Guidance to Proponents for Submitting Electronic Files
for the Electronic Project Information Centre (e-PIC)

The Environmental Assessment Office (EAO) publishes environmental assessment documentation such as Project Descriptions, Valued Components documents, Application Information Requirements (AIR), Applications and other related information on the electronic Project Information Centre (e-PIC).

Applicable project documentation must be submitted to EAO in accordance with the guidelines below. This applies to documentation prepared by Proponents and their consultants. Proponents are responsible for ensuring their consultants are aware of these guidelines.

Electronic Documentation – General Guidelines

1. Documentation must be submitted to the EAO in a manner appropriate for the document size and in accordance with the Project requirements. Acceptable methods for submitting files include: CD, DVD, flash drive and email, as appropriate. Submissions using the Proponent's FTP site or other secure web-based service are also acceptable.

2. Submissions should generally be in PDF format, although other formats may be requested by the EAO. Files must be searchable (i.e., must not be an image). Scans of hard copy documents are not acceptable.

3. PDF files must contain bookmarks that enable a reader to navigate to specific points of interest within the document using the bookmark links (navigation pane). Section and sub-section headings should be bookmarked to the extent practical.

4. Files must not have security limitations or passwords of any kind.

5. The Table of Contents as a separate document can be helpful in providing a standalone overview of the submission package.

6. Pictures can dramatically increase the file size of a document in PDF format. Making the picture a JPEG (.jpg) before inserting it can help reduce the file size.
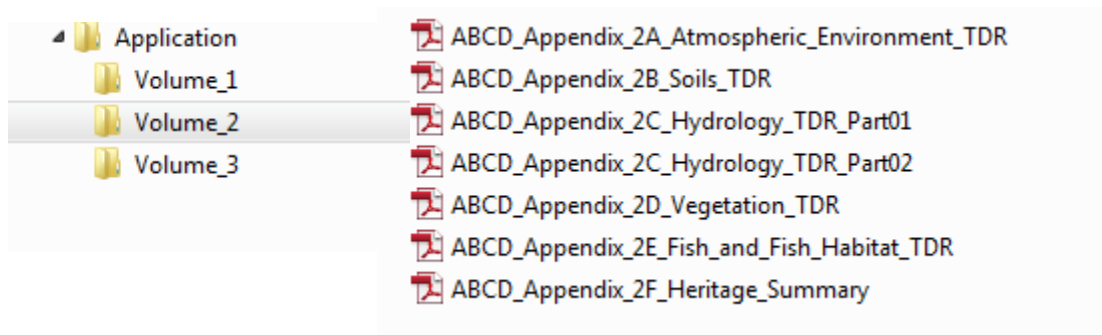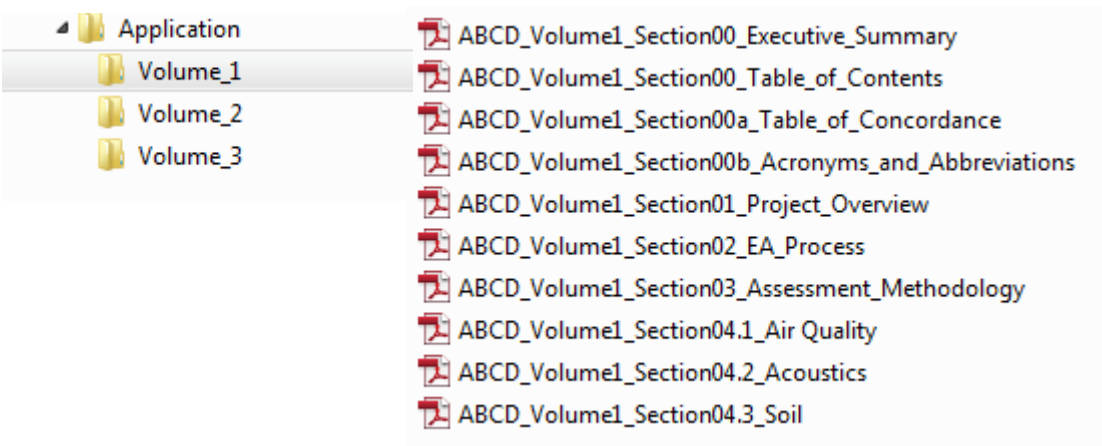
7. Small files of the same type may be combined, where appropriate, to facilitate readability.

8. Where practical, very large files should be broken down into smaller, more manageable file sizes. This is to facilitate the public's ease of downloading documents from EAO's website. A maximum file size of 50 MB is the recommended upper limit; however, slightly larger file sizes may be appropriate. Where file-splitting is required, it should be completed at a logical break in the document, such as at the end of a section or chapter. Do not split a file mid-way through a chapter or at a location that may cause confusion for the reader.

Format of Applications

Applications for Environmental Assessment (EA) Certificates are usually large documents with several volumes of text, tables, figures and drawings. There are two formats that the Proponent may use when submitting their Application:

1. *Format 1: (Preferred)*

This format organizes the Application by volume. All figures, drawings, tables and additional information for a given volume are shown within that volume's folder. There are no sub-folders within the volume folders. The files are named such that the reader can proceed sequentially through the list of files (when sorted by file name). Refer to the *Naming Convention* section below for additional information.

▲ 📁 Application
　　📁 Volume_1
　　📁 Volume_2
　　📁 Volume_3

📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section00_Executive_Summary
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section00_Table_of_Contents
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section00a_Table_of_Concordance
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section00b_Acronyms_and_Abbreviations
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section01_Project_Overview
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section02_EA_Process
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section03_Assessment_Methodology
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section04.1_Air Quality
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section04.2_Acoustics
📄 ABCD_Volume1_Section04.3_Soil

▲ 📁 Application
　　📁 Volume_1
　　📁 Volume_2
　　📁 Volume_3

📄 ABCD_Appendix_2A_Atmospheric_Environment_TDR
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2B_Soils_TDR
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2C_Hydrology_TDR_Part01
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2C_Hydrology_TDR_Part02
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2D_Vegetation_TDR
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2E_Fish_and_Fish_Habitat_TDR
📄 ABCD_Appendix_2F_Heritage_Summary

Using this format, it is possible to have, for example, Figure 1.1 in each volume. Therefore, each file must be named appropriately and completely for the volume it is within. Examples of acceptable file names include:

- *ABCD_Volume1_Section1_Introduction;*
- *ABCD_Volume1_Section2_EA_Process;*
- *ABCD_Volume1_AppendixA_Groundwater_TDR; and*
- *ABCD_Volume1_Figure2.5_Aerial_View.*

2. *Format 2:*

This format has the Application organized into folders that contain the same (or similar) file types. For example, the drawings for all volumes are grouped in the drawings folder, the figures for all volumes are grouped in the figures folder, etc. There are no sub-folders within the drawings, figures, etc. folders.
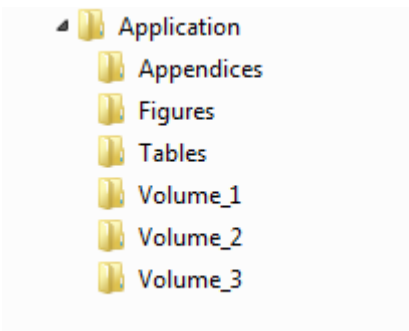
Using this format, the appendices, figures, etc., are not necessarily specific to a volume; they are part of the overall application. Therefore, it is sufficient to name files such as:

- *ABCD_AppendixA_Data_Log;* and
- *ABCD_Figure1.1_Lake_Echo.*

Folders and Sub-Folders

Regardless of the file structure used (Format 1 or 2 above), only two levels of folders should be used. In Format 1, the Application level may contain as many sub-folders as needed, but the volume sub-folders should contain files only. In Format 2, the Application level may have as many sub-folders as needed, but in the next level, where folders such as "Appendices", "Tables" etc. are located, those folders are to contain files only. Additional sub-folders should not be used.

Naming Convention

EAO has a standardized naming convention to facilitate the public's access to information from the electronic Project Information File (e-PIC) website. All files submitted to EAO shall adhere to the following requirements:

- The file names must reflect the contents of the document and must not contain slashes, brackets, commas, symbols or other special characters.
- The file name must start with the 4-letter Project identifier. For example, the code for the ABCD Coal Mine Project is ABCD.
- The length of the file name should be kept as short as possible, but in any case must not exceed 50 characters.
- Where practical, underscores (_) or dashes (-) should be used in lieu of spaces.
- The file name must include the date. The following format is preferred: YYYYMMDD.
- Files shall be named such that the reader can proceed sequentially through the list of files (when sorted by file name).

In summary, the naming convention is as follows:

Project_Volume or Section_File Contents_YYYYMMDD

Example: *ABCD_Volume1_Section04.3_Greenhouse_Gases_20141031*

This file refers to Volume 1, Section 4.3 on Greenhouse Gases in the Application for the ABCD Coal Mine Project, submitted on October 31, 2014.

Additional Information

Submissions that do not adhere to the above guidelines may be returned to the Proponent for re-submission at EAO's discretion. In the Application Evaluation phase, electronic submission issues may be included in EAO's screening letter to the Proponent.

For further information or clarification on these requirements, please contact the Business Applications Administrator by phone at (250) 356-7441 or by e-mail at eaosupport@gov.bc.ca.