

Senate Environment and Communications References Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Department of Industry, Science, Energy and Resources
Inquiry into Oil and gas exploration and production in the Beetaloo Basin
02 August 2021

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: DEPARTMENT OF INDUSTRY, SCIENCE, ENERGY AND RESOURCES

TOPIC: Follow up Question

REFERENCE: Question on Notice (Written, Senator Hanson-Young, 16 August 2021)

QUESTION No.: 3

In relation to Response to QoN 11, has the department advised either the Minister or Empire Energy about the conflicts of interest that appear to be present:

- **that meetings were held in private, with no Departmental officials present between Minister Taylor and Empire Energy one week before the ‘first in, first served’ grant guidelines were officially announced?**
- **between the Chair of the company, it’s major shareholder in providing donations and fundraising support for the Liberal party generally and Minister Taylor in particular?**

The department has not advised the Minister for Resources and Water, the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction or Empire Energy of a conflict of interest as no real or perceived conflicts of interest were identified for the Beetaloo Cooperative Drilling Program grant applications of Imperial Oil & Gas.

The Beetaloo Cooperative Drilling Program Grant Opportunity Guidelines establish the Minister for Resources and Water as the decision maker. The Grant Opportunity Guidelines do not establish a role for the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction.

The Department did not brief the Minister for Energy and Emissions Reduction or his Office on the Grant Opportunity Guidelines or on the likely start date for the Beetaloo Cooperative Drilling Program in advance of the 10 March 2021 meeting.