



4 November 2009

Mr Peter Hallahan
Committee Secretary
Standing Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs
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Dear Mr Hallahan,

Inquiry into the Native Title Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2009

Thank you for providing the Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association (APPEA) with the opportunity to make a submission to the Parliamentary inquiry into the Native Title Amendment Bill 2009 to the *Native Title Act 1993* ('NTA').

APPEA is the peak national body representing the oil and gas exploration, development and production industry in Australia. The Association's membership comprises companies that account for around 98 per cent of Australia's petroleum production and the vast majority of exploration.

Timely access to land to undertake exploration and appraisal activities on resources is critical for industries such as the upstream oil and gas sector. Over the years that the NTA has been in place, our industry has worked closely with Federal, State/Territory governments, native title representative bodies and native title holders and claimants to achieve the best possible outcome for both the industry and the community.

APPEA welcomes the amendments to the NTA as embodied in the Native Title Amendment Bill (No. 2) 2009. While these amendments do not directly impact on our industry's operations we consider that it is important for governments to ensure the well-being of the indigenous people of Australia. This Bill provides the framework for housing in indigenous communities that may be subject to native title. The Government's investment of \$5.5 billion over 10 years to address housing in indigenous communities is welcomed by Australia's oil and gas sector. We hope that this initiative will provide continued support to the indigenous people so that they can enjoy and benefit from their native title.

We look forward to the proclamation of these amendments in due course.

Mr Rangarajan Parimala, Director, Exploration and Access is the APPEA contact on this matter and will be happy to take any enquiries.

Yours sincerely

Belinda Robinson
CHIEF EXECUTIVE