

Our ref: A526195

Senator Jane Hume
Chair
Senate Economics Legislation Committee
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Senator Hume

**Re: Correction to the Hansard transcript from the Senate Estimates hearing on
20 October 2016**

On reviewing the Proof Hansard of the testimony given by the department at the Senate Estimates hearing on 20 October 2016, we find that some of the information provided to the Committee would benefit from clarification and correction.

The following exchange occurred between Senator Waters and Mr Smith, Chief Executive Officer of the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA):

Senator WATERS: Thank you. Coming back to your saying there were two opportunities for resubmission and then one request for further information, what was the specific new information that you requested?

Mr Smith: We do not release those documents during the deliberative process because it could influence the outcome of it, so at this point that information has not been released publicly. The letters that go back to the company with those requests typically include reference to the environment plan, which is not a public document until after approval is granted, on the basis that approval is granted. So at the moment that information is not publicly available.

Please be advised Mr Smith's statement on the record (page 147 of the transcript) implies that environment plans are published after approval is granted. Rather, a summary of the environment plan is prepared by the proponent for publication after approval is granted. This point is consistent with advice given later in the hearing by Mr Smith to the Committee. As such, NOPSEMA is seeking to edit the transcript as follows:

Mr Smith: We do not release those documents during the deliberative process because it could influence the outcome of it, so at this point that information has not been released publicly. The letters that go back to the company with those requests typically include reference to the environment plan, which is not a public document until after approval is granted, *at which time the proponent is required to prepare an environment plan summary of the submission for publication.*

I apologise for any inconvenience caused and ask that you alert other members of the Committee to this correction.

Yours sincerely

Karl Heiden
Head of Division - Regulatory Support

23 November 2016