

Legislative Scrutiny Committee
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Dear Legislative Scrutiny Committee,

**SUBMISSION TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE PIPELINES AND PETROLEUM LEGISLATION AMENDMENT
(INDUSTRY DEVELOPMENT) BILL 2026**

The National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) welcomes the opportunity to provide a submission to the inquiry into the Pipelines and Petroleum Legislation Amendment (Industry Development) Bill 2026 (the Bill).

This submission provides a brief overview of NOPSEMA's functions and jurisdiction. It does not directly address or provide opinions on areas of policy or matters that are outside of the legislated role of NOPSEMA. Policy responsibility for the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* (OPGG Act) framework rests with the Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR).

To support effective and consistent regulation of the offshore energy industry, NOPSEMA welcomes opportunities that improve the alignment between Commonwealth and State and Territory legislative frameworks. Key to this is ensuring that any alignment of legislative definitions are consistent to reduce challenges for regulation.

NOPSEMA's legislative framework

NOPSEMA is Australia's independent regulator for the offshore energy industry established under the OPGGS Act.

Our role includes oversight of health and safety, structural (well) integrity and environmental management for the offshore petroleum and greenhouse gas storage activities in Commonwealth waters, and in coastal waters where regulatory powers and functions have been conferred. NOPSEMA's primary functions are detailed in section 646 of the OPGGS Act and are summarised as follows:

- to promote the occupational health and safety (OHS) of persons engaged in offshore petroleum operations or offshore greenhouse gas storage operations
- to develop and implement effective monitoring and enforcement strategies to ensure compliance under the OPGGS Act and regulations in relation to OHS, environmental management and structural integrity
- to investigate accidents, occurrences and circumstances relating to OHS, well integrity and environmental management
- to advise on matters relating to OHS, well integrity and environmental management
- to make reports, including recommendations, to the responsible Commonwealth minister and each responsible state and Northern Territory minister

- to cooperate with other Commonwealth and state or Northern Territory agencies or authorities having functions relating to regulated operations.

NOPSEMA is also the regulator for offshore renewables, performing the functions of the Offshore Infrastructure Regulator (OIR) under the *Offshore Electricity Infrastructure Act 2021* (OEI Act). This Act establishes NOPSEMA as the OIR to regulate.

Further details on the legislative regimes are available at nopsema.gov.au and oir.gov.au.

Our jurisdiction

NOPSEMA regulates all offshore areas in Commonwealth waters, which comprise those areas beyond the first three nautical miles (approximately 5.5 kilometres) of the territorial sea baseline. NOPSEMA also regulates all offshore areas in coastal waters where a state or territory has conferred regulatory powers and functions. In jurisdictions where powers to regulate are not conferred, regulatory responsibilities remain with the relevant state or territory. Victoria continues to be the only jurisdiction to have enacted conferral provisions, which has resulted in a more streamlined approach.

In some limited circumstances, NOPSEMA has entered into contracts to provide regulatory services to jurisdictions that have not conferred powers, including the Northern Territory. Under these arrangements the relevant contracting party remains the Regulator. Opportunities to streamline offshore petroleum regulation exist with more formalised arrangements through conferral of powers, which NOPSEMA remains open to consider.

Our regulatory approach

NOPSEMA administers an objectives-based, risk focused regime in accordance with the OPGGS Act and its associated regulations which places responsibility for identifying, mitigating and minimising risk with those wishing to undertake the offshore energy activity.

When proposing their activities, the regulated community is responsible for identifying risks and demonstrating how they will mitigate and minimise their impact to achieve compliance with the regulatory framework. Once these proposals, collectively referred to as permissioning documents, are assessed and accepted by NOPSEMA, they form the legislated parameters for that activity which will be monitored and enforced to ensure compliance.

Thank you again for the opportunity to provide a submission to this inquiry. NOPSEMA values the on-going engagement it has with the Northern Territory government in relation to the offshore energy sector.

We are happy to discuss any of the above in more detail. For further information, please contact Lisa Azzarello, Executive Director – Strategic Communications and Engagement Directorate at

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Yours sincerely,

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Sue McCarrey
Chief Executive Officer

27 March 2026