



Meeting	EIA Public Consultation for EIS in relation to the following development permit application: - PA 04236/08: Factory at Hal Far for Sterling Chemicals Ltd. This excludes the installation of a plant and operation as an API for manufacturing which is subject to a separate permit. Site at Factory HF 51, Qasam Industrijali, Hal Far.
Date	02 nd December 2014
Duration	Circa: 17.15 – 18.35 hrs
Location	Skola Primarja, Kulleġġ San Benedittu, Birżebbuġia
EPD representatives	Perit Vincent Cassar (Chairperson)
Minutes taken by	Charmaine Zerafa (EPD)

Perit Vincent Cassar opened the meeting giving details about the proposed developments which are currently subject to the EIS (*PA 04236/08: Factory at Hal Far for Sterling Chemicals Ltd. This excludes the installation of a plant and operation as an API for manufacturing which is subject to a separate permit. Site at Factory HF 51, Qasam Industrijali, Hal Far.*).

Dr Paul Gauci (ERSLI Consultants Ltd.) delivered a presentation explaining the studies carried out as part of the EIS.

Perit Vincent Cassar opened the floor for comments after the presentation.

Mr. John Grech on behalf of Birżebbuġia Environmental Action Group, questioned whether the public hearing will also cover discussions with regards to the IPPC permit.

Dr. Paul Gauci and Mr. Anthony Aquilina (representative of the Environmental Permitting Unit within the Malta Environment and Planning Authority) explained that this public hearing is being carried out in terms of the EIA process and does not cover the IPPC process. Said process is still underway and consultations will be carried out at a later stage.

Mr. Grech enquired with regards to the type of material used for the reactors and the thickness of such material. He also questioned whether said reactors are already in place and installed.

Mr. Simone Ferlin Chairman of Sterling Chemicals Ltd. explained that some of the reactors will be in stainless steel while others will be in glass lined material. He stated that although the reactors are certified for higher levels of pressure, the company will limit the pressure to 0.49, to avoid having higher risks. Information with regards to the thickness of the material used and copies of certifications can be provided upon request.

Mr. John Grech made reference to the four production lines mentioned in the EIS and asked the location of said production lines.

Dr. Paul Gauci informed attendees that the mentioned production lines are found inside the production system; meaning that four different products can be produced at once.

Mr. Edwin Ebejer (Birżebbuġia Environmental Action group representative) pointed out that in the vicinity of the area proposed for this development, there are other industries producing different chemicals. He enquired with regards to the cumulative impact such industries will pose on human beings. Mr. Ebejer continued by asking about the consequences should there be a gas leakage or a contaminated water leakage and questioned about the probabilities for such accidents to take place.

Mr. John Grech pointed out that according to the EIS some accidents are listed as probably to happen once in three years and also as once a year. These are considered to be regular, and the effects of a leakage of contaminated water to sea will be substantial.

Dr. Gauci replied that the mentioned probabilities will mainly depend on the materials used, the design and the management system. One has to note that this company will be subject to the ISO 14001.

Mr. John Grech suggested that the system 'SCADA' is adopted by Sterling company. This system enables real time monitoring and immediate shut down in case of accident. He recommended that this system should be imposed by the Malta Environment and Planning Authority (MEPA) as a permit conditions. Mr. Grech requested the list of labelling codes that will be utilised by the company for the importation of hazardous goods. Further details should be provided on the type of outdoor lighting that will be used and to the effects of such lighting on migrating birds.

Dr. Gauci clarified that no outdoor lighting will be used on site other than the existing street lighting. Thus this is not the responsibility of Sterling Company but the responsibility of Malta Industrial Parks (MIP).

Mr. John Grech addressed those present by referring to a site visit carried out at the mentioned factory and pointed out that only few Maltese were employed with the company. He further asked who will be doing the monitoring once the company is up and running and whether the said monitors will be independent professionals.

Mr. Simone Ferlin explained that this project was initiated by two new graduates from the University of Malta. These graduates were offered an internship in Italy in order to provide them with the necessary know how with respect to the company and its functions. He confirmed that they are also employing foreign professionals giving that the company is not finding the necessary skilled human resources in Malta.

With regards to adopting the 'SCADA' system, one has to note that this system can be easily used with one solvent in use, however in the case of Sterling, the company will make use of three hundred solvents and therefore such is far more complicated. Another option would be to target one particular solvent. The company's Research and Development Team will look further into this matter and explore such option. Routine monitoring will be carried out by internally appointed officers but the actual monitoring and certification will be done by independent professionals.

Mr. John Grech made reference to the 'OPRA regime' system currently adopted by Medichem and suggested that Sterling company should consider using same process. He also suggested that MEPA imposes the use of such system as one of the permit conditions.

Perit Cassar closed the meeting by confirming that the points raised have been recorded and noted. He also thanked the participants and invited them to send any further comments, preferably by email to eamalta@mepa.org.mt, or by post to 'The Director, Environment Protection Directorate, MEPA Head Offices, St Francis Ravelin, Floriana', by 9th December 2014.