Background Information Document (BID)

The purpose of this Background Information Document (BID) is to provide Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs) with information about the following:

- Description of the grit blasting operation by Elgin Brown and Hamer (Pty) Ltd.
- Potential impacts of the grit blasting activities within the EBH operational area under the Namport jurisdiction.
- The approach to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and Environmental Management Plan (EMP);
- The opportunity to register as an IAP and to participate in the EIA process.

1. Introduction

Elgin Brown and Hamer (Pty) Ltd. proposes to assess the impacts emanating from their grit blasting activities at their floating drydocks, Walvis Bay. To proceed with this development, Versatile Environmental Consulting CC (VERSACON) has been assigned to provide environmental advisory services by conducting an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) and an Environmental Management Plan (EMP) for the proposed project. VERSACON cc recently completed a scoping report for the grit project. The EIA in brief will provide the project description, identification of potential impacts, and raise the concerns of (Interested and Affected Parties (I&AP).

The proposed project occurs in an industrial zone of Walvis Bay’s, where similar activities may also occur and is expected not to be a major concern for the residential zone.

2. EBH and background to the assignment

EBH Namibia Pty (Ltd) is joint venture company by the Namibia Ports Authority (Namport – as majority shareholder) and the DCD Group. Over the years, EBH has shown an outstanding dedication and commitment towards sound environmental management practices and cleaner technological innovation. Respectively, this has seen the awarding of ISO 9001-2008 certificate for Quality Management System that discloses commitment at providing continued quality products that meet customer and regulatory recommendations. Additionally, Germanischer Llyod certified for provision of technical supervision on shipping vessels ranging from risk mitigation, technical compliance with oil, gas and industrial installations. Such achievements reveal the company’s commitment towards environmental protection through sustainable use of resources and application of cleaner technologies.

Recently, EBH have been issued with pollution tariffs by Namport as part of the implementation of their 2006 EMP (currently under revision). This cost has been incurred against no scientific evidence from Namport of the extent of pollution, whether water, air and/ or soil pollution. EBH has taken the initiative to approach VERSACON CC to explore the extent of possible impacts through scientific advice.

Based on the findings and feasibility of alternatives, process would aim to provide advice on prevention and mitigation through a proposed EMP.

3. Project location and Site Plan

The direct affected area is indicated by the red rectangle in the below image. The rectangle shows the three floating docks where the grit blasting activities occur. This operation of EBH is located on 2nd Street East, Walvis Bay.

4. Project description

EBH carries out grit blasting operations at its floating drydocks at least once a week. Grit blasting is a process by which abrasive material (copper slag) are expelled from the blast nozzle at maximum velocity using compressed air to deliver smooth cleaning by removing surface coating from vessel hulls.
The process of grit blasting is known to release grit debris (dust and waste) of varying sizes fractured upon impact. Some of which are less than 10 microns, capable of being blown by wind to further distances and tend to be easily respirable. Given that EBH uses copper slag for blast-cleaning, its potential for air and water pollution is unknown.

Key operational elements and phases of the proposed projects includes:

1. Identification of the key issues, key stakeholders, and environmental, social and economic receptors;
2. Identification of direct and indirect long term and short term impacts of the proposed project;
3. Water sampling to set a baseline near and further offshore from the drydocks;
4. Provision water quality results, compare with recommended literature to determine potential impacts and compare with EBH previous findings;
5. Advice on the long term and short term impacts—provide mitigation and preventive measures;
6. Assess the credibility of the Namport pollution tariff in light of scientific evidence and credible international standards for water quality and opacity monitoring.

5. **EIA Process**

EIA is a sustainable development planning and decision making tool. During the EIA process potential impacts are identified based on a description of the project and associated activities. Such impacts (positive or negative) could be on the biophysical, social and/ or economic environments and need to be assessed upfront to support informed decision making. If a project is authorised to proceed, the EIA process provides recommendations for the mitigation of negative impacts and, to maximise positive impacts where possible.

A summary of the key elements of an EIA process follows:

**Scoping phase**
- Identification and registration of Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs), including authorities;
- Notification of the EIA process to all stakeholders and identification of key issues;
- Present a baseline and key issues for the project in the draft Scoping Report;
- Public review of the draft Scoping Report;
- Submission of a final Scoping Report to the Ministry of Environment and Tourism (MET).

**EIA phase**
- Carry out in depth investigations of the key issues identified during Scoping;
- Develop mitigation actions to control the footprint and manage negative impacts;
- Prepare a draft EIA Report and Environmental Management Plan (EMP);
- Public review of the draft EIA Report and EMP;
- Submit final EIA Report and EMP to MET;
- Decision by the authorities is communicated to IAPs;
- Opportunity for appeal

6. **Purpose of the Environmental Management Plan (EMP)**

The purpose of the EMP is: -
- To outline the aspects of the environment elements that requires management.
- To summarise the project activities that have the potential for adverse environmental impacts.
- To compile Project Environmental Specifications for inclusion in contract documents and enforcement on site.
- To set out the roles and responsibilities of all role players with regard to environmental management.
- To specify rehabilitation requirements.
7. Key issues (Assumed)
Based on available information and project description activities, material and equipment used during blast-cleaning, the following key issues are proposed for the assessment.

Table 1: Key environmental issues proposed for EBH Namibia grit blasting project.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Issue</th>
<th>Potential impact</th>
<th>Assessment Approach</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sea water quality</td>
<td>Grit dust deposition on the water surface which may affect marine fauna e.g. fish through gill abrasion, trace metal uptake, etc. Cumulative impact over time due to increasing levels of metals and toxic substances.</td>
<td>Collect and analyse water samples and compare to BCLME recommended guideline values against other international standards.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Air pollution (Immediate surroundings of the blasting operation and release of fugitive dust). Occupational health and safety</td>
<td>Dust may affect the respiratory system of personnel causing respiratory diseases.</td>
<td>Site visit during a blasting operation to observe the amount of dust released, based on prevailing weather the trajectory of dust and, based on the amount of grit used, the volume of dust generated.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marine ecology</td>
<td>Skin damage and ingestion of contaminant dust Hearing loss due to loud noise generated by the operation.</td>
<td>Confirm any reported cases by EBH of illness/ diseases resulting from the potential impacts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social and economic</td>
<td>Revenue loss due to high fines – the annual cumulative value over time could have an impact on the cash flow and revenue projections of EBH.</td>
<td>Trend in fines over time to demonstrate the actual financial/ economic impact on EBH.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EBH and Namport relations</td>
<td>Limited support from Namport as the majority shareholder and parent company to comply. Generally parent companies lend support to avoid fines as it affects them as well.</td>
<td>Trend in fines over time can suggest whether Namport increases its punitive measures or whether it tries to remedy the situation in partnership with EBH.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Aesthetic/ visual</td>
<td>Dust collecting on the sea surface may not be a pleasant sight for tourism passing by on boats. This includes the operators launching their boats in the enclosed area near EBH’s drydocks.</td>
<td>Consult with tour operators and if possible with tourists to gain their opinions. Even though this is very qualitative it provides insights into the views of some stakeholders.</td>
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8. Public participation

Who can participate? Any person and/ or organisation that is interested in the proposed development project and/ or, may be affected by it. I.e. Interested and Affected Parties (IAPs).

Why should you participate? To know and understand what is proposed, the potential impacts and, to participate in the EIA process. Participation could be through meetings, forwarding comments, providing additional information and reviewing the draft reports.

You can also appeal the environmental clearance granted by the authorities.

How can you participate? Register as IAP at email: versaconam@gmail.com or tel: 081 636 9847 to receive information about the project and to be informed about the process.