



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 65

WRITTEN QUESTION

K McNamara to the Minister for Lands, Planning and the Environment, Josh Burgoyne MLA:

Potential prosecution under the Petroleum Act of Imperial Energy for fracking and/or related activities on Exploration Permit 187

Lock the Gate Alliance sought to obtain a document under Freedom of Information which it believed that a brief was provided to then Minister for Environment, Water, Renewables and Energy, Kate Worden, on the 29 July 2024 in relation to a potential prosecution under the Petroleum Act of Imperial Energy for fracking and/or related activities on Exploration Permit 187.

1. What was the nature of the incident that was the subject of the brief to then Minister Worden dated 29 July 2024?

The brief was provided to the former Minister for Environment, Climate Change and Water Security. I have not ever been in possession of the brief or aware of its contents.

2. Why has information about this incident not been disclosed to the public?

I am aware that there were two non-compliances identified during a site inspection in February 2023 where the regulator identified unauthorised clearing incidents had occurred under the Imperial Oil and Gas Pty Ltd's [2021-2025 EP187 Work Program EMP](#), specifically:

- a one hectare gravel pit constructed North of the Carpentaria-4 well pad outside the areas identified in the EMP, as reported in the [recordable incident report](#); and
- a small corner portion (0.4 hectare) of the cleared Carpenaria-4 well pad (three hectares) breaching the 100-metre riparian zone buffer of Relief Creek.

The investigation for the two non-compliances was completed March 2025. The details of that investigation could not be released prior because it may have prejudiced the investigation.

A [Regulatory statement: Imperial Oil and Gas Pty Ltd](#). was released to the public on 24 April 2025. This is line with the Department of Land's Planning and Environment, Environment Division's [Compliance and Enforcement Policy](#) and enforcement principle of transparency. If the Division uses its

enforcement tools, it will provide public information about the details of the enforcement action via annual reporting or publishing regulatory statements.

- 3. Why has the information about this incident not been disclosed to Traditional Owners of the land on which this breach occurred, who are currently being asked to agree to the sale of exploration gas from Imperial for Exploration Permit 187?**

The Department of Lands, Planning and Environment is regularly in contact with the Northern Land Council (NLC) regarding regulatory matters, including the unauthorised clearing incidents and the status of general site inspection observations.

An update was provided to NLC in early March 2025 advising that the two non-compliances were prioritised for resolution in Q1 of 2025. The Department has met this commitment and will provide NLC with correspondence not dissimilar to the regulatory statement referred to previously.

Further, the Department advised NLC it was available to present to the NLC on regulatory matters or attend the on-country meeting with Traditional Owners if requested.

- 4. What steps have you taken since becoming Minister to act on the information that was provided in the draft brief?**

Refer to question 1.

- 5. Has your department taken any action on this matter since the 2024 election?**

Refer [Regulatory statement: Imperial Oil and Gas Pty Ltd.](#)

- 6. What is the current status of the matter?**

This matter is now resolved and closed.