**EIA Quality Mark Article**

**EIA and Environmental Management Plans**

**Bill Wadsworth, from Chris Blandford Associates, explores the links between EIA and Environmental Management Plans**

A key element of the EIA process is to accurately identify measures for ameliorating the construction and operational impacts of proposed development through appropriate avoidance, mitigation and/or compensatory measures.

Commitment 5 of the EIA Quality Mark states that: “...assessments [will] include... an effective description of measures designed to monitor and manage significant effects.” This commitment is usually reflected in assessments through proposals for developing Construction Environmental Management Plans (CEMPs) and/or Operational Environmental Management Plans (OEMPs) to monitor and manage potentially significant effects of the proposed development identified through the EIA process. These plans are typically secured by the local planning authority through planning conditions.

CBA often recommends to its clients that outline CEMPs and/or OEMPs as appropriate are prepared and submitted as supporting documents for planning applications. As the Principal Contractor is usually appointed following receipt of planning consent, early discussions with statutory consultees and other key stakeholders about the scope of CEMPs and OEMPs helps in the planning and costing of construction works. CEMPs are often incorporated into wider Construction Management Plans (CMPs), which are usually the responsibility of the Principal Contractor.

By commencing the process of identifying ecological, heritage and other environmental protection requirements at an earlier stage, the Principal Contractor will be in a better position to understand how environmental risks can be best managed as part of the site construction practices.

OEMPs provide a key tool for establishing long-term environmental management and financial/resource commitments needed during the operational phase of a development. These Plans are helpful in identifying on-going liabilities during negotiations with third parties. As with CEMPs, early agreement on the scope and key principles of OEMPs with statutory consultees and other key stakeholders helps provide a clear understanding of the key environmental management needs for site managers going forward.

The Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management (CIEEM) Guidelines for Ecological Report Writing (2015) and the BS42020 Biodiversity Code of Practice for Planning and Development (2013) include useful guidance on the preparation of CEMPs and OEMPs. CIEEM also offers training for ecologists employed as Ecological Clerks of Work in delivering elements of CEMPs on the ground.

While CEMPs are necessarily site and context specific, and therefore need to be tailored accordingly, a review of CEMPs undertaken by CBA and others suggests the following good practice principles:
A clear understanding of the regulatory framework and planning conditions specific to the project.

Site location, project description and programme are clearly set out.

Clearly identified roles and responsibilities.

Provision of information for contractors relating to site inductions, risk assessments, etc.

Site-specific control measures for identified constraints or features for protection.

Housekeeping and security.

Health & Safety, incident responses and recording.

Importantly, monitoring environmental effects as work progresses (and appropriate responses to any deviations or anomalies) is critical to ensuring the effective implementation of any CEMP.

The CIEEM/BS42020 guidance makes reference to the importance of appointing suitably qualified and competent professionals for the preparation and delivery of CEMPs/OEMPs. This reflects Commitment 2 of the EIA Quality Mark for “ensuring that all our EIA staff have the opportunity to undertake regular and relevant continuing professional development”. Given the considerable breadth and varying complexity of CEMPs/OEMPs, training and knowledge sharing is critical for translating good EIA practice into positive management of environmental risks on the ground.

Bill Wadsworth is a Senior Associate/Ecologist at Chris Blandford Associates, March 2018.

For access to more EIA articles, case studies and hundreds of non-technical summaries of Environmental Statements visit:
http://www.iema.net/eia-quality-mark/