

9. Information sources provided in the preliminary documentation

9.1 Sources of information

Provided below is a list of references used in the preparation of the preliminary documentation. The majority of the information used current (less than three years old) and was prepared as part of the broader environmental impact assessment of the proposal.

References used include:

ARCUE, 2012, Hume Highway duplication threatened species (Squirrel Glider) monitoring report: spring 2011. Unpublished report prepared for NSW Roads and Maritime Services by the Australian Research Centre for Urban Ecology, Melbourne.

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GHD, 2012b, Bourkelands substation to Uranquinty substation 66kV powerline: Ecological assessment. Report prepared for Essential Energy, June 2012.

GHD, 2013a, Realignment of the Olympic Highway at Kapooka including new road-over-rail bridge: review of environmental factors. Report prepared for Roads and Maritime Services, November 2013.

GHD, 2013b, Realignment of the Olympic Highway at Kapooka including new road-over-rail bridge: NSW species impact statement. Report prepared for Roads and Maritime Services, November 2013.

GHD, 2013c, Referral of proposed action: Realignment of the Olympic Highway at Kapooka including new road-over-rail bridge. Report prepared for Roads and Maritime Services, August 2013.

GHD, 2013d, Kapooka bridge - Species impact statement: Box-Gum Woodland and hollow-bearing trees. Report prepared for Roads and Maritime Services, November 2013.

GHD, 2013e, Nature Conservation Trust Biodiversity offset site: Proposed Olympic Highway realignment at Kapooka. Report prepared for Roads and Maritime Services, November 2013.

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nghenvironmental, 2013a, Woodland Bird Component for Species Impact Statement Realignment of the Olympic Highway at Kapooka woodland bird surveys – winter. Draft report prepared by nghenvironmental for Roads and Maritime Services, September 2013.

nghenvironmental, 2013b, Species Impact Statement – Woodland Bird Component Realignment of the Olympic Highway at Kapooka woodland bird surveys – spring. Draft report prepared by nghenvironmental for Roads and Maritime Services, November 2013.

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9.2 Reliability of information

This preliminary documentation draws upon the information in a review of environmental factors (GHD 2013a) and species impact statement (GHD 2013b). Specialist studies of Box-Gum Woodland, woodland birds and Squirrel Gliders were included in the preparation of the species impact statement. The specialist studies included surveys and analysis by ecologists with industry recognised skills in each of these areas.

The preliminary documentation, species impact statement and review of environmental factors have been reviewed by principal environmental consultants from GHD and by the RMS Environment Branch and RMS – South West Region. These reviews also covered the specialist studies that were prepared for the proposal.

The reports were prepared before the detailed design of the proposal was completed; however it is unlikely that the detailed design would significantly change the impacts that have been assessed.

9.3 Uncertainties in the information

Inherent uncertainties are usually associated with ecological impact assessments. To manage this risk, the assessment is based on the most up to date information available for the study area. As discussed in section 9.2, uncertainties have been minimised as far as possible through the preparation of specialist studies. These studies have included surveys and analysis by ecologists with industry recognised skills in each of these areas.

The rate of Squirrel Glider mortality from collisions with vehicles is difficult to quantify, as described in section 4.1.4. Crossing structures will be installed to assist Squirrel Gliders to cross the proposal as described in section 5.2.

As identified in section 4.2.5, the impacts of lighting and noise on Squirrel Gliders are currently unknown; however, have the potential to affect the species (ARCUE 2013, see Appendix D). A safeguard has been included to minimise the impact of lighting on nocturnal fauna as far as is practicable while maintaining traffic safety requirements (see section 5.11). Overall noise is unlikely to be substantially greater than what is currently experienced in the study area.