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Dear Ms. Armstrong

RCL Foods Consumer (Pty) Ltd – Correspondence dated 22 July 2016
EIA No: 14/12/16/3/3/2/745
Your Reference: ARMSTRONGA/MAT3639

Your letter dated 22 July 2016 in response to the meeting held with Department of Environmental Affairs on 13 July 2016 has reference.

Meeting with DEA

The outcomes of our meeting on 13 July 2016, as summarised in Mr Hassam's email of 14 July 2016, were as follows

- RCL to submit a letter to Eskom by 22 July 2016, with an indication of the additional information /studies required from Eskom
- Eskom to respond to RCL's letter by 31 July 2016 and the parties to agree on the process of negotiation on a way forward
- Eskom and RCL have agreed to suspend the administration of the appeal in respect of the transmission power-lines until 31 October 2016
- Both RCL and Eskom to submit supplementary grounds of appeal and responding statements, should the process of negotiation not result in a resolution of the appeal

The Appeal

Mr Hassam stated that whilst the authorised transmission power-line, amendment application 12/12/20/1397/3/AM2 and related appeal (referred to as the "Transmission power-line amendment application") and sub-station application 14/12/16/3/3/2/745 (referred to as the "Substation application") are interrelated, discussions in respect of the sub-station and objections were premature and should be raised in the appropriate forum

At the outset it must be noted (taking into account the views expressed by Mr Hassam referred to in the above paragraph) that the majority of the issues raised in your letter pertain to the "Sub-station application" which is not the subject of the appeal. However, in the interest of completeness and sharing of information, we have addressed the issues raised in this regard

Proposed solution to issue raised in appeal

The possible impact of the transmission power-lines on the RCL poultry farming activities is the main reason for the Appeal. Eskom has proposed the following solution to the issue

Firstly, the transmission power-line will be re-routed to a route which will not traverse the RCL property. All the recent specialist studies indicate that as a result, there will no longer be any impact on the RCL property. Secondly, the current amendment application is to construct a single 765kV transmission power-line rather than two 400kV transmission power-lines. This also reduces the overall impact of transmission power-line construction and maintenance activities.

Response to the letter dated 22 July 2016

Eskom's response follows the same numbering as per your letter of 22 July 2016

- 1 This point is related to the Sub-station Application rather than the authorised "transmission power-line and amendment application". Annexure "A" depicts suggested sub-station sites which are technically not feasible. The suggested sites go over existing roads and are close to N3 national highway. Furthermore, the topography for the sites is not suitable for the substation as it is steep.
- 2 The re-consideration of alternative Venus Sigma Hector Ariadne (VSHA) transmission power-line corridors is not supported. Firstly, these alternatives do not link to the current sub-station site, meaning new linking corridors would need to be assessed. This would result in additional impacts and would not resolve the issue - for example, a route linking the Central or Western corridor to the suggested sub-station sites alternatives 1 and 2 would most likely need to cross RCL's laying farm.

Furthermore, there are numerous stakeholders and interest groups' properties within the Western and Central corridors. Thus, Eskom finds it unreasonable that although the RCL property traverses half of a single corridor for approximately 3km, RCL is of the view that its interest should have been the key deciding factor in the assessment of three corridors which are each over 100km in length.

- 3 Blasting relates to the "Sub-station application". A detailed Geotechnical Investigation as well as a Blasting Specialist Report has been done. These will be available for review and comment during the public review period for the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) for the current Substation application. During this review period, Eskom and ACER will arrange a key stakeholder meeting with RCL to discuss all the DEIR findings. Please note that no blasting will be required for the construction of the transmission power-lines.
- 4 As stated previously, a 765kV transmission power-line route around RCL properties was proposed and confirmed as a solution in writing previously. The two double circuit 400kV transmission power-lines alignments form part of the current sub-station application (14/12/16/3/3/2/745) and were never going to cross RCL property. These alignments are provided in the Draft Sub-station EIR.
- 5 Provisional (not final) construction programme for the proposed transmission power-lines is provided in the DEIR and the Transmission power-line Amendment report, both reports will be made available for comment.
- 6 Refer to paragraph 5 above.
- 7 This relates to blasting and the "Sub-station application". Vibrations, noise and pressure waves are all covered in the Blasting Specialist Report and the Veterinarian Report also provides comment in this regard. These will be available for review and comment during the public review period for the Draft EIR. No blasting will be required for the construction of the transmission power-lines.
- 8 Large compactors, if used, can typically result in vibrations up to a distance of approximately 50m away. Thus, it is not likely that ground vibration from heavy machinery or compactors will be perceptible or result in any impact upon poultry over 400m away. Furthermore, this relates to the "Sub-station application" and not the transmission power-line, amendment application and appeal process.
- 9 A detailed Geotechnical report for the Isundu site has been undertaken and the site does not have the same foundation problems as found at the Sigma sub-station site. No further detailed costing has been done yet, but platform cost comparisons are provided in the Draft EIR to be released for comment.
- 10 Detailed design drawings are unlikely to assist RCL in this regard. A detailed description of the sub-station components and construction thereof, estimated tasks and their duration are provided in the

- Draft EIR Eskom will be willing to provide further information should it be required after reviewing the Draft Isundu Sub-station EIR
- 11 This point is related to the "Sub-station application" as minimal dust will be generated during the construction of transmission power-lines due to the very small areas cleared for the transmission power-line tower foundations. An Air Quality specialist study has been done on dust impacts related to the sub-station and mitigation measures are proposed in the Draft EIR. There appears to be uncertainty with regard to acceptable dust levels for poultry (as highlighted in the Draft EIR), thus, Eskom requests that RCL provide (if this information is available) the historical levels of dust typically found in their laying houses and the tolerance levels of their poultry.
 - 12 This point is related to the "sub-station application" as the transmission power-lines will not have any lights. Lighting risks have been addressed in the Draft Isundu Sub-station EIR and suitable mitigation measures proposed. Lighting details or impacts can be further discussed during the Draft EIR public review period.
 - 13 A Noise Specialist study has been done for the "Sub-station application" and will be made available during the public review period of the Draft Isundu Sub-station EIR. Helicopters may be used for maintenance or inspection of transmission power-lines. Helicopter noise will be no more than has occurred as a result of the transmission power-line which has been located on the RCL property since the 1970's. Furthermore, as outlined in points 2 and 4 above the proposed transmission power-lines routes will not cross the RCL property.
 - 14 Noise from the transmission power-lines is addressed in the EMF and Noise specialist studies. Furthermore, as stated in points 2 and 4 above, the proposed transmission power-line routes will not cross RCL property.
 - 15 No transmission power-line construction staff or sub-station construction staff will need to access RCL property as the entire proposed route will not traverse its property. RCL is already fenced off in accordance with existing access protocols. Should access be required in order to mitigate impacts related to the "Sub-station application", RCL's requirements for access and control to effect this mitigation can be negotiated and agreed upon.
 - 16 This point is related to the "Sub-station application". The impact of traffic has been covered in the Draft Isundu Sub-station EIR. Further discussion or clarification can be addressed during the Draft EIR public review period.
 - 17 Eskom has taken note of RCL's initial submission regarding the closure of the chicken houses. However, any claim for mitigation costs and/or actual losses incurred by RCL will have to be assessed by an independent valuer to ensure fairness. RCL must allow Eskom access to its property for the purposes of the assessment / valuation.

In conclusion, Eskom notes that no additional information or studies in regard to the proposed transmission power-lines and/or the appeal have been requested as referred to in Mr Hassam's email. With respect to the appeal process, Eskom is of the view that its proposal which avoids the RCL property (by the re-routing of the transmission power-line alignment around RCL property) is appropriate in the circumstance as RCL will no longer be impacted by the proposed transmission power-line.

The issues regarding the "substation application" have been addressed in the Draft Isundu Sub-station EIR. This report is anticipated to be released for public comment before the end of September 2016 and a further key stakeholder meeting will be arranged with RCL to discuss the findings. During this meeting and the review period Eskom is willing to further discuss and clarify any outstanding issues of concern related to the proposed sub-station.

Yours sincerely

Archibald Mogokonyane

PROGRAMME-MANAGER: LAND DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT