



For immediate release

NOPSEMA welcomes Chief Scientist's Audit Report

The findings of an independent audit of NOPSEMA's consideration of exploration in the Great Australian Bight have been welcomed by the independent regulator for offshore energy.

The report, released today, recognises NOPSEMA as a "highly skilled, professional and competent regulator" with "appropriate processes and practices to ensure environment plans are assessed against relevant, sufficient and complete scientific and technical information".

NOPSEMA's CEO, Stuart Smith says the audit results reinforce the authority's important role as a robust and effective regulator.

"The results of Australia's Chief Scientist's independent audit underscore NOPSEMA's commitment and effectiveness in protecting the health and safety of offshore workers, well integrity and the environment," Mr Smith said.

"While not involved in the process for determining whether the Great Australian Bight should be opened up to exploration, NOPSEMA has an integral role in assessing and overseeing compliance for individual activity proposals to ensure risks are as low as reasonably practicable and the impact is acceptable.

"NOPSEMA makes expert, independent decisions based on science and facts and places primary focus on the prevention of incidents that would undermine safety, well integrity and the health of the environment.

"We will work with the Federal Government in examining opportunities for improvement put forward by the Chief Scientist while recognising and appreciating that policy decisions are a matter for the Government.

"In addition, we will continue our work in undertaking the assessment of Equinor's proposal for exploration in the Great Australian Bight while fulfilling our wider remit of ensuring risks are managed to protect the offshore workforce and environment."

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Contact: Nicholas Page, Manager Communications & Stakeholder Relations

t: 08 6188 8752 | m: 0476 827 635 | e: communications@nopsema.gov.au

About NOPSEMA

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) is Australia's independent expert regulator for health and safety, environmental management, structural and well integrity for offshore petroleum facilities and activities in Commonwealth waters.

By law, offshore petroleum activities cannot commence before NOPSEMA has assessed and accepted detailed risk management plans documenting and demonstrating how an organisation will manage the risks to health and safety to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) and the risk to the environment to ALARP and with acceptable environmental impacts.

For more information see nopsema.gov.au.

