



## Debunking the myths

### Major projects assessment system: fact sheet 8

**MYTH:** *The major projects assessment system gives the Minister a new ability to call-in projects from local councils.*

**FACT:** Since the Environmental Planning and Assessment Act came into operation in 1979, the Minister for Planning has always had the ability to deal with projects or sites considered to be of regional or State significance. This is in recognition that some major projects have implications well beyond the particular local council area.

**MYTH:** *The major projects assessment system reduces community consultation and transparency.*

**FACT:** It increases community consultation and transparency, by making a much wider range of documents available, as can be seen below. In addition, community submissions are given a higher status, with the proponents asked to respond to issues raised and if appropriate for the proponent to amend the project to reduce impacts.

DOCUMENTS	PART 3A (Major projects assessment system)	PART 4 (Assessment system replaced by Part 3A for major projects but still used by local councils)
Director-General's requirements for environmental assessment	On website	Not part of Part 4 system
Detailed environmental assessment for public exhibition	On website and exhibited	Environmental impact statement for "designated development" and development application for "advertised development" exhibited  Notification of other applications depends on council policy
Assessment of proposal by Department	On website after determination	No publication requirement, depends on council policy
Determination	On website	Notification depends on type of application and council policy

**MYTH:** *Appeal rights are not allowed under the major projects assessment system.*

**FACT:** Due to the types of development that are subject to the major project assessment process, objectors are able to appeal on a greater proportion determinations, compared to local council determinations. This is outlined further in the fact sheet *Merit Appeals*.

**MYTH:** *Critical infrastructure means there is not a proper environmental assessment of proposals.*

**FACT:** The Department's environmental assessment of proposals declared critical infrastructure is just as rigorous as any other major project considered under the major projects assessment system. This includes:

- requirements are issued to proponents outlining key issues that need to be addressed in their proposal
- the proposal must be publicly exhibited for a minimum of 30 days
- people are invited to make public submissions
- proponents are required to respond to submissions
- the Department assesses the submissions.

## FURTHER INFORMATION

Department of Planning website:  
[www.planning.nsw.gov.au](http://www.planning.nsw.gov.au)