

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio
Supplementary Budget Senate Estimates
21 October 2009

Question: SR-6
Topic: National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA)
investigation in Montara incident – Report
Proof Hansard Page: E83

Senator SIEWERT asked:

Senator SIEWERT—I understand from the minister's ministerial statement at the last sitting of parliament that the inquiry into occupational health and safety issues has already commenced. Is that a correct understanding?

Mr Hartwell—Yes. The National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority, NOPSA, has commenced an investigation in relation to all the health and safety issues resulting from the incident.

Senator SIEWERT—When do you expect that to be completed?

Mr Squire—The timing of the completion of that inquiry is dependent upon NOPSA being able to place inspectors on the facility. NOPSA is unable to place inspectors on the facility until the well has been sealed. So the timing and conclusion of that inquiry is going to be dependent on the well being sealed.

Senator SIEWERT—I appreciate the sense of that. Will the report from that review be made public?

Mr Squire—The commission of inquiry or the NOPSA safety report?

Senator SIEWERT—The NOPSA safety report.

Mr Squire—The outcome of that inquiry could result in court action. We will take the question on notice.

Answer:

The *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* requires the National Offshore Petroleum Safety Authority (NOPSA) to investigate accidents, occurrences and circumstances that affect, or have the potential to affect, the occupational health and safety of persons engaged in offshore petroleum operations and report on those investigations, as appropriate, to the responsible Commonwealth Minister and parties to which the report relates.

If considered appropriate, information contained in the report may be made public.