

MINUTES MARINUS LINK GIPPSLAND STAKEHOLDER LIAISON GROUP

Date: 20 June 2023

Location: MLPL Traralgon Office and online via Teams

Meeting Number: 7

Chair: Jane Leslie (JL) – in person

Attendees

Bridget McGrath (BMG), LVA – in person	Shannon Egan (SE), TAFE Gippsland – in person
Jeanie Hall (JH), LVA – in person	Tony Cantwell (TC), C4G – in person
Glen McColl, LCC – in person	Kate Guard (KG), Marinus Link - online
Nick Dudley (ND), GLaWAC - online	Erin Littlewood (EL), Marinus Link - online
Ken Griffiths (KG), SGSC - online	Mark Lindsay (ML), Marinus Link – in person
Ken Fraser (KF), SGSC - online	Christina Young (CY), Marinus Link – in person
Nick Stephens (NS), SGLN - online	Uncle Lloyd Hood (LH), Marinus Link – in person
Mark Matthews (MM), SGLN - online	Peter Hood (PH), Marinus Link – in person
Peter Mooney (PM), Electrical Trades Union - online	Dusk Johnston (DJ), RPS (minutes) - online

Apologies

Mercedes Stewart (RDV)	Ian Gibson (IG), Federation University
Nicala Oakley (RDV)	Martin Fuller (MF), WGCMA
Tony Flynn (LVA)	

Abbreviations

AC	Alternating current
AEMO	Australian Energy Market Operator
DC	Direct current
EES	Environment Effects Statement
FID	Final Investment Decision
GLaWAC	Gunaikurnai Land and Waters Aboriginal Corporation
GSLG	Gippsland Stakeholder Liaison Group
ISP	Integrated Service Plan
NEM	National Electricity Market

Minutes

Introduction (Jane Leslie)

- Welcome and Acknowledgement of Country
- Apologies, introduction to new representatives including *Glen McColl from Latrobe City Council and Ken Fraser from South Gippsland Shire Council*

Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct (Mark L)

- Terms of Reference for the GSLG have been reviewed and updated, as per governance requirements to undertake a review every 12 months
- Proposed changes include minor wording updates to emphasise group's Gippsland focus, attendance expectations by members and meeting frequency
- Updated Terms of Reference accepted by the GSLG, to be circulated to members along with the Code of Conduct for all members to sign

Questions:

Can a proxy attend GSLG meetings? (ND)

Response: Yes. Proxies are welcome to join meetings if regular members cannot attend.

Environmental Approvals (Kate Guard)

- Approvals timeline displayed and current status discussed
- Technical studies (22) and EIS/EES chapters to be reviewed by the project's Technical Reference Group incrementally throughout 2023
- Preparation of cultural heritage management plan is ongoing
- The project is expecting to submit the combined EIS/EES to the Australian, Victorian and Tasmanian governments in late 2023, with public exhibition of documents anticipated in early 2024

Questions:

What is the timeframe for the technical reports to be reviewed, has enough time been provided? (ND)

Response: A staggered review of the technical reports has been ongoing since early 2023. The project will engage directly with organisations part of the Technical Reference Group regarding timeframes to finalise the reports. *Marinus Link will provide an approvals timeline with June Meeting Minutes.*

Can you provide background on the Technical Reference Group? (NS)

Response: The Technical Reference Group was established by the Victorian Department of Transport and Planning. Members include Victorian and Commonwealth government organisations. Its main role is to advise on the adequacy of the Marinus Link technical studies and assist with the coordination with statutory approval processes.

Are the technical reports currently available for public viewing? (PM)

Response: No, the reports are still being finalised. The technical reports will form part of the EIS/EES and be available for public viewing and comment in early 2024.

First Peoples engagement (Uncle Lloyd Hood & Peter Hood)

- Various internal and external engagement activities related to First Peoples shared and discussed with the GSLG
- Frequent engagement with the three traditional owner groups in the Victorian project area over the past 12 months
- Cultural heritage surveys ongoing, however, current inclement weather is causing some difficulties to complete some activities
- Engagement with Tasmanian Traditional Owners also underway, with engagement planned with around 12 stakeholder groups over the next 12 months
- Underwater cultural heritage in the Bass Strait is an area of interest for Victorian and Tasmanian Traditional Owner groups
- Marinus Link is looking at ways to increase the cultural capability of project staff and is undertaking internal consultation to inform this

Questions:

There will be learnings from this project about cultural heritage, how will this knowledge be shared more broadly? (JL)

Response: Marinus Link recognises this could be a positive outcome of the project and will need to work through how learnings are shared outside of the project.

Comment: GLaWAC noted that the benthic [underwater] ecology study did not include cultural heritage and this was a missed opportunity.

Response: The project has conducted underwater cultural heritage investigations and has commenced discussions with Traditional Owners in Tasmania and Victoria related to potential impacts and opportunities that come from this information.

Comment: LVA noted that it would be a good to involve young people in the underwater study work in the future.

Industry Participation (Christina Young)

- Marinus Link is subject to requirements for engaging local businesses across three different jurisdictions, all with slightly different approaches and targets
- The project is forming an approach for local participation that will meet requirements and best suit the Gippsland region
- A key focus is the use of trainees, which will increase local capabilities and create a workforce for future energy projects built in Gippsland
- Currently taking expression of interests from businesses that want to work on the project and this information will be shared with contractors during the tender process
- Marinus Link is committed to engaging social enterprise businesses and already has some contracts in place for services supporting the Gippsland office
- The project is planning for a local industry briefing session towards the end of 2023, which will also provide opportunities for business-to-business networking
- Marinus Link is soon to commence the development of its Industry Participation Plan , which will include target setting and significant engagement within industry in both Tasmania and Victoria

Questions:

Can you provide an overview of the tenders that are out at the moment? (NS)

Response: Currently we are tendering for our cable supply contract. The project is unable to provide much detail due to probity restrictions during the tender review process. There will be future tenders released for civil works packages.

Is there a timeline available for future tenders over the next 6-12 months? (NS)

Action: Marinus Link to investigate the preparation of a tender timeline to share with the GSLG.

Comment: LVA noted that as much notice as possible should be provided to local businesses of tender opportunities, so they have time to prepare. Some businesses may not be able to deliver works on their own but could potentially join forces with other businesses in the area and put forward a collaborative tender. Also provides opportunity for businesses to upskill to meet requirements.

Response: Marinus Link is considering this and has undertaken research to understand current industry capabilities to determine what support or opportunities may be required to best meet needs of local businesses. This will form part of the Industry Participation Plan, which will require the companies that take on the main tenders to engage local suppliers to help build the project. There is a strong focus to gear up well in advance of works starting, which is expected to be from early 2025. The GSLG will be engaged to help develop the Industry Participation Plan.

Discussion:

- There has been an increase of people moving to the region over the past couple of years, many with different capabilities that may not have been here previously. Important not to assume that things can't already be done here as the capability may exist, just need to ask the question.
- With other energy projects in the region, there already has been a growth in the local industry.
- A different definition of 'local' exists in the community to what is used in government requirements and the ICN (Industry Capability Network), which is usually very broad. Important that Marinus Link considers this.
- The GSLG can provide assistance to the project in reaching local industry and is available to support this process.

Sustainability Framework (Erin Littlewood)

- Outlined Sustainability Framework key objectives, priorities, and focus areas and thanked GSLG members for their contribution in developing the Sustainability Framework, which was formally adopted by MLPL Board in Feb 2023.
- Currently developing a Marinus Link Sustainability Strategy to clarify approach to managing the sustainability of the project through the project lifecycle, including how to deliver on the Sustainability Framework objectives, priorities, and focus areas. The Strategy will be reviewed every year, to ensure continuous improvement during the project
- Strategy will be presented to the Marinus Link Board for endorsement
- Key part of the Strategy is to set measurable targets that will track performance over time of sustainability initiatives e.g. target percentage of engaging First Nations businesses
- Different targets will be aligned to project phases to ensure relevance across planning, delivery, operations and decommissioning
- Developing a workforce accommodation strategy is a key piece of work that we are focusing on now, in recognition that 'Affordable housing' is a key focus area under the Sustainability Framework

- The project is committed to developing a sustainable solution for housing and has an internal working group in place that is first undertaking desktop research and then will start to engage with key stakeholders including directly impacted local government areas.
- Developing a Community Benefit Sharing Scheme is another key piece of work that we are focusing on now, to deliver on our objectives under the Sustainability Framework of leaving a positive legacy including a 'Healthy Planet' and 'Prospering Communities'
- The Community Benefit Sharing Scheme will be implemented across the whole project. The objectives, priorities, and key focus areas set out in the Sustainability Framework will help guide development of the Community Benefit Sharing Scheme.
- Marinus Link will be engaging with community and stakeholders over the next 12 months to develop the Community Benefit Sharing Scheme, including the GSLG workshop undertaken during this meeting
- A bridging 'grants' program is in development and intended to be rolled out in the near future to support community initiatives whilst the scheme is under development

Questions:

Is the Strategy an internally developed document? Will it be made available when finalised? (NS)

Response: Yes, it's an internal working document that sets out governance, roles and responsibilities.

Additionally: The Strategy is designed to set project targets, which will be reported upon throughout the lifetime of the project. Once the Strategy has been endorsed internally, we will provide an update to the GSLG. We are looking at appropriate channels for reporting on our targets publicly.

Disappointing that the Framework didn't have more in terms of biodiversity, but sounds like the Strategy will have targets included? Will the targets be made public? (MM)

Response: Yes, the Strategy will include targets around biodiversity. The project is looking at ways to share progress on how commitments made under the Framework are tracking. It is not common for a young business to produce an annual sustainability report within the first few years of operating, but it is something Marinus Link would like to work towards. The project team is still working through what this public reporting may look like.

Comment: If the targets aren't proposed to be shared at this point, what scope is there for organisations to engage with the project on biodiversity if they don't know what Marinus Link is looking to achieve. It will make it difficult to participate or provide comment.

Response: We are committed to reporting on our performance against our sustainability targets. We are working through how we might share more information about the targets with our stakeholders, what would be most appropriate etc. We will know more once we have Board approval of the targets – anticipated in the coming weeks – and will provide an update to the GSLG when we have more information. We will be working with the contractors involved in delivering the project to ensure we have their support in delivering on our sustainability objectives, priorities and targets, and reporting on our sustainability performance throughout the project lifecycle.

Community Benefits Sharing Workshop (All)

- The GSLG brainstormed ideas to support the development of the Community Benefit Sharing Scheme
- Attendees shared insights on what the community may expect, what needs to be in place to ensure success and any examples of schemes or programs that have worked well
- Marinus Link will continue developing the scheme over the next 12 months and the GSLG will have further opportunity to provide feedback, including who the project should engage with as part of this process

Meeting close 11.00am

Actions	Who	Due Date	Progress
Provide Terms of Reference and Code of Conduct to GSLG members	Mark	July	Completed
GSLG members to sign and return Code of Conduct	GSLG	July	CoC sent
Provide meeting minutes and presentation to GSLG members	Mark	July	Completed
Next GSLG Meeting – Tuesday 15 August	All	15/08/23	