



LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF THE NORTHERN TERRITORY

No. 93

WRITTEN QUESTION

K McNamara to the Minister for Mining and Energy, Hon Gerard Maley MLA:

Incident regarding the activities of Imperial Oil and Gas

As reported by the NT Independent in May 2025, the Department for Lands, Planning and Environment (DPLE) recently disclosed that it had resolved three incidents relating to the activities of Imperial Oil and Gas (a subsidiary of Empire Energy) at EP187.

While the details of two of these incidents were set out in a Regulatory Statement, the details of the third incident were not provided. DPLE stated that this third incident was resolved under the Petroleum Act and that no non-compliance had occurred.

1. What are the details of this third undisclosed incident? What occurred and when?

The NT Independent article referenced a Ministerial Brief to former Minister for Environment in 2024. The Department of Mining and Energy (DME) is not privy to this briefing document.

The DME advises, through its regulatory responsibilities under the *Petroleum Act 1984*, there was no incident that occurred during the drilling of the Carpentaria 3H well in late 2022.

Imperial's Well Operations Management Plan (WOMP), as regulated under the *Petroleum Act 1984*, required well barriers in place to separate aquifers, if the aquifers were not in hydraulic communication.

Scientific evidence was available that indicated the Anthony Lagoon and Gum Ridge aquifers were in communication, so the well was constructed in accordance with the WOMP.

There was no non-compliance under the *Petroleum Act 1984*.

2. When and how was DPLE notified of this incident?

For DLPE To respond.

- 3. What actions, if any, were taken to rectify the incident when it first occurred? What, if any, follow-up measures have been undertaken?**

For DLPE to respond.

- 4. Was the incident a contravention of an environmental performance standard (in a current EMP) or inconsistent with an environmental outcome specified in the current EMP? If yes, why wasn't this incident publicly disclosed as a recordable incident? If no, is there no obligation under the current laws to publicly report such an incident?**

For DLPE to respond.

- 5. Who made the decision that this incident could be resolved under the Petroleum Act?**

As detailed in the response to question 1, there was no incident and no non-compliance under the *Petroleum Act 1984*.

- 6. How was this incident resolved under the Petroleum Act?**

See response to question 1, there was no non-compliance under the *Petroleum Act 1984*.

- 7. What explanation can be provided to demonstrate that no non-compliance under the Petroleum (Environment) regulations has occurred?**

For DLPE to respond.

- 8. What explanation can be provided to demonstrate that no non-compliance under the Petroleum Act has occurred?**

See response to question 1, there was no non-compliance under the *Petroleum Act 1984*.

- 9. How will DPLE ensure that an incident like this doesn't happen again?**

For DLPE to respond.