Victoria’s EIA framework

Adam Mitchell – Manager, Impact Assessment, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Acts

Formal EIA can be undertaken under the following Acts:

1. Environment Effects Act 1978
   - Environment Effects Statement
   - No EES with conditions
   - No EES
   - Impact Management Plan
   - Comprehensive Impact Statement
   - Available only to project proponents that are ‘public authorities’
3. Administered by the Minister for Planning
Objectives of EIA in Victoria

Written, but uncodified:
• To assess projects capable of having a significant effect on the environment
• To inform decision making under environmental, planning and other legislative standards
• Provide for public consultation

Set out in:
• Minister’s Guidelines under the Environment Effects Act 1978
• Objectives of Major Transport Projects Facilitation Act 2009
Successful EIA should respond to the broad objectives of planning and environmental law that apply in Victoria:

- *Environment Projection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (C’wealth)*
- *Planning and Environment Act 1987*
- *Environment Protection Act 1970*
- *Heritage Act 1995*
- *Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Act 2006*
Key issues

‘Environment’ is defined very broadly – good EIA assesses the range of economic, social and environmental factors that are affected by a proposal.

EIA fundamentally addresses negative impacts that are external to a proposal - a good EIA can place these in the context of the positive benefits of a proposal.

EIA should present a coherent picture of the overall effect of the combined impacts of a project – not a series of isolated conclusions on air, water, land etc...

EIA should be integrated with design.

Public consultation is central to the process – effective, proponent led community consultation is key.

EIA should maintain a clear focus on the statutory decisions that will be informed by the assessment – where possible EIA should include the information required to make these decisions. EIA can provide a framework for engaging with agencies.