

## **Preamble to EAO's *Guide to Preparing Terms of Reference***

Environmental assessment (EA) is a process for the evaluation of proposed projects that informs decisions on their overall acceptability within the context of prevailing legal and policy objectives and technical expectations. In British Columbia, the *Environmental Assessment Act*, and associated regulations and procedures, enables EA to be tailored to the requirements of each project to ensure a focused, timely, technically sound, and cost-effective review process.

There are two stages of B.C.'s EA review process: pre-application and application review. During pre-application, the focus is on developing project-specific EA procedures, scope of issues, and information requirements that describe *what* is to be contained in an application for EA certification (Application). During the application review stage, the focus is on the adequacy of the information provided and the significance of potential impacts.

A key feature of the EA review process is the opportunity for proponents to develop information requirements or Terms of Reference specific to their project and, in many cases, the flexibility to propose how prevailing policy objectives, standards and targets will be met. A well-designed and complete Terms of Reference provides a good framework for development of a proponent's Application, and contributes to the Application's completeness and reviewability. This, in turn, assists the EAO in preparing its Assessment Report for consideration by Ministers and reduces the likelihood that additional information will be required for issue resolution during the application review stage. It is expected that information requirements for each project will be different and will focus on issues relevant to whether or not the project should proceed.

Issue identification and issue scoping is undertaken in consultation with interested and potentially affected parties – federal and provincial agencies, local government, First Nations and the public – to ensure that all potential effects and issues of relevance to the assessment are incorporated into the Terms of Reference, so that the resulting application for EA certification is complete. Terms of Reference will contain more detailed information requirements for issues of greatest concern. Less significant issues may require only general information or be excluded from the scope of assessment.

Once complete, EAO issues Approved Terms of Reference to proponents as the basis for developing their Application. In issuing final Terms of Reference, EAO determines issues that are relevant and those that are outside the scope of the assessment. It typically takes at least six months to develop, review (agency, First Nations, and public), and finalize information requirements for a given project. The duration of pre-application activities is largely determined by the type and location of the proposed project, the complexity of issues, the extent of existing baseline data, and the nature and extent of proponents' discussions with government agencies and consultations with local communities, stakeholders, and potentially-affected First Nations. Proponents are advised to contact the EAO and relevant government agencies as early as possible to discuss consultation and baseline data collection requirements.

EAO developed the *Guide to Preparing Terms of Reference* in July 2004 to help guide proponents and their consultants in the development of Terms of Reference during pre-application. It is not intended to be used as a standard template or checklist of information to be included in every EA application.

The *Guide* presents the basic outline for Terms of Reference which follow the steps of a typical assessment process (*i.e.*, project description issues scoping, project setting (baseline), impact assessment, and proposed impact management and mitigation). Recent experiences suggest proponents and other review participants often prefer other ways of structuring their Terms of Reference – and ultimately the proponent's EA Application and the EAO's Assessment Report – which can contribute to a more efficient review (*e.g.*, by project component, by issue, by Valued

Ecosystem Component (VEC), etc.). Proponents are encouraged to discuss the structure of their Terms of Reference with EAO and key review agencies to determine the most effective means of presenting the required information.

The sample information requirements in the *Guide* are based on those developed for the Whistler Nordic Centre Project in June 2004. The scope of issues and nature and extent of information required is relevant only to a nordic facility in the Callahan Valley of south-western B.C. It is expected that proponents and their consultants will develop Terms of Reference tailored specifically to their projects.

### **Useful Resources for Developing Terms of Reference:**

The *Guide* is one resource to be considered in developing Terms of Reference. Other sources of information and guidance include relevant standard methods (*e.g.* [RISC Standards](#)), policy statements or objectives identified by government agencies, consultation with EAO and Canadian Environmental Assessment Agency staff, and other examples of Terms of Reference developed for other projects of a similar type and/or in the vicinity of the proposed project area.

Click on the following [titles](#) to access these useful resources for developing Terms of Reference:

- [A Guide to Preparing Terms of Reference \(colour version\)](#)
- [A Guide to Preparing Terms of Reference \(black and white version\)](#)
- [Table 1](#) Terms of Reference listed by Sector
- [Table 2](#) Terms of Reference listed by Region
- [Guidance to Proponents for Submitting Electronic Documentation](#) (Updated June 2005)
- [List of Provincial and Federal Permits, Authorizations and other Useful Links and Resources](#)
- [EAO internet mapping application](#): enables proponents and others to search for projects geographically

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**Table 1. Terms of Reference by Sector (updated June 12, 2006)**

Click on the project name to view the relevant Terms of Reference document available online through EAO's electronic Project Information Centre (*ePIC*).

<b>Project Name</b>	<b>TOR Status</b>	<b>Region</b>
<b>Energy</b>		
<a href="#">Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement</a>	Approved Jan 2006	Vancouver Island
<a href="#">Nahwitti Wind Farm Project</a>	Approved Dec 2005	Vancouver Island
<a href="#">East Toba Montrose Creek Hydroelectric Project</a>	Approved Dec 2005	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Dokie Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Peace
<a href="#">Upper Harrison Water Power Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Wartenbe Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Peace
<a href="#">South Meager Geothermal Project</a>	Approved May 2005	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Kitimat LNG Terminal Project</a>	Approved April 2005	Skeena
<a href="#">Holberg Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved April 2004	Vancouver Island
<a href="#">Knob Hill Wind Farm Project</a>	Approved June 2003	Vancouver Island
<a href="#">Bear Mountain Wind Park Project</a>	Draft under review	Peace
<a href="#">Mackenzie Green Energy Centre Project</a>	Draft under review	Omineca
<b>Mining</b>		
<a href="#">Ruby Creek Molybdenum</a>	Approved March 2006	Skeena
<a href="#">Galore Creek Project</a>	Approved March 2006	Skeena
<a href="#">Brule Mine Project</a>	Approved Oct 2005	Peace
<a href="#">Swamp Point Gravel Project</a>	Approved Sept 2005	Skeena
<a href="#">Kemess North Project</a>	Approved August 2005	Omineca
<a href="#">Cariboo Gold Project</a>	Approved April 2005	Cariboo
<a href="#">Orca Sand &amp; Gravel Project</a>	Approved Nov 2004	Vancouver Island
<a href="#">Red Chris Porphyry Copper-Gold Mine Project</a>	Approved June 2004	Skeena
<a href="#">Davidson Project</a>	Draft under review	Skeena
<b>Tourist Destination Resorts</b>		
<a href="#">Whistler Nordic Centre Project</a>	Approved June 2004	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Juliet / Coquihalla Pass Resort Project</a>	Draft under review	Lower Mainland
<b>Transportation</b>		
<a href="#">South Fraser Perimeter Road Project</a>	Approved Jan 2005	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Deltaport Third Berth Project</a>	Approved Oct 2004	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Sea-To-Sky Highway Upgrade Project</a>	Approved June 2003	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Canada Line</a>	Approved Feb 2003	Lower Mainland
<b>Waste Disposal</b>		
<a href="#">Ashcroft Ranch Landfill Project</a>	Approved March 2003	Thompson
<a href="#">Highland Valley Centre for Sustainable Waste Management</a>	Draft under review	Thompson
<b>Water Management</b>		
<a href="#">Terrace Green Street Well Project</a>	Approved March 2006	Skeena
<a href="#">New Fraser River Crossing Project</a>	July 2003	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion</a>	July 2003	Lower Mainland
<a href="#">Prince George - Fishtrap Island Collector Well</a>	Feb 2003	Omineca

**Table 2. Terms of Reference by Region (updated June 12, 2006)**

Click on the project name to view the relevant Terms of Reference document available online through EAO's electronic Project Information Centre (*ePIC*).

<a href="#">Vancouver Island Transmission Reinforcement</a>	Approved Jan 2006	Energy
<a href="#">Nahwitti Wind Farm Project</a>	Approved Dec 2005	Energy
<a href="#">Orca Sand &amp; Gravel Project</a>	Approved Nov 2004	Mining
<a href="#">Holberg Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved Apr 2004	Energy
<a href="#">Knob Hill Wind Farm Project</a>	Approved June 2003	Energy
<b>Lower Mainland</b>		
<a href="#">East Toba Montrose Creek Hydroelectric Project</a>	Approved Dec 2005	Energy
<a href="#">Upper Harrison Water Power Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Energy
<a href="#">South Meager Geothermal Project</a>	Approved May 2005	Energy
<a href="#">South Fraser Perimeter Road Project</a>	Approved Jan 2005	Transportation
<a href="#">Deltaport Third Berth Project</a>	Approved Oct 2004	Transportation
<a href="#">Whistler Nordic Centre</a>	Approved June 2004	Resorts
<a href="#">New Fraser River Crossing Project</a>	Approved July 2003	Water Mgmt
<a href="#">Vancouver Convention Centre Expansion</a>	Approved July 2003	Water Mgmt
<a href="#">Sea-To-Sky Highway Upgrade Project</a>	Approved June 2003	Transportation
<a href="#">Canada Line</a>	Approved Feb 2003	Transportation
<a href="#">Juliet / Coquihalla Pass Resort Project</a>	Draft under review	Resorts
<b>Thompson and Cariboo</b>		
<a href="#">Cariboo Gold Project</a>	Approved April 2005	Mining
<a href="#">Ashcroft Ranch Landfill Project</a>	Approved March 2003	Waste Disposal
<a href="#">Highland Valley Centre for Sustainable Waste Management</a>	Draft under review	Waste Disposal
<b>Kootenay and Okanagan</b>		
n/a		
<b>Skeena</b>		
<a href="#">Davidson Project</a>	Draft under review	Mining
<a href="#">Ruby Creek Molybdenum</a>	Approved March 2006	Mining
<a href="#">Galore Creek Project</a>	Approved March 2006	Mining
<a href="#">Terrace Green Street Well Project</a>	Approved March 2006	Water Mgmt
<a href="#">Swamp Point Gravel Project</a>	Approved Sept 2005	Mining
<a href="#">Kitimat LNG Terminal Project</a>	Approved April 2005	Energy
<a href="#">Red Chris Porphyry Copper-Gold Mine Project</a>	Approved June 2004	Mining
<b>Omineca and Peace</b>		
<a href="#">Dokie Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Energy
<a href="#">Wartenbe Wind Energy Project</a>	Approved Nov 2005	Energy
<a href="#">Brule Mine Project</a>	Approved Oct 2005	Mining
<a href="#">Kemess North Project</a>	Approved Aug 2005	Mining
<a href="#">Prince George - Fishtrap Island Collector Well</a>	Approved Feb 2003	Water Mgmt
<a href="#">Bear Mountain Wind Park Project</a>	Draft under review	Energy
<a href="#">Mackenzie Green Energy Centre Project</a>	Draft under review	Energy

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