



Australian Government
**Department of Industry,
Science and Resources**

Senator Lisa Darmanin
Chair
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Darmanin

Following a review of Hansard at the Senate Estimates hearing on 12 February 2026. I am writing to correct the below evidence/information provided on the day.

The following exchange occurred between Senator Hodgins-May and myself and Mr William Tan, General Manager, Offshore Decommissioning Directorate:

Senator HODGINS-MAY: Did DISR have a role in the Timor-Leste Australia Economic and Business Conference 2025 from 7 to 8 August?

Ms Chard: Yes, we did have some involvement in that.

Senator HODGINS-MAY: What was the role that you played?

Ms Chard: To give you the specifics, I'll just ask one of my colleagues.

Mr Tan: That was funded a little bit before I started in the role, but I believe the Australian government funded participation for Timor-Leste officials to be at that conference.

Senator HODGINS-MAY: Perhaps I can get on notice any other role that we played.

Ms Quinn: I just want to check the details. What conference are you referring to?

Senator HODGINS-MAY: The Timor-Leste Australia Economic and Business Conference 2025.

Ms Quinn: Okay.

Ms Chard: We'll take it on notice. My understanding is that we participated in an information booth at the conference and that we were also involved in facilitating a couple of sessions at the conference, as well as supporting some of the Timor-Leste participation. But we'll take it on notice to give you more specific detail on that.

Senator HODGINS-MAY: That'd be great. Thank you. Can the department rule out the promotion of fossil fuel projects or their companies to the Timorese people?

Ms Chard: It's certainly not the department's role to promote projects as such. We have a role in considering the particular development proposal for the Sunrise Joint Venture. The Sunrise Joint Venture participants are in the process of developing a concept for how that project will be developed, and the department plays a role in assessing the technical and commercial viability of that. Australia has been committed to supporting any development proposal that is both technically viable and commercially viable, but, beyond that, we have no role in promoting projects in any particular way.

Senator Ayres: Just to be clear, the Prime Minister was in Timor-Leste in January. He signed a joint declaration with the Prime Minister of Timor-Leste that acknowledged their commitment to onshore

processing of the gas from Greater Sunrise. This is a very significant economic resilience opportunity for that country. For all of the reasons that you can imagine, the Australian government is intensifying our cooperation with the government of Timor-Leste for economic development reasons and all the regional stability reasons that I probably don't need to go through.

The Timor-Leste Australia Economic and Business Conference 2025 was organised by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) under the PROSIVU (A Partnership for Inclusive Prosperity/Parceria ba Prosperidade Inkluzivu) Program. The Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) did not attend this event nor fund the participation of Timor-Leste officials.

I apologise for any inconvenience caused and ask that you alert other members of the Committee to this correction.

Yours sincerely



Sam Chard
Head of Oil and Gas Division

13 March 2026