

## July 2024

Committee Secretary  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment & Communications  
Department of the Senate  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

### RE: Response to Question on Notice

Senator Hanson-Young (Chair)	Tamboran Response
1. In June 2023, 'Not to deal' commitments were made with the five proponents for the Middle Arm Industrial Precinct, with preferred sites set aside for up to 12 months. These commitments are due to expire in June 2024. Please set out the next steps relating to your commitment, including whether it will be extended, and any consequences for your proposed activity on the site if the commitment lapses.	<p>The 'Not to Deal' commitment over the MASDP acreage was extended to 31 December 2024 following the receipt of a letter from the Northern Territory Government on 29 February 2024.</p> <p>During this 'Not to Deal' period Tamboran will complete the Concept Select phase for the NTLNG project and will share the results with the NT Government in support of securing an interim lease that will enable further progress on the NTLNG project.</p>



2. Date of meeting between Tamboran and Environment Minister related to the water trigger	Tamboran met with the Department of Climate Change, Energy and Water on the 11 June 2024 and with the Environment Minister's advisor on the 19 April 2024.
3. Has Tamboran been fined for any breaches relating to their water use in the Northern Territory?	<p>Tamboran received three penalty infringement notices issued under the Petroleum Regulations toward the end of 2022 and has not received any since (<b>Infringement Notices</b>).</p> <p>The Infringement Notices were derived from a single incident at the Maverick Well Pad that was self-reported.</p> <p>The wastewater identified was predominantly groundwater that had been added incorrectly to the sump during the drilling of the surface casing section of the Maverick 1 well. The fluid was of low salinity consistent with the fluid utilised during water bore drilling. Corrective actions were taken and upon review no environmental harm occurred as a result of the incident.</p>
<b>Senator Pocock</b>	<b>Tamboran Response</b>
4. Respond on notice to Senator Pocock's tabled peer reviewed papers on the health impacts of gas extraction	<p>Tamboran prioritises the health and safety of the communities where we operate and remain committed to working collaboratively with local residents and governments to uphold this principle across the industry.</p> <p>We support informed, science-based assessments that evaluate the potential impact of our operations. These studies are essential for guiding our operations, improving industry practices and contributing positively to Northern Australia's future.</p> <p>Assessing and managing potential risks to human health from any project is of critical importance. In Australia, human health risk assessments are</p>



	<p>underpinned by well defined standards and processes to ensure potential risks from projects are appropriately assess and mitigated. This includes characterising potential contaminants of concern, identifying potential exposure pathways and implementing controls to mitigate impacts . The Australian Government has a number of robust standards and guidelines, including the National Environment (Air Toxics) Protection Measures (NEPM) and enHealth Guidelines for assessing human health which underpin Environmental Impact Assessments<sup>1</sup></p> <p>It is concerning that several studies, often cited in opposition to the gas industry, contain several limitations and variability across years, location, duration and frequency of sample collection. A large portion of the literature overlooks primary data collection, instead presenting findings based on observational methodologies, which lack the objectivity needed to establish causation. Further limitations include no standardisation of metrics of symptoms, no confounding variables used in analysis, no consideration that population is not generalisable to broader population, and failure to adjust for pre-determined health factors, additional exposure sources and social economic factors.</p> <p>We point to an assessment undertaken by the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment ('CDPHE') that assessed studies purporting a link between oil and gas and health. Using a scientific method for evaluating the weight of evidence, the two state health agencies concluded that none of the studies alleging cancer were sufficient and it is probable that there are social characteristics and differing access to medical care that would explain the findings. The</p>
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<sup>1</sup> Australian Government Department of Health and aged care. Health guidance- Guideline for assessing human health risks from environmental hazards. (2012, available at: enHealth guidance – Guidelines for assessing human health risks from environmental hazards | Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care



	<p>agencies highlighted a range of insufficient evidence, or in some cases, a lack of evidence for the possibility of harmful health effects.<sup>2</sup></p> <p>An additional assessment by the CDPHE found no substantial or moderate evidence for any health effects and significantly limited evidence for skin symptoms and exacerbation of asthma.<sup>3</sup> Several studies classified as low-quality evidence by the CDPHE are cited to support allegations in the documents tabled by Senator David Pocock in this inquiry.</p> <p>The Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory ('Pepper Inquiry') referred to the CDPHE's assessment as a useful summary by a competent US Public Health authority and included a summary of this review in the Panel's Final Report. Tamboran acknowledges the 15 months of work by the Pepper Inquiry to finalise the 135 recommendations, all of which the NT Government has implemented.<sup>4</sup></p> <p>For those looking to assess the environmental and social impacts of gas development, it is critical to integrate information from credible bodies engaged in primary data collection, such as the aforementioned studies and those referenced within Tamboran's submission to the Committee in 2023. It is also important to understand how academic literature applies to the Beetaloo, specifically as the variables leading to potential adverse outcomes may not be relevant. This includes difference in chemicals of concern and presence/absence of exposure pathways. A robust human health risk assessment methodology ought to be weighed against academic literature alleging adverse effects from an overseas industry with different regulatory and socio-environmental setting.</p>
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<sup>2</sup> Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment, Pennsylvania Department of Health. A Systematic Review of the Epidemiologic Literature Assessing Health Outcomes in Populations Living near Oil and Natural Gas Operations: Study Quality and Future Recommendations (May 2019)

<sup>3</sup> Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment. Assessment of Potential Health Effects from Oil and Gas Operations in Colorado (February 2017)

<sup>4</sup> NT Government, Final Report of the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory, (Report, 2018)



<p>5. Mr Riddle agreed to table a study from the Colorado health department in response to some of the studies tabled by Senator Pocock.</p>	<p><a href="#"><u>Statement from Dr Larry Wolk, Chief Medical Officer and Executive Director of Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Colorado Department of Public Health &amp; Environment. Assessment of Potential Health Effects from Oil and Gas Operations in Colorado (February 2017)</u></a></p> <p><a href="#"><u>Colorado Department of Public Health &amp; Environment, Pennsylvania Department of Health. A Systematic Review of the Epidemiologic Literature Assessing Health Outcomes in Populations Living near Oil and Natural Gas Operations: Study Quality and Future Recommendations (May 2019)</u></a></p>
<p>6. Has Tamboran ever engaged the services of Bespoke Territory?</p>	<p>Tamboran has not engaged the services of Bespoke Territory.</p>