



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 252

WRITTEN QUESTION

J Davis to the Minister for Lands, Planning and Environment, Hon Joshua Burgoyne MLA:

Ichthys Emissions Estimation and Health Risk Assessment

- 1. A review by the Department in early 2025 identified discrepancies between emissions reported to the National Pollutant Inventory and emissions reported under Environment Protection Licence 228 for 2023-24. In October 2025 the licensee revised its 2023-24 estimates upwards, including estimated benzene emissions from approximately 5 tonnes to approximately 500 tonnes.**

- a. On what date did the Department identify those discrepancies, and what action did it take between that date and the licensee's revision in October 2025?**

On 5 February 2025, the Department wrote to INPEX seeking an explanation for discrepancies identified between reported emissions data and requesting that INPEX review its reporting for consistency and accuracy.

The discrepancies identified at that time were less than one tonne. The substantially revised benzene estimate was not disclosed to the Department until October 2025.

- b. Other than benzene, for which pollutants were estimates revised, and by what amounts?**

In October 2025, INPEX revised its pollutant emission estimates for benzene, toluene, ethylbenzene, xylene and total volatile organic compounds for the 2023-24 reporting year. This information is publicly available in INPEX's media release:

[Ichthys LNG emissions reporting | INPEX](#).

c. Do the revisions apply to reporting years other than 2023-24 and, if so, which?

INPEX has advised that data for the following years will be revised: 2018-19, 2019-20, 2020-21, 2021-22 and 2022-23. This information will be made publicly available through the Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority (NT EPA) National Pollutant Inventory (NPI) at: [National pollutant inventory](#) [NTEPA](#)

2. The Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority is recorded as having initiated a range of measures in response to the revised emissions estimates, of which the review of the two Darwin airshed licences is one. What are the others, and on what date was each commenced?

a. Please state the action taken and its date, without reference to any matter currently before a court.

The NT EPA's actions have been publicly summarised on the NT EPA website. They include investigation and compliance activity, requests for updated airshed modelling, independent review of modelling, preliminary human health risk assessment work, review of the Darwin Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network, licence review activity and policy work relating to air quality monitoring. Refer [Darwin airshed emissions management](#) [NTEPA](#).

Actions taken are summarised in the following table:

Action	Date commenced
Investigation into potential breaches of environmental laws associated with historical under-reporting	15 October 2025
NT EPA requests to INPEX to provide revised airshed modelling using the revised emissions estimates	16 October 2025
Independent (Department-commissioned) review of INPEX's modelling using the revised emissions estimates	November 2025
Preliminary Human Health Risk Assessment in collaboration with the NT Chief Health Officer	December 2025
Darwin Ambient Air Quality Monitoring Network review	December 2025
Policy development for legislative reform to allow for industry funding of the Darwin air quality monitoring stations.	December 2025
A request under s 6 of the NT <i>Environment Protection (National Pollution Inventory) Objective</i> to obtain information regarding the cause of the pollutant calculation errors	19 February 2026
A statutory audit under s 48 of the <i>Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998</i> to confirm that INPEX has implemented recommendations made by their consultant to fix the methodological errors	19 February 2026

Engagement with other regulators, namely the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water and the Heads of EPAs, to share findings regarding accuracy of NPI submissions.	Q1 2026
Review of Darwin airshed LNG licences	March 2026
Procurement of additional monitoring equipment for the existing air quality monitoring stations	Q4 2026

3. Has the Department reassessed any previous compliance decisions, approvals or enforcement actions in light of the revised estimates?

a. If so, with what result? If not, why not?

Matters are before the Court and further comment cannot be made at this time.

4. Has the emissions estimation methodology for the facility now been overhauled?

In March 2026, INPEX was issued with a *Notice to Carry Out Environmental Audit Program* under section 48 of the *Waste Management and Pollution Control Act 1998*. The Auditor's Report provided in response is available on the NT EPA's environmental audit register. The Report addresses measures identified to rectify the emissions calculation issues: [Ichthys LNG Pty Ltd | NTEPA](#).

a. What independent auditing or verification processes are now in place?

The Auditor recommended annual independent verification. INPEX's response to the auditor's recommendations is set out in the auditor's report available on the NT EPA's environmental audit register.

b. What additional resources have been allocated to compliance and emissions monitoring?

During February – June 2026 a new Taskforce was established within the Environmental Regulation Division to focus on air quality and LNG matters.

Since then the Environment Regulation Division has increased its resourcing of its LNG and NPI compliance team by two additional FTE.

c. How will the public be assured that future emissions reporting is accurate?

Public assurance will be supported by the section 48 Environmental Audit, annual independent verification and proposed amendments to LNG licences to strengthen audit and assurance mechanisms.

- 5. NT Health engaged SLR Consulting Australia Pty Ltd to prepare an Independent Preliminary Human Health Risk Assessment of emissions from the Ichthys LNG Acid Gas Removal Unit hot venting, revision 3.0 dated 26 February 2026. That assessment records the Air Environment (2025) review as concluding that “The ERM (2025) AGRU vent modelling assessment was conducted using a technically sound methodology”, but that its scope “was inherently limited since it included AGRU hot venting scenarios only, rather than providing comprehensive facility-wide air quality impact assessment of BTEX emissions”, with limitations including “incomplete BTEX compound coverage (addressing only benzene and toluene), insufficient methodological detail regarding emission estimation procedures and a five-year modelling period rather than covering the full 2018-2025 operational period”.**

a. Has that assessment been published? If not, why not?

Yes Refer [Darwin airshed emissions management | NTEPA](#).

The Air Environment Review is also published on the NT EPA website. The Effluent Rising Main (ERM) Report is an INPEX document and is not published by NT EPA.

b. Has a health risk assessment covering the full 2018-2025 operational period and the full BTEX suite been commissioned? If so, by whom, with what funding, and by what date is it due?

NT EPA has requested further airshed modelling from INPEX covering the full 2018-2025 operational period and the full BTEX suite. The results will be shared with the Chief Health Officer (CHO) and will inform whether any further human health risk assessment is required.

c. If it has not been commissioned, on what date will it be and what accounts for the delay?

A further human health risk assessment has not been commissioned at this stage. NT EPA and CHO will consider the further modelling results before determining whether one is required.

d. Are the Air Environment (2025) review and the ERM (2025) modelling assessment published, and will they be provided?

The Air Environment Review is published on the NT EPA website Refer [Darwin airshed emissions management | NTEPA](#)
The ERM modelling assessment is an INPEX document and is not published by the NT EPA:

6. How is the independence from both the licensee and the Government of the specialists engaged for health risk assessment work being ensured?

This question should be re-directed to the Department of Health, as the preliminary human health risk assessment was commissioned and overseen by the CHO.