



ACBA7004: Lecture 9: EIA Critique Workshop

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Your assignment is to critique an EIA process.

In the critique, you should aim to:

- identify any areas that have been neglected and offer suggestions
- highlight areas of ambiguity and unsupported mitigation.
- use all necessary information (including archived) to determine whether the environment (natural and human) is being protected fully and correctly.
- research / source other examples of best practice and procedures from other locations and EIAs.
- make a comparison between the theory (what EIA processes should be followed) and the practice in your project.



Questions to ask:

- 1) Have the public been included?
 - a) At what stage? How? Where their views influential in the process and final design?
- 2) Did the developer carry out all the advisory steps as well as the mandatory?
 - a) Did they conduct a Scoping Report to capture the LPA's and Statutory consultants feedback?
 - b) Did they include all stakeholders as early as possible in the process?
 - c) Did they consider alternatives, including a do-nothing approach?
- 3) Are all the required steps in the document (as outlined by the government schedules)?
- 4) If any potential impacts were excluded, was their sufficient justification / evidence for doing so e.g. air quality?
- 5) Does the documentation, in your opinion, facilitate an informed decision by the competent authority?

Recommended Process:

- 1) Read the Non-technical summary
- 2) Align your critique with an existing review structure identified in literature (e.g. Lee and Colley review package (1990))
- 3) Use another Environmental Statement as a comparison
- 4) Focus on the summary / synthesis / discussion sections.

Tips:

- You are not expected to read every word of the ES and all of its appendices (with the exception of appendix Scoping documents) – for example, the detailed reports from the external consultants such as noise / air quality / ecology. These documents contain many highly technical aspects beyond the expected knowledge of non-subject matter experts, you need only care about why they were invited, and their findings.
- Skip unnecessary details, for example, at the beginning, most ESs introduce the EIA process, you already know this process, so just identify they are setting the scene, and move to the next section.
- Your job is to question the how (the process), not the specifics e.g. which instrument a consultant used to establish an environmental metric, just that a metric was used to establish a baseline and forecast prediction
- The objective is to critique the decision making and process of the proponent; have they followed best practise, are their decisions defensible?
- Your assignment is 4000 words, so you are not expected to query and discuss every element.

Workshop: compare and critically evaluate multiple EIA's

- Using each of your case studies as your baseline...
- Compare the following:
 - EIA stages (Screening, Scoping, and ES)
 - Format and clarity of information (accessibility, ease of reading, structure of reporting)
 - Scope of impacts (omissions and justifications)
 - Alternatives (range / diversity, justification measures, and 'do-nothing')
 - Public participation (which stages of the EIA, to what extent, influence on the project)
 - Response to feedback / consultations (from Scoping Opinion, Statutory consultants, and the public).
 - Compliance with regulation and planning policy
- Discuss any key observations and then feed your findings back to the class at the end of the session.



Any questions?

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Teams: "ACBA7004 Environmental Planning and Policy 2024/25_GRP"