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Mr Stephen Palethorpe
Committee Secretary
Senate Education and Employment Committee
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Via email: eec.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Mr Palethorpe

Defined offshore petroleum facilities in the Northern Territory are not covered by Northern Territory legislation and therefore, the Northern Territory will not make a detailed submission to this inquiry. The *Work Health and Safety (National Uniform Legislation) Act* (the WHS Act) does, however, apply to offshore vessels which may include support vessels not defined under the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* (the OPGG Act).

The Northern Territory supports the review for consistency in the requirements and application of workplace health and safety in the offshore petroleum industry to better align with the current model work health and safety laws.

Issues such as consistency of duties and rights of health and safety representatives, and improved collaboration in work health and safety (WHS) matters, were addressed through the creation and adoption of model WHS laws. This was further supported through the establishment and ongoing support of both Safe Work Australia and the Heads of Workplace Safety Authorities (a group that also includes the Chief Executive Officer of WorkSafe New Zealand and closely collaborates with WHS regulators in the mining industry).

However, it is the Northern Territory's observation that the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority rarely collaborates with these groups, nor appears to attempt to leverage off the work they undertake. This could be because the areas of jurisdiction are so different or that the pieces of legislation administered are so different.

The Northern Territory believes that alignment of the WHS Act and the OPGG Act will provide for safer workplaces and reduce potential confusion between activities on and offshore and between vessels. Specific offshore petroleum regulations could be drafted to suit industry requirements (just as the model WHS regulations for mining were drafted specifically for the mining industry). This may facilitate better use of human resources and provide an avenue for resource sharing to reduce business risks and support the provision of consistent advice.

We look forward to reading the outcomes of this review.

Yours sincerely

NATASHA FYLES

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