

# Environmental Assessment Program

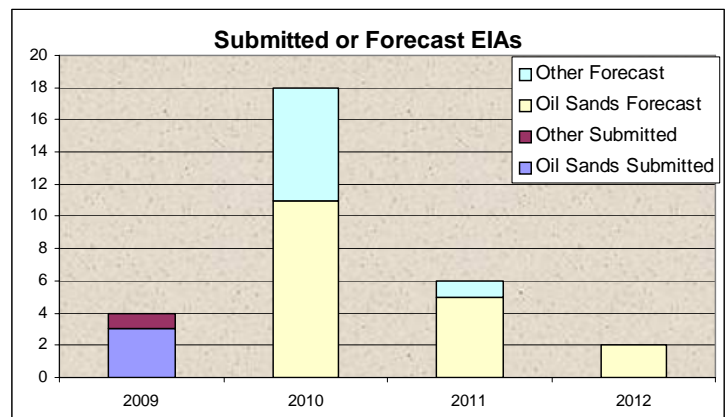
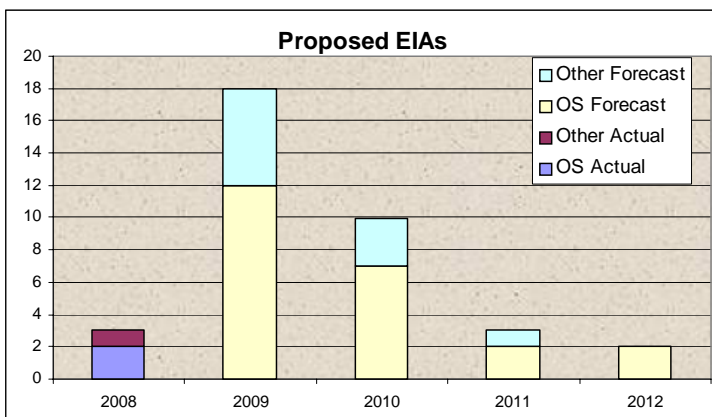
## Environmental Assessment Program 2009 Year-End Statistics

The year-end Statistics are expanded to include comparisons of key statistics against the start of the year to examine trends. The year-end Statistics also include information on some long-term trends.

### Upcoming Environmental Impact Assessment Reports

The charts below show the number of EIA reports submitted or proposed over the next several years (the chart on the left shows the status as of December 31, 2008; the one on the right shows status as of December 31, 2009). The charts separate out oil sands projects (mines, upgraders and *in-situ*/SAGD projects), which have formed the majority of the EIA workload in recent years, and other projects.

The number of projects proposed for submission in 2009 changed dramatically over the year, likely reflecting the significant changes in economic conditions. Over the year the following changes to the number of planned submissions occurred: 2009 (-16); 2010 (+8); 2011 (+3); 2012(0)<sup>1</sup>. As with last year, most projects were shifted to future years as opposed to being cancelled outright.

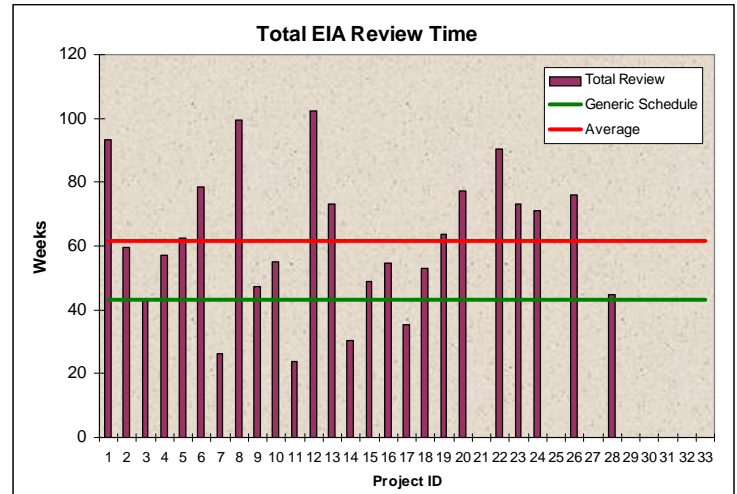


<sup>1</sup> The numbers may not balance (i.e., sum to zero) as some projects may be added or deleted during the year.

## Review Time Performance

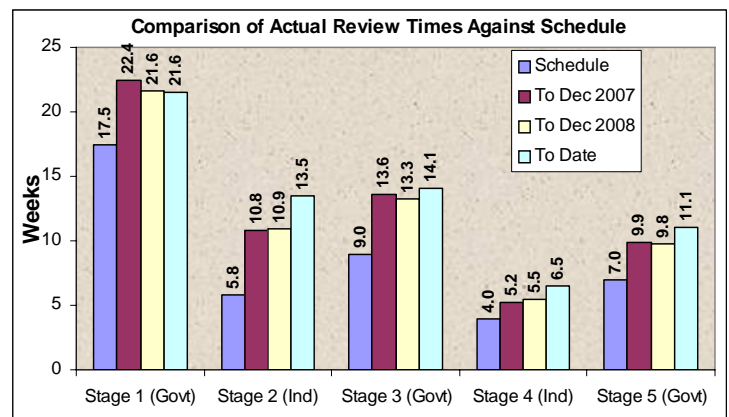
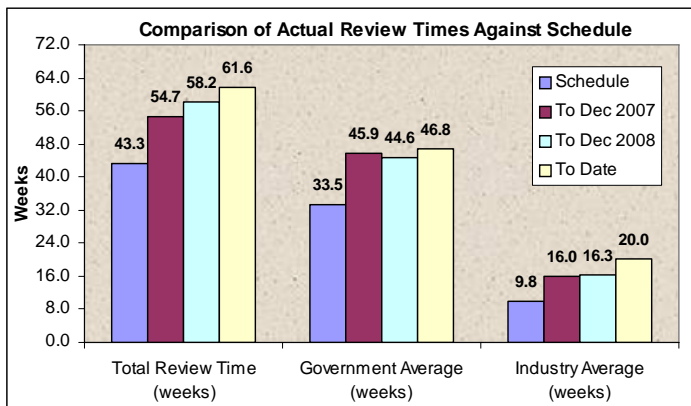
Alberta Environment has adopted a standard review schedule for EIA projects of 43.3 weeks. The time period starts when the review begins and ends when the Director makes the decision that the EIA report is complete. The green line shows the 43.3 week target and the red line the average performance. In 2009 projects 20, 22, 23, 24, 26 and 28 reached the EIA completeness stage.

The chart shows the variability in review times for different projects. Empty columns indicate projects that are still under review as of this update. The variability in performance is a reflection of the time taken by the government review teams and the time taken by the proponent in responding to the Supplemental Information Requests, as well as the complexity of the project and whether any significant project updates were submitted during the review.



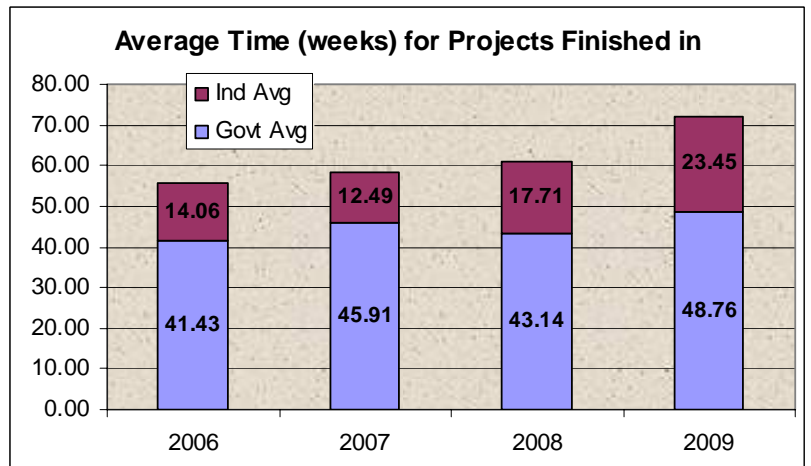
The chart on the left below shows the relative performance of the government review teams and proponents in meeting the times in the standard review schedule. The chart on the right breaks down the performance data by review stage.

- Stage 1 (Government) – Review EIA and send SIRs to Proponent
- Stage 2 (Industry) – Respond to SIRs
- Stage 3 (Government) – Review response and send any additional SIRs to Proponent
- Stage 4 (Industry) – Respond to SIRs
- Stage 5 (Government) – Review response and send EIA Completeness Letter to Board



The two charts above track cumulative performance (to the end of December 2007, 2008 and 2009) for all of the projects in the top chart. The sum of the individual times does not equal the Total Review Time since projects are at various stages of the review (i.e., only 25 projects may have been completed while 29 have reached Stage 1).

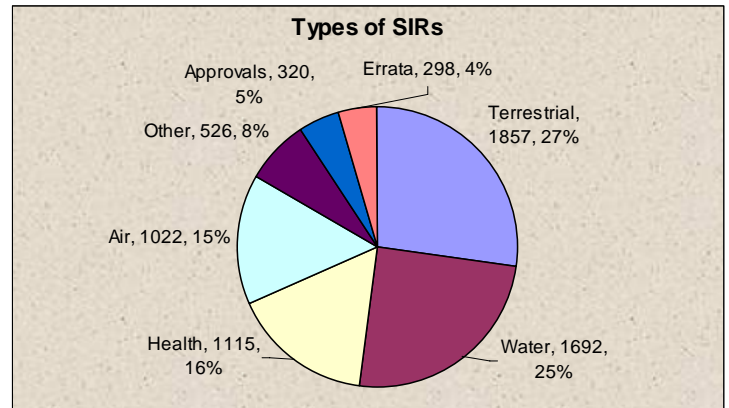
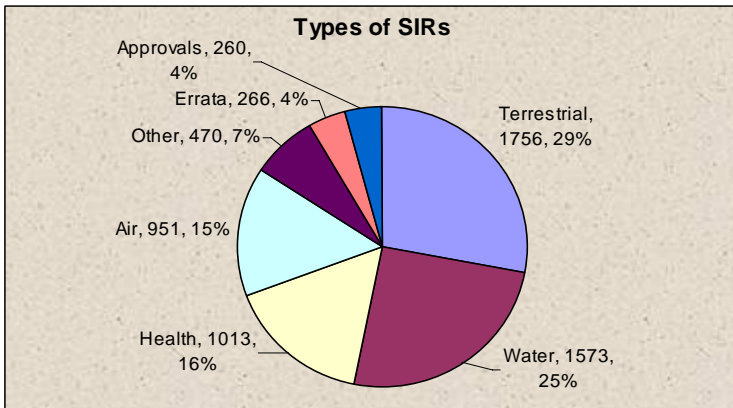
The chart to the right shows the average length of time for reviews completed in a given year (7 in 2006; 5 in 2007; 7 in 2008 and 6 in 2009). The increasing time to complete reviews reflects delays by both government and industry and some very large outliers in each year.



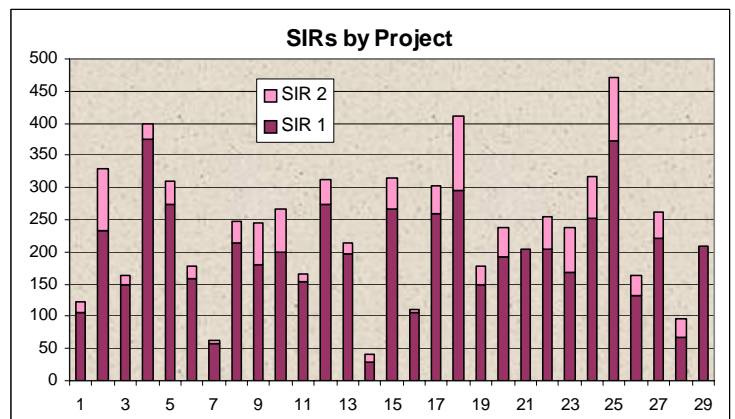
### Supplemental Information Requests

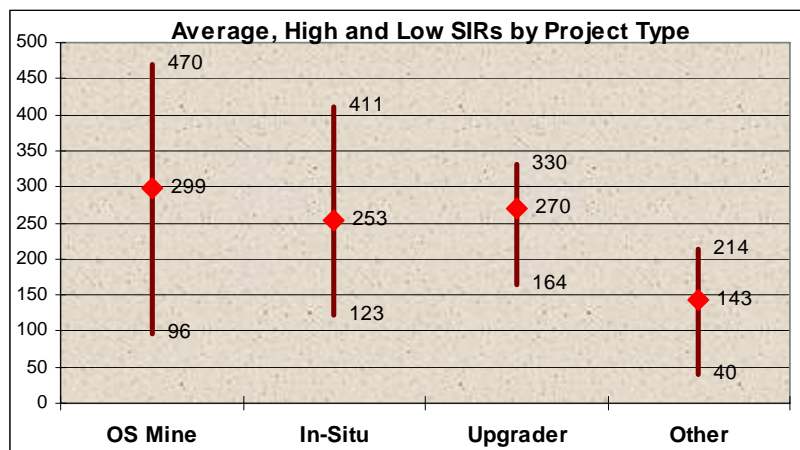
During the review of an EIA report and associated applications the review teams may require additional information. This additional information is solicited from the Proponent through the Supplemental Information Request (SIR) process. Sometimes more than one round of Supplemental Information Requests is required.

The charts below show the types of questions asked by the review teams. The Terrestrial and Water teams have the largest number of questions because of the wide diversity of issues they cover. The overall trends are the same from 2008 (left chart) to 2009 (right) but there have been very small changes in Terrestrial, Other and Approvals percentages. In 2009, 541 SIR questions were asked.



The chart to the right shows the variability in the number of questions asked. The Project IDs are the same as those in the Review Time chart (top of page 2).





The chart to the left shows the average number of SIRs by project type, as well as the high and low numbers. Generally, oil sands projects are more complex and generate more questions.

## Fast Stats

	Dec 2008	Dec 2009
Number of EIAs currently under review	9	5
Number of EIA reviews completed this year <sup>2</sup>	7	6
Average weeks from Final Terms of Reference to submission of EIA	21.2	21.1
Average weeks from submission of EIA to start of review	9.8	10.3
Number of federal referrals completed <sup>3</sup>	36	21
Average weeks to complete federal referral	4.4	3.7
Number of e-mail notification system subscribers <sup>4</sup>	520	702
Number of e-mail system postings	33	54
Number of 3PC Contracts <sup>5</sup> (Active/Completed)	14 (7/7)	16 (11/5)
Number of Different 3PC Contractors	6	7
Average 3PC Team Size	13	13
Total Amount Spent to Date on 3PC Projects	\$2.735M	\$3.275
Total 3PC Hours Billed to Date	17,947	21,249

<sup>2</sup> The following project reviews were completed in 2009: Shell Canada Limited Scotford Upgrader 2; Canadian Natural Resources Limited Kirby In-Situ; Total E&P Canada Ltd. Total Upgrader; StatoilHydro Canada Ltd. Kai Kos Dehseh SAGD; Syncrude Canada Ltd. South West Sand Storage Conversion; Coal Valley Resources Inc. Mercoal West / Yellowhead Tower Mine Expansion.

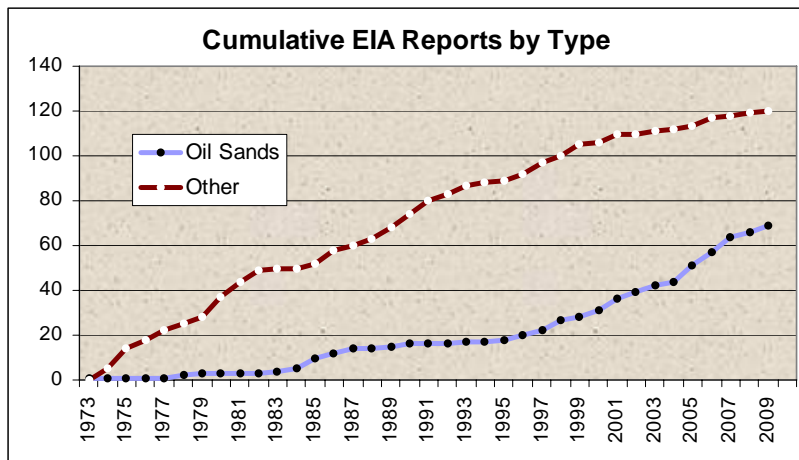
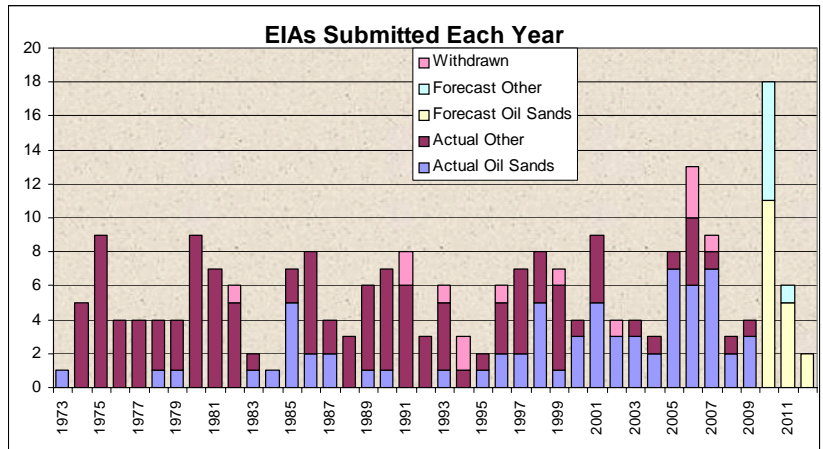
<sup>3</sup> The *Canada-Alberta Agreement for Environmental Assessment Cooperation* provides Alberta the opportunity to comment on, or participate in, the review of projects in Alberta that trigger the federal environmental assessment process but do not require an EIA under the *Environmental Protection and Enhancement Act*.

<sup>4</sup> If you are interested in receiving EIA status updates click on the *E-mail Information Service* link on the upper left-hand corner of the webpage. You will be asked to input your e-mail address and will then receive an e-mail notifying you about the service.

<sup>5</sup> 3PC stands for Third Party Contracting. Alberta Environment started contracting out the review of the EIA and related applications to consulting firms in 2007. The Proponent pays for the reviews but Alberta Environment selects the consulting firm and provides the direction for the work. See the website under the 3PC heading for more information.

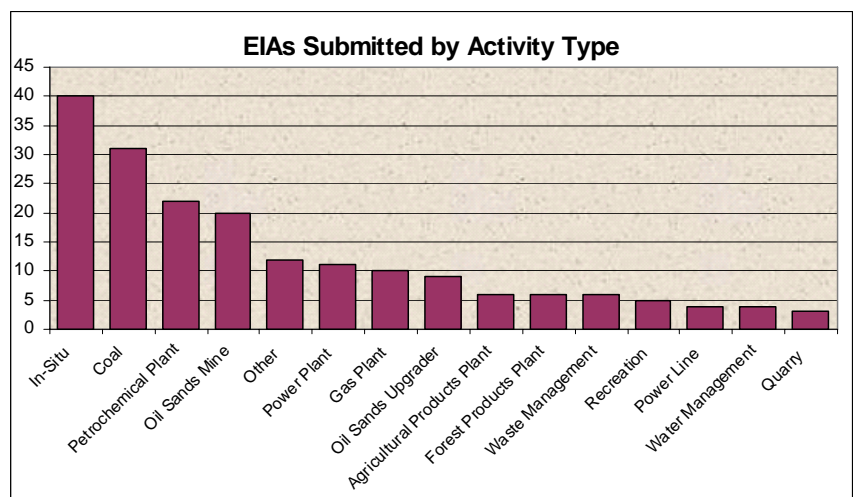
## Long-Term Trends

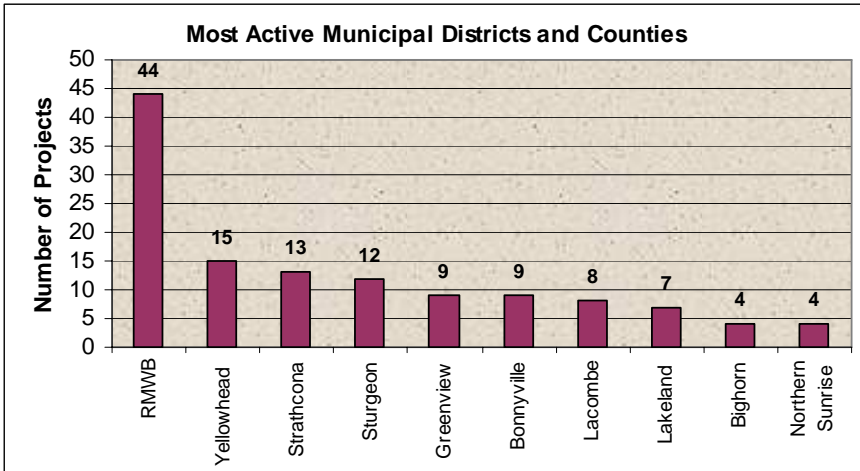
The chart to the right shows the number of EIA reports submitted each year. Projects in the chart shown as *Withdrawn* were submitted and then withdrawn or cancelled by the Proponent at some time prior to the EIA completeness decision. All other charts in this report exclude withdrawn projects.



The chart to the left shows the running submission totals, split into oil sands and non-oil sands projects.

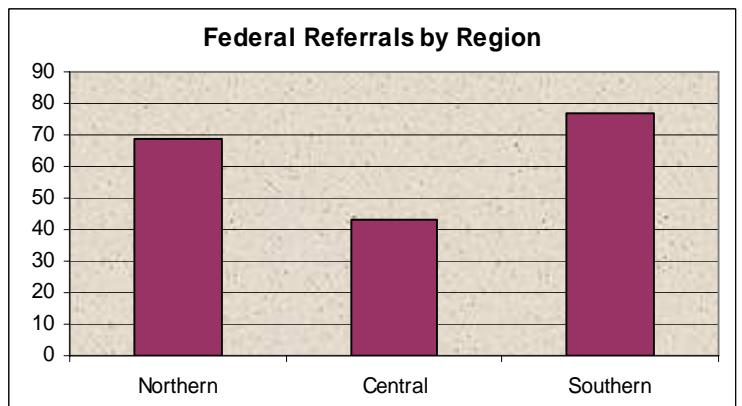
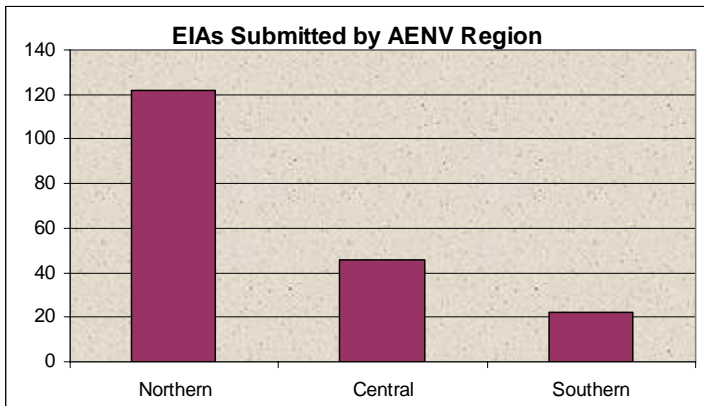
The chart to the right shows the number of EIA reports by project type (in-situ and coal projects dominate). Many of the other categories (e.g., gas plant, agricultural products plant, forest products plant, recreation) have not had submissions in several years. Power lines no longer require EIA reports.



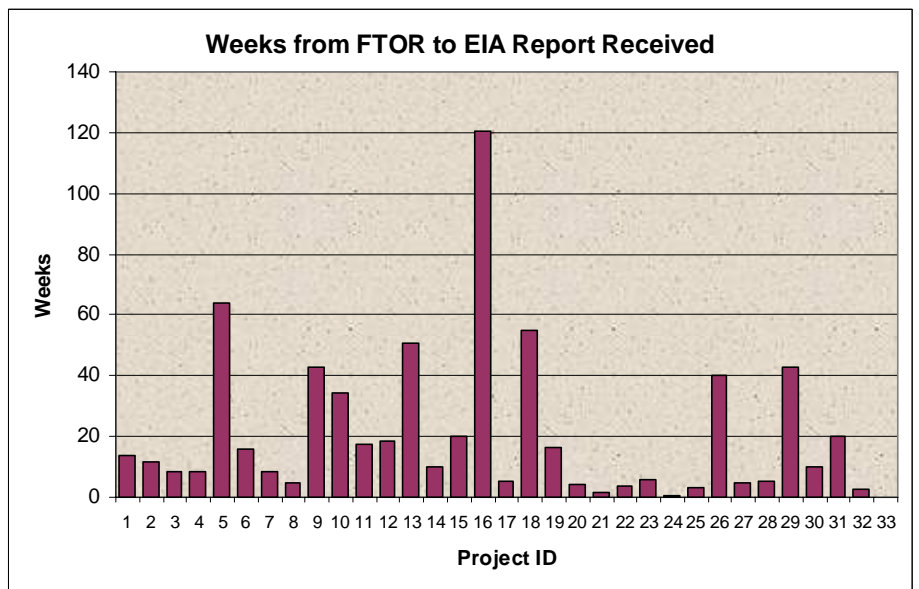


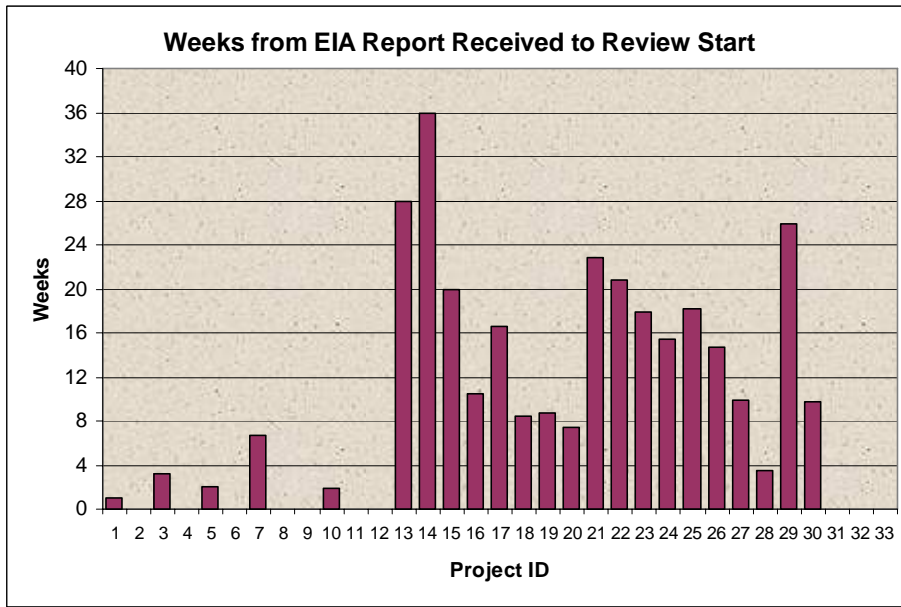
The chart on the left shows the top ten municipalities in which EIA projects are located (RMWB = Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo). The distribution is a direct reflection of the distribution of activity types shown above.

The charts below show the number of EIA projects (left) and federal referral projects (right) by Alberta Environment Region. The dominance of Northern Region EIA projects reflects oil sands development, in particular in-situ projects. The larger proportion of federal referral projects in the Southern Region is a reflection of the prevalence of federal funding for municipal projects.



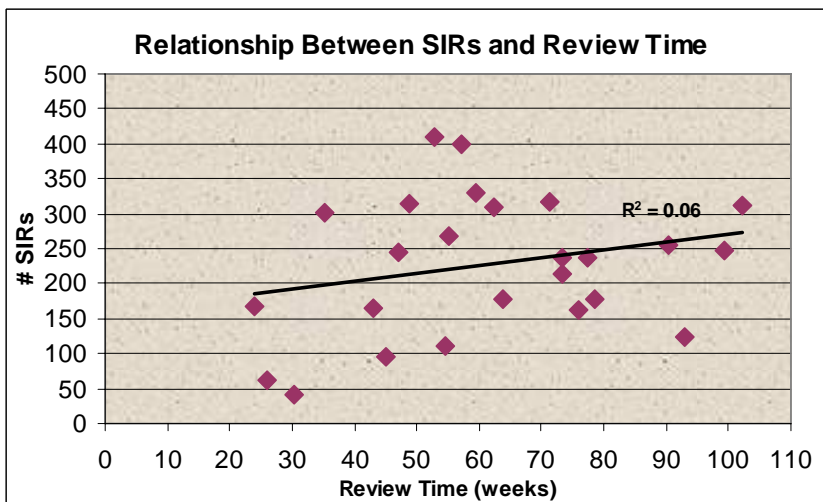
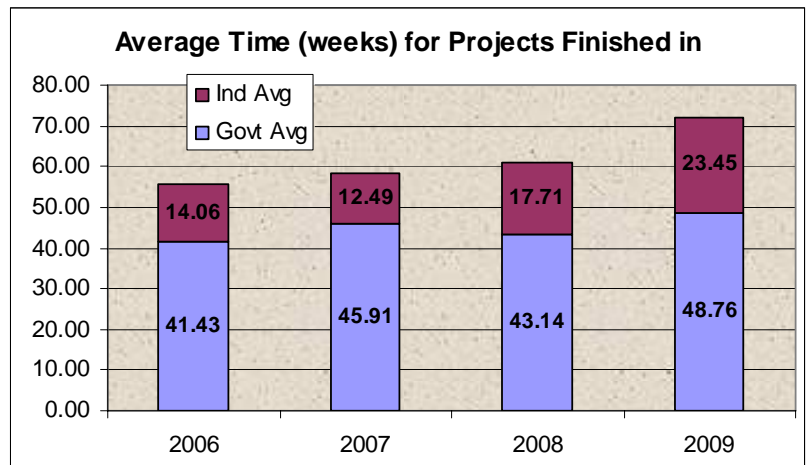
The chart on the right shows the number of weeks elapsing between the time the Final Terms of Reference are published and the Proponent submits their EIA report. Proponents and their consultants have become so familiar with the expected contents of EIA reports that they have done most of the field work for the report prior to finalizing the Terms of Reference, as shown by the short time spans between publication and submission.





The chart to the left shows the elapsed time between submission of the EIA report to start of the review. The significant increase in time starting at Project 13 is what triggered the need for the 3PC initiative. 3PC provided the capacity to start reviews. The second increase at Project 21 occurred when the original target of using 3PC for six projects was reached. A decision was made at this point to use 3PC for all projects to ensure project reviews could start.

The review performance data on page 2 provide cumulative review stats (i.e., the 2007 data are for 12 projects while the 2009 data are for 25 projects). The chart to the right shows the average length of time for reviews completed in a given year.



The final chart shows the relationship between the number of SIRs and the review time. Many people assume that length of review time is a reflection of EIA report quality, and further assume that report quality is reflected in the number of SIRs (i.e., a project that generates a lot of SIRs must be poorer quality and therefore take a longer time to review). The chart suggests there is no clear relationship between number of SIRs and length of review.