

## Public Consultation Meeting held on 27<sup>th</sup> January 2010

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### PA 00867/09 – Development of a gas storage and bottling facility including pipeline from importation terminal, Birzebbugia.

#### Minutes of meetings held with Identified Stakeholders and the Public

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**MEPA:** Josianne Abela Vassallo (Chair); Jonathan Henwood, Fleur Bonett;

**EIA Consultants:** Paul Gauci, Miles Seaman;

**Gasco:** Paul Agius Delicata, Vince Magri (Architect);

**Birzebbugia Local Council (BLC):** Joseph Farrugia (Mayor), Anthony Roberts, Joseph Baldacchino, Jesmond Borg, Sarah Cuschieri, Rocco Zahra,;

**Birzebbugia Environment Action Group (BEAG):** John Grech.

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Josianne Abela Vassallo explained the purpose of the public consultation meeting which was being presented to the public following the update of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), for which submissions from the public will be accepted until 3th February 2010 on [eiamalta@mepa.org.mt](mailto:eiamalta@mepa.org.mt).

Dr Paul Gauci gave an overview on the findings of the EIS Update and explained how a Safety and Risk Assessment was carried out due to the site falling under Seveso II Directive. He gave an explanation of the general layout focussing on the pipeline which will deliver the gas to the tanks.

The following questions made by the members of the panel and the members of the public:

Name	Question	Answer
<b>Mr Josef Farrugia, Mayor, B'Bugia Local Council</b>	Will the general public still have access to the coastline once the project is complete?	Paul Gauci noted that there is access all around the site. Fencing to keep trespassers out due to safety purposes shall be erected at a distance specified by Seveso II safety report.
	Will the gas transportation pass through Hal Far or Birzebbugia? Could the Local Council have a written guarantee the heavy vehicles will not pass through the village?	Paul Gauci noted that gas transportation will pass from Hal Far as shown in the layout plan of the EIS Update.
	Will the waste water emerging from the plant be treated before it ends up in the sea?	Paul Gauci noted that waste water will be treated before discharge as the new plant shall have its own treatment plant.
<b>Mr Andrew Roberts, Councillor, B'Bugia Local Council</b>	Commented that the Qajzenza plant should be dismantled as soon as possible. Also raised the concern about the smell of the residue left in gas tank and released once tanks are dismantled. Will this smell be kept to a minimum during the dismantling?	Paul Agius Delicata explained the process of cleaning tanks until they are gas free following which they can be cut up. Mr Delicata pointed out that the water used to clean the cylinders will be treated and any hazardous waste filtered out of the water will be exported.

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<b>Mr John Grech, BEAG</b>	Referred to the scoping meeting where it was requested who is to be responsible for the maintenance of the pipeline from oil tanking.	Paul Agius Delicata explained where the pipeline is going to pass through and that responsibility lies with Gasco.
	There was a problem of debris in the area and some caves have been breached when the quarry was being excavated.	Paul Gauci noted the issue and was clear that no caves will be breached by the proposed works.
	Is the capacity of gas at Benghisa expected to increase?	Paul Agius Delicata noted that up to 48 000 metric tonnes will be stored which is nearly double that of today.
	Referred to Seveso II Directive and asked if the new plant will have an ISO Certificate since residents would want to rest their minds assured that safety criteria is being adhered to.	Miles Seamen noted that information pertaining to safety and management policies may be found in ISO Standards Section 6.4 of his report in the EIA Update.
	In the case of an explosion emanating from oil tanking and/ or the gas depot will there not be a domino effect in view of the vicinity of the two installations?	A study was carried out, as part of the EIA Update, considering what would happen if there were an explosion and a domino effect took place in relation to Oil Tanking and Med Serv. Risk studies show that severe effects would be contained according to the plan. Mr Seaman said that it was highly improbable that this would take place and constitute a high risk being close to Oil Tanking.
	Pleased to hear that a light pollution study was also carried out in view of the sea birds on site.	Paul Gauci explained the outcome of the light assessment study.
	EIA states that the site is 2km away whereas it is actually just over 1km. Can MEPA condition ADT to impede heavy vehicle traffic from passing through Birzebbugia?	MEPA noted that the inclusion of this condition will be explored.
	Has it been considered that gas be delivered to Gozo by sea rather than land?	Paul Agius Delicata noted that transport would occur by land.
	With regards to a noise study, has this been considered in conjunction with other activities in the area?	Paul Agius Delicata noted that noise generated by the plant will have no comparison to existent levels at present. The noise of vehicles and minimal machinery will be sustained in the quarry.
	Will a contingency plan be drawn up?	Paul Agius Delicata noted that there will actually be two. One for internal use and the other for external use. These will be drawn up six months prior to commencement of operations.

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	Has third party insurance been considered?	Paul Agius Delicata confirmed this.
	Landscaping should be introduced.	Paul Gauci noted that this may be done on the outside only and not on the inside, as dead/dry bark could catch fire easily, and would be too dangerous.
	What is the level of surface of quarry above sea level? He pointed out that when the wind is southwest the waves are high enough to enter the quarry.	Paul Agius Delicata noted that the bottom part of the quarry is 9m above MSL.
	Will the operating heavy vehicles be entering the site one at a time?	Paul Agius Delicata commented that an on site internal road is planned just for the use of staff that load and unload. No queue is envisaged along the public road since the internal road is sufficient to cater for all requirements.
	Will there be some form of compensation for the residents as in the pollution pay principle?	Paul Agius Delicata referred that the query will be directed to the company.
<b>Ms Marlene Ebejer, resident of Birzebbugia</b>	There have been gas leaks from the present plant in the past and I reside 1.5km away from the plant. What are the health risks in a case like this?	Paul Gauci and Miles Seaman noted that the gases released would be dispersed.
	Will the plant be operating 24/7?	Paul Agius Delicata said that the plant will be working as usual daily and possibly extra in the colder months of winter.
<b>Mr Noel Pace, resident of Birzebbugia</b>	As regards to safety, will monitoring be carried out regularly? It is important for monitoring to be ongoing to ensure the safety of residents and anything nearby.	Paul Agius Delicata noted that monitoring shall be carried out on a daily basis.
<b>Mrs Bonnici, resident of Birzebbugia</b>	Where are the entrance and the exit to the site?	Paul Agius Delicata indicated the road on the way to B'Bugia on the plan.
<b>Mrs Connie Cutajar, resident of Birzebbugia</b>	Will there be job opportunities for B'Bugia residents to work at the new plant?	Paul Agius Delicata explained how the company shall be keeping the staff they have at present. If future vacancies should arise, it would be an asset the engage workers from the vicinity.

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<b>Fr Nicholas Pace,</b> resident of <b>Birzebbugia</b>	Will the proposal have an affect on landing aircraft?	Paul Gauci noted that the risks to aircraft flying overhead was assessed in the EIS Update by Miles Seaman. Miles Seaman then explained that airplanes never go below 500m altitude above the site, whereas debris from a BLEVE only reaches 100-200m. Also probability of an explosion of occurring whilst a plane is landing is very remote.
<b>Mr Jason Vella,</b> resident of <b>Birzebbugia</b>	What is planned for the land to be vacated at Qajjenza?	Vince Magri noted that the Local Plan designates uses to the site.
<b>Mr Grabiell Ebejer,</b> resident of <b>Birzebbugia</b>	Where may officials be contacted in case of further information being sought?	The B'Bugia Local Council will be given additional digital copies of the EIA Update.

Final comments by Josianne Abela Vassallo were made, including that any submissions would need to reach MEPA by 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2010 on [eiamalta@mepa.org.mt](mailto:eiamalta@mepa.org.mt).

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