

Mr Mark Fitt
Committee Secretary
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Submitted electronically

Dear Mr Fitt

Please accept this correspondence as a submission from the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) to the Senate Economics Legislation Committee inquiry into the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Amendment (Cross-boundary Greenhouse Gas Titles and Other Measures) Bill 2019 and the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Regulatory Levies) Amendment (Miscellaneous Measures) Bill 2019 (the Bills).

The Bills contain a number of amendments relevant to the delivery of NOPSEMA's functions as the offshore energy regulator. Most notably this includes amendments to ensure that NOPSEMA is able to rapidly and comprehensively respond in the event of an oil pollution emergency originating in Commonwealth waters. The legislative framework in its current form limits NOPSEMA's flexibility and agility as a regulator and can cause unnecessary delays in NOPSEMA's ability to urgently access locations and monitor compliance with emergency response arrangements.

In the event of a significant offshore incident, the need for Government to obtain and maintain accurate, reliable and independent situational awareness is paramount. This requires capacity for Government to monitor compliance in real time and to require additional actions where necessary to ensure an effective and timely emergency response.

Amendments contained in the Bills will ensure that, in the unlikely event that an oil spill originating in Commonwealth waters crosses into an area of State or Northern Territory jurisdiction, NOPSEMA has the necessary suite of compliance monitoring and enforcement powers to verify compliance first hand and intervene where necessary to protect people and the environment.

In addition the Bills contain amendments that will make NOPSEMA the responsible regulator for cross-boundary greenhouse gas titles. This arrangement will ensure a streamlined regulatory framework with a single independent regulator for both approvals and compliance monitoring.

NOPSEMA fully support the passage of the Bills to further enhance the effectiveness of the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act legislative framework and NOPSEMA in protecting people and the environment.

Yours sincerely



Stuart Smith
Chief Executive Officer

7 January 2020