

Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling Environment Plan

1. Purpose of this report

NOPSEMA has accepted the Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (the EP) submitted by Chevron Australia Pty Ltd ('Chevron') (the titleholder) for exploration drilling within production licence WA-47-L in Commonwealth waters, located approximately 175 km northwest of Dampier Port and approximately 65 km north-northwest of the Montebello Islands. The activity is scheduled to be completed between 2024 and 2025.

As required by the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2023 (the Environment Regulations), the public was provided with an opportunity to comment on the EP between 19 April 2024 and 19 May 2024. There were two public comments received during the public comment period. After this period, Chevron took into account public comments and prepared a Report on Public Comment which is published on NOPSEMA's website¹.

Following the public comment period, the titleholder submitted the EP to NOPSEMA on 30 May 2024 for assessment. NOPSEMA has since completed its assessment of the EP and determined that it is reasonably satisfied that the EP meets the criteria for acceptance². NOPSEMA made this decision on 19 December 2024.

This report summarises how NOPSEMA took public comments into account in making its decision. Where comments were received outside of the public comment period, these comments were not considered by NOPSEMA in its assessment of the EP³.

This report references the accepted Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (Document No. ABU220400628, Revision 4) submitted by Chevron, which is available on the NOPSEMA website and should be referred to for further information.

1.1. Key matters that NOPSEMA took into account

During its assessment of the EP, NOPSEMA considered each public comment received during the public comment period and identified the following relevant key matters⁴:

- concerns that the activity presents unacceptable risks to ecosystems of conservation, recreation and tourism value;
- concerns that the activity contributes an unacceptable risk to the environment from greenhouse gas emissions; and
- concerns that the titleholder has not evaluated the use of additional well control equipment to reduce impacts and risks to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP).

NOPSEMA took into account these public comments and relevant key matters, and also the Titleholder's Report on Public Comment¹ during the EP assessment process (in accordance with relevant NOPSEMA

¹ Chevron Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling Environment Plan Response to Public Comments, 30 May 2024

² Environment Regulations, Regulation 34

³ Environment Regulations, Regulation 30(6)(b)

⁴ Environment Regulations, Regulation 30(6)(a)

policies and procedures), in determining that it was reasonably satisfied that the EP met the criteria for acceptance².

In relation to the key matters listed above, NOPSEMA concluded that the EP demonstrated that environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be reduced to as ALARP and to an acceptable level. This is because, the EP demonstrated that:

- the costs of implementing any further control measures would be grossly disproportionate to the benefits to the environment that could be gained; and
- the defined acceptable levels of impact and risk were well informed (based on reasonable internal and external context, legislative and industry standards) and would be met for the duration of the activity.

1.2. Information relevant to NOPSEMA's decision:

In making the decision to accept this EP, NOPSEMA took into account:

- the Environment Regulations;
- NOPSEMA Assessment Policy (PL0050), Environment Plan Assessment Policy (PL1347), Environment Plan Decision Making Guidelines (GL1721), Environment Plan Content Requirement Guidance Note (GN1344) and Consultation in the course of preparing an Environment Plan Guideline (GL2086);
- the Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling Environment Plan (Document No. ABU220400628, Revision 4), which includes the titleholder's Oil Pollution Emergency Plan and Operational and Scientific Monitoring Plan;
- the information provided and objections or claims raised by relevant persons through the relevant persons consultation process;
- the comments raised during the public comment period;
- relevant plans of management and threatened species recovery plans developed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) and relevant guidance published by the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW); and
- relevant legislative requirements that apply to the activity and are relevant to the environmental management of the activity.

2. Next steps

Responsibility for the ongoing environmental performance of the exploratory drilling activity remains, at all times, with Chevron.

NOPSEMA has legislated responsibilities to inspect and investigate offshore petroleum and greenhouse gas storage activities, and to enforce compliance with environmental law. These functions will be applied to this activity in accordance with NOPSEMA's policies.

3. Sensitive Information

Sensitive information received during the public comment period, such as the names and contact details of commenters and specific information identified by the commenter or relevant person as 'sensitive', is not

published in this report. Sensitive information is contained in a sensitive information part of the EP which has been considered by NOPSEMA during its assessment process.

4. Further information

If you would like further information about the activity, please contact the titleholder's nominated liaison person specified in the EP and on NOPSEMA's webpage for the Wheatstone Deep-1 Exploration Drilling activity.

If you would like to be notified of regulatory information on the activity, such as start and end dates and enforcement actions (if any), please subscribe to updates from the [Underway Offshore page](#) on NOPSEMA's website.