

Frequently Asked Questions



Nuclear-Powered Submarine Construction Yard approvals processes

South Australian Government, Australian Government and other approvals processes

Q – What are the main assessment processes that need to be followed for the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Construction Yard project to be approved at the proposed site at Osborne?

A – There are three main assessment processes that are involved in approvals for the proposed Nuclear-Powered Submarine Construction Yard project:

- development approval under the *Planning, Development and Infrastructure Act 2016*, which is being progressed through an impact assessed development application
- Australian Government approvals under the *Environment, Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act)
- Nuclear licensing under the *Australian Radiation Protection and Nuclear Safety Act 1998* (ARPANS Act), which requires significant and detailed assessments against a range of internationally recognised standards.

Whilst these processes are undertaken separately, there are some areas of overlap.

Q – What is the South Australian Government’s Impact Assessed Development assessment process?

A – ‘Impact assessed’ is the most rigorous and comprehensive level of development assessment in South Australia and is reserved for projects that are of economic, social or environmental importance to the state.

The assessment process for impact assessed developments is:

1. project is declared to be ‘impact assessed’ by the Minister for Planning
2. development application lodged by the proponent
3. assessment requirements prepared by the independent State Planning Commission with input from state government agencies and the local council

4. Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) prepared by the proponent.
5. public, agency and Council invited to provide feedback on the EIS
6. response document prepared by the proponent, addressing issues raised through the engagement
7. assessment report prepared by the State Planning Commission
8. final decision made by the Minister for Planning, which will be published on the PlanSA website.

Visit the [PlanSA website](#) for more details about each stage of the impact assessed development process.

Q – Where can I find the Environmental Impact Statement assessment requirements?

A – The detailed [Assessment Requirements](#) are prepared by the independent State Planning Commission and are published on the PlanSA website. The applicant is required to prepare an Environmental Impact Assessment that evaluates the project against these requirements.

Q – What issues does the Environmental Impact Assessment address?

A – The potential impacts of construction and operation of the nuclear-powered submarine construction yard are assessed.

The Environmental Impact Statement has considered potential impacts on:

- economic impacts and benefits
- community impacts such as noise and vibration, light spill, air quality, cultural heritage and visual amenity
- the environment including marine and land based flora and fauna, water quality, climate change, site contamination and waste management
- existing infrastructure and facilities that services the Lefevre Peninsula community and businesses
- transport networks and services, including roads, freight rail, active transport and public transport.

Q – What is the Australian Government Strategic Assessment process?

A – Strategic assessments are a collaboration between the Australian Government and an assessment partner to help safeguard 'protected matters' under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) over a long period of time.

The process for a strategic assessment is:

1. Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water enters into an agreement with another person to undertake a strategic assessment on the impacts of actions under a policy, plan or program

2. Terms of Reference are prepared for a report on the impacts relating to the agreement
3. Draft Strategic Impact Assessment Report prepared
4. Draft Strategic Impact Assessment Report open for public comment for at least 28 days
5. Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water may recommend modifying the policy, plan or program
6. Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water may endorse the policy, plan or program if appropriate
7. Commonwealth Minister for the Environment and Water may approve actions under the policy, plan or program if appropriate, which may include conditions.

Find out more about the Strategic Assessment process on the [Department for Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#) website.

Q – What does the Australian Government EPBC Act Strategic Assessment consider?

A – The Strategic Assessment considers and assesses the impacts of constructing and operating the nuclear-powered submarine construction yard on ‘protected matters’ under the EPBC Act.

The [Terms of Reference](#) provide details of what the Strategic Impact Assessment Report must consider, including:

- describing ‘protected matters’ that relate to the project, including:
 - Listed threatened species and ecological communities
 - Listed migratory species
 - The environment, as it relates to the protection of the environment from Commonwealth actions.
- assessing the impacts of implementing the project on protected matters
- preparing implementation and assurance frameworks that outline how the project will be implemented and how Australian Submarine Agency will address and adaptively manage outcomes
- evaluating the overall conservation commitments and environmental outcomes for protected matters
- identifying and addressing uncertainties and risks associated with implementing the plan and propose adaptations to changing circumstances.

Further details are available in the Strategic Assessment Agreement and Terms of Reference for the Nuclear-Powered Submarine Construction Yard on the [Australian Submarine Agency](#) and [Department for Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water](#) websites.