

ESTIMATES COMMITTEE

Question Taken on Notice

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From: Mr Steve Edgington

To: Hon Mark Monaghan

Portfolio: Mining

Agency: Industry, Tourism & Trade

Subject: Exploration licence permits in the Northern Territory

QUESTION

In regard to the 120 exploration licence permits, what is the longest period an application has been awaiting approval?

ANSWER

Under the *Petroleum Act 1984*, there are 120 exploration permit applications across the Northern Territory.

As at 20 June 2024, there are 2 exploration permit applications that have been with the same applicant for a period of approximately 26 years and 4 months.

On 12 February 1998, an operator submitted exploration permit applications. It obtained the exclusive right to seek consent from Traditional Owners for the grant of the permit and conduct of future petroleum activities.

Both exploration permit applications are located in the Wiso Basin, west of Tennant Creek, and are over Aboriginal freehold land.

Under the *Aboriginal Land Rights (Northern Territory) Act 1976*, the consent to negotiate procedure applies that involves petroleum companies, through a prescribed body corporate (in this case, the Central Land Council), obtaining Traditional Owner consent to the grant of the permits and the conduct of future petroleum activities.

Negotiations between the operator, through the prescribed body corporate, for Traditional Owner consent to grant, the exploration permits are ongoing.