



Planning Panels Victoria

Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning

1 Spring Street
Melbourne Victoria 3000
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Melbourne, Victoria 3001
Telephone (03) 8392 5115

19 August 2021

As addressed

Dear Submitter

Your submission to the Western Outer Ring Main Gas Pipeline Project

Thank you for your submission to the above Project.

The Minister for Planning has appointed the Western Outer Ring Main Gas Pipeline Inquiry to consider the environmental effects of the Project. The Inquiry comprises Michael Kirsch (Chair), Elissa Bell (Deputy Chair), and Sandra Brizga (Member). Information about the Inquiry including its Terms of Reference provided by the Minister for Planning can be found on the Engage Victoria website at:

<https://engage.vic.gov.au/worm-inquiry>

It is understood that the Inquiry will also be appointed as a Panel under the *Pipelines Act 2005* by the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change to consider the pipeline licence application.

Andrea Harwood (Senior Project Manager) and Georgia Thomas (Project Officer) from the office of Planning Panels Victoria will be assisting the Inquiry and will be the primary contact for all enquiries. They can be contacted by email at planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au.

The Proponent for the Project is APA VTS Australia (Operations) Pty Limited (APA).

The Inquiry will:

- hear submitters in an independent forum
- be relatively informal and not like a court
- give fair, unbiased advice to the:
 - Minister for Planning about the environmental effects of the Project
 - Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change about the pipeline licence application.

The Inquiry has received 25 submissions.

Submissions and other information presented throughout the process, including the Hearing, will be **treated as public documents**. Please note the attached *Privacy Collection Notice*.

The Inquiry process includes a Directions Hearing and the Hearing.

Directions Hearing

Given the physical distancing restrictions in response to Novel Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19), the Directions Hearing will be held by video conference using Zoom at **10.00am, Monday 6 September 2021**.

At the Directions Hearing, the Inquiry will discuss the inquiry process, including the arrangements for the Hearing. It will also:

Privacy Statement

Any personal information about you or a third party in your correspondence will be protected under the provisions of the Privacy and Data Protection Act 2014. It will only be used or disclosed to appropriate Ministerial, Statutory Authority, or departmental staff in regard to the purpose for which it was provided, unless required or authorised by law. Enquiries about access to information about you held by the Department should be directed to the Privacy Coordinator, Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, PO Box 500, East Melbourne, Victoria 8002



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- discuss site inspections
- discuss a draft timetable and the format of the Hearing
- outline its Request for Further Information from the Proponent
- answer questions submitters have about the Inquiry process including the Hearing
- provide its directions about exchanging information, including evidence.

You should attend the Directions Hearing if you:

- are new to the Inquiry process or wish to participate in the Hearing
- have questions about the Inquiry process or wish to raise procedural issues
- just wish to observe the proceedings.

Any submitters who wish to raise a procedural matter or ask a question of the Inquiry at the Directions Hearing, must provide notice that you wish to speak and submit any questions in writing to the Inquiry by **12noon on Thursday 2 September 2021** to planning.panels@delwpv.vic.gov.au.

A copy of the Hearing timetable and Directions issued by the Inquiry will be published on the Engage Victoria after the Directions Hearing.

Accessing the Directions Hearing

The Directions Hearing can be accessed using the following hyperlink to Zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85411740564?pwd=ckJlQ1l1cVBPRE52NFhxNURsZkN0Zz09>

Meeting ID: 854 1174 0564

Passcode: 721977

If you do not have access to a computer or you cannot connect to a network for video and computer audio, you can join and participate in the Directions Hearing by telephone using the following prompts:

1. Dial +61370182005
2. Input the meeting ID: 854 1174 0564 followed by the '#' key
3. Input meeting passcode: 721977

If you are using a landline, please find your local number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/u/kbyEBTvO1t>

In the meantime, please familiarise yourself with the attached Zoom guide (Attachment 1).

If you require technical assistance or have questions about the Zoom platform, please contact the dedicated assistance phone line on **03 9453 2857** from Monday, 30 August 2021 between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

Public Hearing

The Public Hearing allows for:

- The Proponent to set out its case in full and provide evidence in support of the Project
- Municipal Councils, agencies, community groups and submitters to speak to their submissions and call evidence if required.

Questions will be allowed of all witnesses by other parties.

The Hearing will commence at **10.00am** on **Monday 4 October 2021** and is expected to run for three weeks, generally sitting four days per week (Monday to Thursday). Due to the current COVID-19 related physical distancing restrictions and the uncertainty of future health advice, the Hearing will be convened by video conference. The Hearing will be open to the public and can be observed through the Zoom Hearing link published to the project website. The Hearing will also be recorded, and the recordings will be available to the public.

The parties and submitters will be scheduled in the following general order:



- APA (the Proponent)
- Minister for Planning and Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change (to be confirmed)
- Melton and Hume Municipal Councils
- Victorian Planning Authority and the Department of Transport
- Industry/business groups
- Community groups
- Individual submitters.

All submitters who have requested to be heard will be allocated a time to present to the Inquiry. The Inquiry will consider all written submissions when preparing its report, including those from submitters who do not wish to speak to their submission at the Hearing.

Directions to be complied with before the Directions Hearing

To enable the Inquiry to outline a draft timetable for discussion at the Directions Hearing, all **parties and submitters must:**

Direction 1: Provide confirmation of all representation details, evidence to be called (by whom and in what fields), the estimated time for your case and any email addresses for inclusion on the party distribution list by **12noon on Thursday 2 September 2021**. This should be provided in writing to planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au.

Draft Directions regarding submission of evidence, submissions, and other documents

Direction 2: The Proponent (APA) must file all evidence by **12.00noon Wednesday 22 September 2021**

Direction 3: All other parties must file their evidence by **12.00noon Monday 27 September 2021**

Direction 4: The Proponent must file its Request for further information response by **12.00noon Wednesday 22 September 2021**

Direction 5: Any (like) evidence in reply from the Proponent (if required) must be filed by **12.00noon Thursday 30 September 2021**

Direction 6: The Proponent must file its opening submission, including a summary of its responses to submissions by **12.00noon Thursday 30 September 2021**

Direction 7: Any other material and documents must be filed by 12.00noon the preceding business day prior to the relevant submission.

The Inquiry may direct experts in like fields to meet to prepare a joint statement of agreed opinions and facts.

Public Hearing timetable

The Inquiry will prepare a timetable for the Public Hearing based on the information provided on the online submission form or submission coversheet that was provided with your submission. The Inquiry notes that some parties have not provided the length of time requested, advocate and expert witness details with their submission. These parties must respond to Direction 1 above. The timetable will be available on the Engage Victoria website and will be updated as required.

The Terms of Reference note at Clause 27 that the Inquiry may limit the time of parties appearing before it. For a Hearing of this nature, the Inquiry will consider all time requests and will ensure it has a robust timetable that ensures all parties and submitters have the opportunity to be heard in a fair and timely manner. This is to ensure that the Inquiry is best able to be informed in a timely and efficient manner.

What will attending and speaking at the Hearing be like?

Planning Panels Victoria has prepared a guide on what to expect when presenting at the Public Hearing (Attachment 2). If you have any further questions after viewing this guide, raise them at the Directions Hearing or contact the Planning Panels Victoria project team.

Can I view the other submissions?

Prior to the Directions Hearing, all submissions will be published on the Engage Victoria website, unless a submitter specifically requested it not be published due to special concerns.

Further Information

The attached *Privacy Collection Notice* explains how your submission and materials filed through the course of the public hearing will be used by the Inquiry.

If you have any other questions, please contact Andrea Harwood or Georgia Thomas of Planning Panels Victoria by direct email at planning.panels@delwp.vic.gov.au.

The Inquiry looks forward to elaborating on these and other matters at the Directions Hearing on 6 September 2021.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in grey ink, appearing to read 'Michael Kirsch', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Michael Kirsch

Inquiry Chair

Attachment 1: Guide to using Zoom, Planning Panels Victoria

Attachment 2: Guide to the Public Hearing, Planning Panels Victoria



Privacy Collection Statement

Western Outer Ring Main Gas Pipeline Project Inquiry

This Privacy Collection Statement relates to all submissions collected in relation to the Western Outer Ring Main Gas Pipeline Project Inquiry (the 'Inquiry'). Planning Panels Victoria (PPV) is providing administrative services to the Inquiry.

PPV is part of the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and submissions will be managed in accordance with the Department's Information Privacy Policy. The Department's Information Privacy Policy is online at <https://www2.delwp.vic.gov.au/doing-business-with-us/information-privacy>.

Use of your submission

Your submission has been collected by the Inquiry for the purpose of helping to develop its advice to the Minister for Planning in accordance with the Terms of Reference. In addition, your submission has also been collected to assist any appointed Panel to develop its advice to the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change in accordance with the requirements of the *Pipelines Act 2005* and any specification in its instrument of appointment.

Natural justice to participants and transparency are important parts of the Inquiry process. In meeting its legislative requirements and complying with the Terms of Reference, the Inquiry may do the following with your submission:

- Publish a copy of your submission, in its entirety, on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website, Engage Victoria website or other Victorian Government website as required
- Provide a copy of your submission to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning, Local Councils, APA VTS (Operations) Pty Ltd (the Proponent) any relevant Registered Aboriginal Party, Government Agencies and other parties (submitters) to the process
- Provide a copy of your personal contact details to the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning and EPA Victoria if needed for notification of Ministerial decisions
- Display a copy of your submission in the Planning Panels Victoria Office
- Display a copy of your submission at relevant Local Council, Local Library or Government Offices as appropriate
- If a face to face submitter conference is to be held, display a copy of your submission in the submitter conference room.

Publication of your personal information on the Internet

The Inquiry Report will be published on the internet and may include:

- The name of the submitter
- Direct quotes from some of the submission
- The submitter's name and address as required.

Planning Panels Victoria will remove your submission from the web pages that it controls within six months after the Inquiry has reported. Planning Panels Victoria cannot guarantee that your submission will be removed from external web pages outside its control.

Hearing of submissions

If a Hearing is required it may be held face to face, via telephone conference or via video link or a combination of these. You should be aware the Inquiry may:

- broadcast submissions and proceedings live on the internet
- record submissions and proceedings
- make the recording available on request to submitters and parties to the hearing of submissions and third parties
- publish the recording on the Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning website, Engage Victoria website or other Victorian Government website
- use your phone contact details to contact you during a telephone/video hearing of submissions as is necessary.

The Inquiry will direct that parties do not record online hearing of submissions or use them for any other purpose. However, the Inquiry is unable to guarantee that third parties will not be recording online hearing of submissions, and the use of any such recordings outside the hearing of submissions context cannot be regulated by the Inquiry.

All participants are reminded that during the Inquiry process, the privacy of others should be respected and to refrain from the defamation of others.

After the Inquiry has reported

After the Inquiry has reported to the Minister for Planning (and the Minister for Energy, Environment and Climate Change if applicable) your submission will be removed from all public display within six months.

Your original submission and any additional material provided to the Inquiry will be held at Planning Panels Victoria for two years and then sent to the Public Records Office of Victoria. All additional copies of the submission and other material held by Planning Panels Victoria will be securely destroyed.

If you have any concerns in respect to the way your personal information or submission will be used please contact Planning Panels Victoria on Planning.Panels@delwp.vic.gov.au.