the MCA.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consultation with landholders on all three potential routes was undertaken in March 2020. Feedback will be considered in the MCA. The project always talks to directly affected landholders about anything concerning their property first. If CAG members hear that a decision has been made but the project team hasn't updated you yet, it's because it's important to have that conversation with landholders first. • Consultation with the community was undertaken in April-May 2020. Feedback is reported in a consultation summary: https://www.starofthesouth.com.au/s/Consultation-Summary-March-May-2020B.pdf • Next steps are to finalise studies and complete the MCA, decide which route to progress with and communicate with landholders and the community. Once a decision is made, we'll start detailed discussions with landholders about an option agreement and compensation, and undertake further detailed environmental and engineering work.
6	<p>Questions and discussion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comment that underground cables can help reduce weather and bushfire risks. • Question about scalability built into transmission system – Star of the South is a big project and requires a lot of capacity but is also talking with other projects and government about opportunities to share and/or future proof infrastructure. • Question about transmission in Alternating Current (AC) or Direct Current (DC) and voltage – the project will transmit electricity in AC, currently planning for 275kV. • Question about the Gippsland Renewable Energy Zone – there are six zones defined for Victoria. Star of the South will work closely with Government to understand what this means in Gippsland. • Question about whether it would be a cleared easement – the land would be cleared for construction and re-instated to its former use. Maintenance pits (joint bays) must remain clear during operation. There are some restrictions on activities above the cables – see landholder easement information here: https://www.starofthesouth.com.au/s/Landholder-information-pack.pdf • Question if there would be four groups of three cables – this is the configuration currently being considered – see diagram in Landholder Information Pack (via link above) – but is subject to change. • Question if there would be any above ground lines – if it is not technically feasible to put them below ground or if it is found to reduce impacts, and potentially near the grid connection point. • Question about timing of a decision – it's not a straightforward decision and there are many considerations. The project team has only recently completed flora and fauna studies and needed to analyse findings and feed into the MCA. The project team will keep the group informed. • Question about a community benefit fund – the project team is keen to get involved in the community but no formal community benefit fund is currently in place. This is something to be considered if the project is found to be feasible and proceeds. • Question about timing for construction – mid-2020s if our studies go well and all approvals are obtained. • Question about exclusion zones for fishing and who makes this decision – there are typically some exclusion areas during construction for safety reasons. Most types of fishing, including recreational fishing, can occur inside an operational wind farm. The Australian Government is the ultimate decision maker as the proposed wind farm is located in Commonwealth waters. They have been clear in guidance to date that their first principle is to co-exist, so the project team is looking at how fishers, offshore wind and other marine users can safely share the waters. • What type of oil is used in turbines – taken on notice. • Are direct drive turbines being considered – taken on notice.
7	<p>Other items</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suggestions for future agenda items – fishing and offshore wind, marine studies, planning and approvals process, bird studies.

- Chair suggested late January for next meeting followed by another in late February/early March – public holiday in January raised as potential issue. Chair and project team will consider timing, members to advise any preferences or unavailability.
- Chair suggested next two meetings focus on planning and approvals process and marine/bird studies.
- Feedback sought on meeting – Chair acknowledged difficulties of hybrid meetings and that this is a necessary approach. Some suggestions provided regarding teleconferencing system/equipment that may be useful for future meetings (iPad to pass around room, video capturing whole room, microphone feed direct to laptop).

Actions

#	Description	Owner
1	Raise any difficulties accessing CAG Members webpage and chat with Sarah	Members
2	Follow up with response to questions taken on notice	Sarah
3	Members to suggest agenda topics and advise of any preferences for future meetings	Members

Next meeting

Date:	Thursday 11 February
Time:	4pm-6pm
Place:	Latrobe Valley (location TBC) + Zoom (link to be supplied)
Minutes prepared by:	Martina Gassner
Minutes approved by:	Ian Gibson