

Frequently Asked Questions

Last updated 21 January 2025

Below is a summary of the frequently asked questions (FAQ) related to the amendments to the [Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006 \(OPGGGS Act\)](#), which was passed by Parliament in May 2024.

These FAQs will be updated regularly.

Why has the legislation changed?

A review of Australia's offshore safety regime conducted by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) identified improvements that could help strengthen and enhance offshore worker safety outcomes.

These include:

- Improving engagement between industry and the regulator in designing offshore facilities
- Strengthening the role of health and safety representatives
- Further recognising the importance of mental health
- Increasing regulatory oversight of diving operations
- Strengthening compliance mechanisms
- Streamlining administrative processes

To implement these, the OPGGS Act and the OPGGS Safety Regulations have now been amended.

As the regulator, NOPSEMA will administer the new requirements when they come into force on 12 June 2025.

Did consultation occur?

Yes, DISR consulted with key stakeholders including industry, industry bodies, unions, NOPSEMA and other relevant government bodies and departments throughout the policy development.

When do the changes take effect?

The new safety provisions in the OPGGS Act and the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Safety) Regulations 2024 (the Regulations) will come into effect on 12 June 2025. NOPSEMA will provide further information regarding the transition arrangements in its guidance documents, which are under development.

What are the changes?

The changes will support industry and NOPSEMA to ensure the ongoing health and safety of workers. They include:

- Strengthening the role of HSRs
- Workforce health and wellbeing
- Sexual harassment and psychosocial health
- Modernised regulation of diving
- Mandatory design notification scheme
- Administration of safety cases
- Operators and titleholders
- Compliance and enforcement
- Vessel activity notification scheme
- AMSA jurisdictional interface policy measure
- Remedial direction changes

A more detailed explanation of the changes can be found on NOPSEMA's website – www.nopsema.gov.au.

Who is affected by the changes?

All operators, contractors, workers and HSRs will be affected by changes to the legislation.

HSRs will be given new training rights and be able to request reviews of safety management-related documents.

What happens to safety cases under assessment?

Safety cases submitted to NOPSEMA will be assessed under the current regulations.

NOPSEMA will develop guidance regarding transitional arrangements for any safety cases which may not be accepted before 12 June 2025.

Operators should consider the requirements of the new regulations for any safety cases which are being prepared.

Will NOPSEMA provide any further information on the changes?

Yes, NOPSEMA will communicate changes to industry and stakeholders.

NOPSEMA's website will provide useful information including a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section.

We will also provide information through our publications and guidance documents, as well as targeted industry information sessions and our regular industry engagements.

You can also contact NOPSEMA directly at communications@nopsema.gov.au

What is the new Design Notification Scheme (DNS)?

The Design Notification Scheme (DNS) introduces early engagement with NOPSEMA on a facility's safety case at the design phase of project development. It applies to, and is in relation to, a vessel or structure that is a new production facility or a new greenhouse gas facility. Under the scheme, the design notification must be submitted in sufficient time to allow for any comments made by NOPSEMA to be considered in the final design and before any construction or alteration work begins.

NOPSEMA is currently developing processes to support the introduction of the DNS and will shortly be publishing policies and guidance to support industry.

What is the Vessel Activity Notification Scheme?

Amendments to the OPGGS Act requires that if a vessel becomes a facility or ceases to be a facility, the operator of a facility must notify NOPSEMA.

This new requirement ensures that NOPSEMA is aware of key changes in a facility's status and can provide assurance that best practice safety standards are in place.

This is of particular concern in emergency situations, such as a cyclone, when the Commonwealth Government needs to establish situational awareness quickly.

NOPSEMA is developing processes to ensure this notification is quick and easy. We are also developing guidance covering the different circumstances in which a notification may be required.

Where do I get more information?

- Information on the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Legislation Amendment (Safety and Other Measures) Bill 2024 can be found on the [Parliament of Australia website](https://www.parliament.gov.au) (<https://tinyurl.com/3bxfv3p>).
- The new Regulations can also be found on the [Parliament of Australia website](https://www.parliament.gov.au) (<https://tinyurl.com/4jrmskux>) along with the [Explanatory Statement](#) which identifies the specific changes between the 2009 regulations and the 2024 regulations.
- A summary of the key elements of the Bill and how they will be implemented by NOPSEMA can be found on [NOPSEMA's website](http://www.nopsema.gov.au) (www.nopsema.gov.au).

