

Our ref: A719267

Mr Andrew Metcalfe
Secretary
Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment
GPO Box 787
CANBERRA ACT 2601

Dear ~~Secretary~~ *Andrew*

SHARING OF OFFSHORE INFORMATION

It was a pleasure meeting you again on 26 February when we attended our joint meeting with the Minister for the Environment.

During that meeting I noted that section 695X of the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* (OPGGS Act) permits the Chief Executive Officer of the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) to share offshore information or things with other agencies to use in the course of the exercise of the agency's powers, or performance of the agency's functions under or for the purpose of a law.

Further discussion has occurred between our agencies, such that I am now writing to confirm my willingness to provide information to assist the Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) in the administration and implementation of laws relating to the protection of the environment. In particular, it is my intention to provide DAWE with offshore information¹ held by NOPSEMA that is relevant to the impact evaluation and management of greenhouse gas emissions and implications for global climate change in the Woodside Energy Limited (WEL) document titled Scarborough Offshore Project Proposal (Revision 5, February 2020). This information (refer Attachment A) is being provided on the understanding that it may not be shared, distributed or otherwise disseminated to any other person or agency outside DAWE without written consent from NOPSEMA.

My intentions in providing this information include:

- Facilitating intra-government coordination of environmental assessments for new offshore oil and gas development projects that are currently being conducted by DAWE and NOPSEMA under the respective legislation.
- Informing the preparation of guidance for agencies and proponents on evaluation and management of project greenhouse gas emissions and implications for global climate change;
- Giving effect to relevant responsibilities of both our agencies under the administrative arrangements² for the NOPSEMA Program which streamlines environmental regulation of offshore oil and gas activities.

¹ As defined under subsection 695U(1) of the OPGGS Act.

² The administrative arrangements between the Department of the Environment and Energy and NOPSEMA to implement the endorsed NOPSEMA Program, March 2017

The experience of NOPSEMA with our inter-agency consultations to date, suggest that DAWE shares these intentions as a common purpose.


Following consideration of the above information by DAWE, I would appreciate a response indicating whether the information is inconsistent with current views of DAWE regarding possible requirements for its assessment under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) of WEL's evaluation and management of scope 3 greenhouse gas emissions and implications for global climate change for the Browse to Northwest Shelf Project.

As you may be aware, WEL have resubmitted the Scarborough Offshore Project Proposal to NOPSEMA and we are working to a tight deadline to complete our assessment. Accordingly, I would appreciate your assistance in receiving your response with any such views before 9 March 2020.

I also request that DAWE shares information on the same topic with NOPSEMA where it is provided to DAWE by WEL for the EPBC Act assessment of the Browse to Northwest Shelf Project. This request is intended to be consistent with the overarching intent of the Program administrative arrangements to establish the framework within which our agencies efficiently and effectively share information to support one another's roles, to the extent allowable under law.

I trust the information shared here will be sufficient to allow you to consider my request. Further assistance is also available from Mr Cameron Grebe (Head of Division Environment) at [REDACTED] or on [REDACTED]

Yours sincerely



Stuart Smith
Chief Executive Officer

28 February 2020

Att.

cc Dean Knudson, Deputy Secretary (DAWE)
 Michelle Croker, First Assistant Secretary (DAWE)
 Greg Manning, Assistant Secretary (DAWE)