

Environment Agency– Abu Dhabi



Update of Environmental Permitting Procedures and Guidelines

Guidance on Preconstruction Studies

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Overview

- Technical Guidance Documents have been updated for the following 'pre-construction' environmental studies:
 - Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)
 - Terms of Reference (TOR)
 - Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)
 - Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

- The new Technical Guidance Documents outline the requirements for developing environmental studies for review and evaluation by EAD

- The following presentation will provide an overview of each of the four pre-construction study types and the information presented in the Technical Guidance Documents

Why are these Environmental Studies required?

- As the competent authority for implementation of Federal Law No.24 within the Abu Dhabi Emirate, EAD may require a proponent to submit a pre-construction environmental study:
 - As a mechanism for predicting and evaluating potential environmental impacts resulting from a project
 - For proposing suitable mitigation measures and monitoring controls.

Who prepares the Environmental Studies?

- Environmental Studies should be prepared by an EAD-approved consultant engaged by the proponent
- The consultant must include in the report all of the details and requirements stipulated by EAD as per the new Technical Guidance Documents

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

What is a PER?

- The PER is a document that:
 - Describes the current environmental conditions of the project site
 - Provides details of the proposed project
 - Assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the project
 - Recommends mitigation measures and monitoring programs

- The PER report differs from the EIA. The EIA is a more detailed document, generally required for large scale projects with potential for significant environmental impact

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

When is a PER required?

- As a general guideline, a PER is usually required:
 - For industrial facilities located in areas zoned for industrial use
 - When current existing baseline studies are available for the project site
 - For projects likely to have a low environmental or low cumulative environmental impact
 - When the proposed facility is only small to medium in size.

- However, permit applications are reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

Technical Guidance Document

- Section 1 – Background Information
 - Definition of a PER Report
 - Objective of a PER Report
 - Preparation and Submission of a PER Report
 - Includes a Checklist of chapter-by chapter review
 - Review of a PER Report

- Section 2 – PER Report Format and Contents
 - Includes a standard Table of Contents
 - Provides discussion of the required contents for each chapter

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

Report Format

- Chapter 1 - Executive Summary
 - Project Description
 - Summary of Findings
- Chapter 2 – Introduction
 - Project Title and Project Proponent
 - PER Consultants
 - Project Description and Rationale
 - Justification and Chronology for the Development of a PER Report
- Chapter 3 – Legal Framework and Standards
- Chapter 4 – Project Description
 - Statement of Need
 - Project Location and Scale
 - Project Activity and Description
 - Project Status and Schedule

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

Report Format

- Chapter 5 – Impacts, Mitigation and Monitoring
 - Describe the current environmental baseline conditions
 - Detail the methodology or sources of information used to determine the baseline conditions
 - Discuss the potential impacts associated with the project
 - Describe the mitigation measures and monitoring efforts that will be used to reduce the negative impacts of the project on the environment
 - Environmental components that should be considered include:
 - Air Quality
 - Marine Water
 - Waste Management
 - Geology, Seismicity, Soil and Groundwater
 - Marine Ecology
 - Terrestrial Ecology
 - Noise
 - Traffic
 - Socio-Economic
 - Other Environmental Components

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

Report Format

- Chapter 5 – Impacts, Mitigation and Monitoring (cont.)
 - Impacts Mitigation and Monitoring Summary
 - Summary of all environmental impacts and associated mitigation measures and monitoring programs
 - Monitoring efforts should be detailed for both mitigated and residual impacts
 - Risk Assessments
 - Address the risks associated with impacts to human health and the environment that could occur as a result of a mishap or failures during construction, operation and decommissioning phases of the proposed project
 - Environmental Management Framework
 - Provide an overview of the project-specific EMF that will be developed by the proponent to facilitate implementation, tracking and reporting of the mitigation and monitoring measures that have been identified and committed to in the PER report

Preliminary Environmental Review (PER)

Report Format

- Chapter 6 – Project Alternatives
 - List and describe alternative approaches to the proposed project
- Chapter 7 – Statement of Commitments
 - Outline commitments to mitigating environmental impacts and potential risks associated with the proposed project
- Annexes
 - References
 - Information on the Current Condition of the Environment (methodology, data and results)
 - Material Safety Data Sheets (if applicable)

Terms of Reference (TOR)

What is a TOR?

- The TOR is a document used to determine the data collection and assessments needs of either an EIA or SEA
- The TOR report:
 - Characterises existing baseline data
 - Identifies data needs and describes methods for data collection
 - Discusses the probable environmental impacts associated with the project and potential mitigation approaches.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

When is a TOR required?

- EAD requires preparation and submission of a TOR when either an EIA or a SEA is requested
- The TOR must be completed, reviewed and approved prior to conducting an EIA or SEA. This is to ensure that the specific approach proposed for the preparation of the EIA or SEA, including data collection and monitoring, is deemed appropriate by EAD.

Terms of Reference (TOR)

Technical Guidance Document

- Similar structure to the Guidance Document for PER

- Section 1 – Background Information
 - Definition of a TOR
 - Objective of a TOR
 - Preparation and Submission of a TOR
 - Review of a TOR

- Section 2 – TOR Format and Contents
 - Recommended report format similar to that of the PER
 - Includes a standard Table of Contents
 - Provides discussion of the required contents for each chapter

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

What is an EIA?

- The EIA is a comprehensive document that:
 - Describes the current environmental conditions of the project site
 - Provides details of the proposed project
 - Assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the project
 - Recommends mitigation measures and monitoring programs

- The EIA is one of the highest levels of environmental assessment required by the EAD.

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

When is an EIA required?

- As a general guideline, an EIA is usually required:
 - For medium to large scale industrial or development projects
 - For sites where previous studies are unavailable or out of date
 - For projects where there is the potential for moderate to severe environmental impacts

- An EIA may also be necessary following completion and approval of a SEA or PER

- A Terms of Reference (TOR) document, which outlines the data collection and assessment needs of the EIA, must be submitted for approval by EAD prior to conducting the EIA

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)

Technical Guidance Document

- Similar to the Technical Guidance Document for PER

- Section 1 – Background Information
 - Definition of an EIA Report
 - Objective of an EIA Report
 - Preparation and Submission of an EIA Report
 - Review of an EIA Report

- Section 2 – EIA Report Format and Contents
 - Recommended report format the same as for the PER
 - Includes a standard Table of Contents
 - Provides discussion of the required contents for each chapter
 - Additional Annexes required for the EIA, including a copy of the TOR

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

What is a SEA?

- ❑ The SEA is a document used to integrate environmental considerations into the early planning stages of Master Planning
- ❑ The SEA is a document that:
 - Identifies, describes and evaluates the potential environmental effects of implementing the Master Plan (and its reasonable alternatives)
 - Sets out measures to prevent, reduce or offset any adverse environmental effects that have been identified
- ❑ Designed to ensure that information on the significant environmental effects of a Master Plan are gathered and made available to decision makers
- ❑ Differs from the EIA in that it is applied to Master Plans with a broad and long-term perspective, rather than specific projects with a limited range of project alternatives

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

When is a SEA required?

- ❑ On review of an Environmental Permit application for a Master Plan, EAD will review the application and determine whether an SEA is required
- ❑ Masters Plans likely to result in significant environmental effects generally require an SEA
- ❑ A Terms of Reference (TOR) document, which outlines the data collection and assessment needs of the SEA, must be submitted for approval by EAD prior to conducting the SEA

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Technical Guidance Documents

- Technical Guidance Document for SEA is similar to those for both the PER and EIA

- Section 1 – Background Information
 - Definition of a SEA Report
 - Applicability and Approach
 - Objective of an SEA Report
 - Preparation and Submission of a SEA Report
 - Review of a SEA Report

- Section 2 – SEA Report Format and Contents
 - Recommended report format similar to the PER and EIA
 - Includes a standard Table of Contents
 - Provides discussion of the required contents for each chapter

Required Studies

- The following provides brief guidance on the sequencing of environmental studies:
 - PER may be followed by an EIA or an Environmental Management Plan
 - TOR is always required prior to preparation of an EIA or SEA
 - SEA will usually be followed by one or more EIAs
 - EIA is followed by an Environmental Management Plan

- Environmental studies must be completed before construction of a project or facility can

Key Changes

- Technical Guidance Document for **PER** reports has been expanded to better define EAD requirements for preparation of the PER
- New Technical Guidance Document for **TOR** provides a clear description of what EAD requires prior to preparation of an EIA or SEA
- New Technical Guidance Document for **SEA**