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1 INTRODUCTION

BHP Billiton Petroleum Pty Ltd (BHP Billiton) is operator of the Minerva offshore facilities, located in Commonwealth waters in production licence area VIC/L22 and pipeline licence VIC/PL33, approximately 11 km southwest of the township of Port Campbell in Victoria, Australia.

The Minerva offshore facilities produce hydrocarbon liquids from the Minerva reservoir via a single subsea vertical well, Minerva-3. The hydrocarbon liquids are transported onshore to the Minerva Gas Plant via a pipeline for processing. A second well was part of the original Minerva Gas Plant development (Minerva-4), however the well was permanently shut-in 2013.

Production from the Minerva offshore facilities commenced in 2005. Working interests for the Minerva facilities are BHP Billiton Petroleum (Victoria) Pty Ltd (90%) and Santos (BOL) Pty Ltd.

The Environment Plan (EP) for the Minerva offshore facilities in Commonwealth waters was prepared in accordance with the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009* (Environment Regulations) and accepted by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) on 30th June 2014.

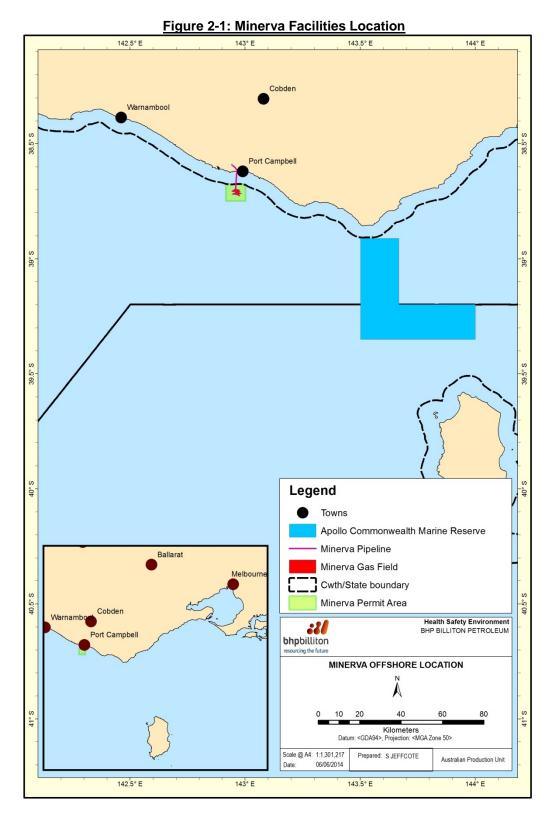
This EP summary document has been prepared as per the requirements of the Environment Regulations r.11(7) and 11(8). It summarises the findings and conclusions of the environmental risk assessment undertaken for BHP Billiton's ongoing operation of the Minerva offshore facilities located in Commonwealth waters, and the relevant preventative and mitigation measures developed and implemented to ensure any adverse impacts are eliminated or managed to as low as reasonably possible.

The original Minerva Gas Plant development was assessed as a joint Commonwealth / State Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) – Victorian Environment Effects Statement (EES) under the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection (Impact of Proposals) Act 1974* and the Victorian *Environment Effects Act 1978*. The EP for the Minerva offshore facilities addresses conditions associated with these approvals where they are relevant to the activities in Commonwealth waters.

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2 LOCATION OF THE FACILITY

The Minerva offshore facilities are located in production licence area VIC/L22 and pipeline licence VIC/PL33, approximately 11 km southwest of the township of Port Campbell, Victoria, Australia (refer Figure 2-1). The facilities are located in water approximately 60m deep. The facilities coordinates are provided in Table 2-1 below.



Name	Short Name	Description	Latitude (GDA 94)	Longitude (GDA 94)
Minerva 3	Min-3	Vertical producing well	38 42 22.73 S	142 57 32.99 E
Minerva 4	Min-4	Shut-in, 2013	38 43 07.37 S	142 57 44.02 E
Flowline crossing point from Commonwealth into State Waters	-		38 40 29.1 S	142 57 39.4 E

Table 2-1 – Minerva Offshore Facilities Coordinates

3 DESCRIPTION OF THE ACTIVITY

The Minerva offshore facilities in Commonwealth waters comprise:

- Two subsea vertical wells Minerva-3 and Minerva-4;
- A single 10" production flowline, which transports production fluids from the field to the onshore gas plant;
- Two small diameter chemical injection lines, which transport a mix of hydrate and corrosion inhibitor chemicals from the gas plant out to each of the wells; and
- An electro-hydraulic umbilical, which provides services for well control.

The wells are completed with 7-inch (17.78cm) production tubing and tied to horizontal subsea production trees, with downhole completion including a single downhole subsea safety valve (SSSV). The wells were designed to flow individually or simultaneously depending on gas demand and reservoir depletion. Control of the subsea facilities is from the process control system interfaced via the well control system located at the onshore gas plant. At commissioning, each well was capable of supplying the maximum gas plant throughput of 150 TJ/d.

The flowline has been designed with a 10-inch (25.4cm) diameter to suit the flowrates, pressures and temperatures expected during operation. An internal and external corrosion protection system has been provided on the flowline and tie-in spools.

Production from the Minerva field is currently in decline, with one of the wells permanently shut-in (Minerva-4). Based on remaining reserves and economic estimate, the end of field life of Minerva production will be in approximately FY18.

Infrastructure in the operational area included in the scope of the EP is as follows:

- All subsea infrastructure associated with production from the Minerva field, including:
 - flowlines;
 - wellheads;
 - manifolds; and
 - subsea trees.
- Installation and inspection vessel activity operating within the operational area.

Activities associated with the above included in the scope of this EP are as follows:

- routine production;
- routine inspection, maintenance and repair of all infrastructure listed above;
- routine installation vessel activities associated with maintenance of the subsea infrastructure and inspection vessel activity used for surveys of the pipeline; and
- non-routine and accidental activities and incidents.

3.1 Timing

The Minerva offshore facilities commenced production in 2005. The facilities operate 24 hours per day 365 days per year. Supporting activities take place infrequently as required.

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4 DESCRIPTION OF RECEIVING ENVIRONMENT

4.1 Natural Environment

The Minerva operation is located in the South-East Marine Region. The South-East Marine Region contains 11 provincial bioregions as defined in South East Commonwealth Marine Reserves Network Management Plan 2013–23 (Director of National Parks, 2013). Provincial bioregions identify large areas of ocean with broadly similar characteristics that are classified by scientists based on the distribution of fish species and ocean conditions. This South-East Marine Region is recognised as a major marine biogeographic region with high diversity and large numbers of endemic species. Although compared to other marine areas the Bioregion is relatively low in nutrients and primary productivity, water bodies converge and mix in some locations to create areas of relatively high biological productivity.

Seasonal and transient upwelling events are important ecological features of the bioregion, such as the Bonney Upwelling in south east South Australia. Nutrient-rich waters at the Shelf Break east of Bass Strait rise to the surface in winter as part of the processes of the Bass Strait Water Cascade. Here the eastward shallow waters of the strait over the continental shelf mix with cooler, deeper nutrient-rich water.

There are not any Commonwealth marine reserves within 40km of the Minerva facilities, and the facilities are not located in a protected marine reserve. The nearest Commonwealth marine reserve to the Minerva offshore operations is the Apollo Commonwealth Marine Reserve, which is located approximately 50 km south east of the Minerva wells (see **Error! Reference source not found.**). The seafloor in the reserve has many rocky reef patches interspersed with areas of sediment and, in places, has rich, benthic fauna dominated by sponges. Seabirds, dolphins, seals and Great white sharks forage in the reserve, and Blue whales migrate through Bass Strait. The MV *City of Rayville*, a United States of America freighter which was sunk in 1940 by a mine, lies in the reserve south of Cape Otway.

The following subsea conditions have been observed in the Port Campbell area:

- relatively smooth seabed, consisting of sand and some rocky outcrops from approximately 12 km offshore to the cliff base, just west of the Port Campbell township; and
- several large cliff and reef structures towards the entrance to Port Campbell inlet.

Offshore in the vicinity of the Rutledge Creek and Sherbrook River mouths east of Port Campbell, a number of rocky reefs and underwater cliffs have also been noted (Fugro, 1994).

The climate in the south west region of Victoria is characterised as temperate (BoM, 2004). Winds during the May to October period are typically strong with a predominately offshore wind direction. The maximum speed measured for the May to October period between 1999 and 2001 was 39 knots (approximately 72 km/h or 20 m/s), with a mean speed of 12.39 knots (approximately 23 km/h or 6.4 m/s). The November to April period was typically onshore. The maximum speed measured for the November to April period was 36 knots (approximately 66.7 km/h or 18.5 m/s), with a mean speed of 11.52 knots (approximately 21.3 km/h or 5.9 m/s).

At a local scale, in the waters around Port Campbell wind driven currents are an important characteristic. In adverse weather conditions, storm-generated currents in the region can exceed 0.5 m/s near the bottom of the nearshore region. These currents are directed parallel to the coast and from west to east, with wave crests moving parallel to the coast, resulting in no strong long-shore currents. In waters less than 10 m deep, the water movements are dominated by orbital motion waves and wave generated currents. Tidal currents are in the order of 0.1 m/s, running in an east to southeast direction for the majority of the time.

The astronomical tide in the region is mixed in character, with a maximum range at the spring tide of approximately 1.2 m. The area is dominated by high-energy conditions, with wave heights in the Port Campbell region between 2.0 and 3.5 m for 50 per cent of the time, though in winter they are known to exceed 7.6 m. In addition to the tide, the Minerva offshore area is also subject to sea level variations from storm surges and wave set up.

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The typical surface temperatures vary from 13 to 18°C, and bottom temperatures in the region of 11 to 15°C (WNI, 2002). A seasonal thermocline is formed at a depth of approximately 30 m in early December, which then moves to approximately 100 m in May.

4.2 Biological Environment

A review of previous studies in the Port Campbell area (BJP-Santos, 1999) indicates that a range of different habitats can be expected to occur between the shore and the location of the Minerva offshore facilities as follows:

- intertidal zone dominated by large brown algae *Ecklonia*;
- shallow kelp reef zone from east to west to depths of approximately 7 m;
- shallow sandy reef patches, colonised with large brown algae or turfing red/brown algae and some green algae;
- mid-depth sand areas below the intertidal zone to water depths of 15 m or greater;
- subtidal areas to water depths of approximately 60 m approximately 10 km offshore, with invertebrate fauna;
- deep subtidal areas with large tracts of open sand with little or no epifauna and infauana communities of bivalves, plolychaetes and crustaceans; and
- estuaries, including Port Campbell Creek and Curdies Inlet.

A search of the Commonwealth *Environmental Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act) Protected Matters database identified a total of 49 protected species including 8 endangered and 16 threatened species that may occur or have habitat within 15 km of the Minerva offshore facilities. Endangered species included the Blue whale (Balaenoptera musculus) and Southern right whale (Eubalaena australis), and Loggerhead turtle (Caretta caretta) and Leatherback turtle (Dermochelys coriacea).

Southern right whales are seasonally present on the Australian coast between about May and November. There is a seasonal closure to vessels in the immediate vicinity of the right whale calving area at Warrnambool, Victoria.

Blue whale sightings in Australian waters have been widespread, and it is likely that the whales occur right around the continent at various times of the year. The only known area of significance to Blue whales in the region is the Bonney Upwelling feeding area and adjacent upwelling areas of South Australia and Victoria (DEH, 2005). Although Blue whales have been sighted in the region, they are currently thought to aggregate further offshore than the Minerva field, towards the shelf break (Butler *et al*, 2002).

The Minerva offshore area does not contain any known feeding or nesting habitats for Loggerhead or Leatherback turtles, however each species may be found migrating and foraging through Victorian waters.

A number of important coastal and pelagic bird habitats are found between Cape Otway and the Nuyts Archipelago off the west coast of Eyre Peninsula (Dames & Moore, 1991). Pelagic habitats support penguins and a range of albatrosses, petrels, shearwaters, storm-petrels, terns and skuas. Of particular significance are the breeding areas of the Little Penguin (*Eudyptula minor*). Penguin colonies are located at a number of sites along the coast of Southern Australia. Nesting sites in the vicinity of the Minerva offshore operations include near London Arch and at Middle Island (Warrnambool) which is a small, threatened colony of approximately 100 birds. The Minerva offshore area does not contain any known seabird feeding or nesting habitats, however many species may be found migrating and foraging through Victorian waters.

The Twelve Apostles Marine National Park is located south-east of Port Campbell between Broken Head and Pebble Point, and extends offshore 3 nautical miles to the limit of Victorian waters. Important values for Twelve Apostles Marine National Park include:

• unique limestone rock formations, including the Twelve Apostles;

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- a range of marine habitats representative of the Otway marine bioregion;
- indigenous culture based on spiritual connection to sea Country and a history of marine resource use;
- the wreck of the Loch Ard;
- opportunities to view marine life; and
- spectacular scenery within the park.

The Arches Marine Sanctuary is approximately 600 m offshore from Port Campbell. Important values include:

- underwater limestone formations of arches and canyons;
- a diverse range of encrusting invertebrates; and
- indigenous culture based on spiritual connection to sea Country.

4.3 Socio-Economic Environment

The coast of Victoria supports an extensive range of human usage. Much of the coast is designated national park and marine reserves. Beaches along the coast from the west of Cape Otway to Apollo Bay to Queenscliff are some of the most popular outside of Port Phillip Bay. To the east, Point Nepean, San Remo, Venus and Waratah Bays are also popular summer locations.

Rhodes *et al* (1995) have identified five shipwrecks in the Port Campbell area. These are the *Napier*, *Newfield*, *Loch Ard*, *Schomberg* and *Young Australia*. The closest wreck to the Minerva area is the *Napier*, which is within 1.5 km of the pipeline corridor.

There are also number of gas production fields located in the Otway Basin, which include the Otway Gas Project (two fields located 55 and 70 km from Port Campbell) and the Casino Gas Project.

Recreational fishing in the area is mostly from access points from the shore, but also occurs from boats during calm conditions. Some spear fishing and pot fishing is also undertaken (Dames & Moore, 1991).

State fisheries operating in the area include Blacklip abalone (*Haliotis rubra*) and the Southern Rock Lobster (*Jasus edwardsii*). Blacklip abalone is Victoria's most valuable commercial fishery. The Southern Rock Lobster is caught in waters in the area up to 150 m deep. However lobsters have a higher abundance near the shore with the majority of the catch of Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania taken from waters less than 60 m deep.

Commonwealth-managed commercial fisheries operating in the region include:

- Bass Strait Central Zone Scallop Fishery;
- Eastern Tuna and Billfish Fishery (ETBF);
- Eastern Skipjack Tuna Fishery (Australian Fishing Zone, Sub-Area 03);
- Small Pelagic Fishery (SPF) (Western Sub-Area);
- Southern and Eastern Scalefish and Shark Fishery (SESSF);
- Southern Bluefin Tuna Fishery; and
- Squid Jig Fishery (SSJF).

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5 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS, RISKS AND CONTROLS

BHP Billiton has undertaken an analysis of the environmental impacts and risks associated with activities at the Minerva offshore facilities. The risk assessment methodology was consistent with the procedures outlined in the Australian and New Zealand Standards AS/NZS ISO 31000:2009 (*Risk Management – Principles and Guidelines*).

These risks, potential impacts, and preventative and mitigative controls are summarised below. All management and mitigation measures associated with risks will be used to reduce environmental risk to as low as reasonably practicable (ALARP) and will be of an acceptable level.

Risk	Impacts	Management and Mitigation Measures		
Planned Activities				
Physical presence	Attraction (or displacement) of species to, or from, the area (e.g. pelagic fish). Interference with/obstacle to other marine users (fishing and shipping).	 Maintenance of safety zones and navigational aids. Stakeholder engagement. 		
Seabed disturbance	Minor impact to seabed with small area with burial and smothering of benthic habitats via installation aids being wet parked and existing infrastructure being moved and replaced.	 Marine disturbances will be managed to minimise environmental impact to sensitive benthic habitats. Control of vessel anchoring activities. 		

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Risk	Impacts	Management and Mitigation Measures
Light emissions	Low impact with attraction and/or disorientation of seabirds and turtles.	 Restriction of vessel lighting to levels necessary for safe working practices and navigation.
Atmospheric emissions	Low impact to the environment based on the individual greenhouse gas contribution to the greenhouse effect (N ₂ O, CO ₂ , CH ₄) in comparison to the global contribution.	 International Air Pollution Prevention (IAPP) certification of vessels. Inspection and maintenance of equipment. Monitoring and reporting of emissions in accordance with targets. Use of low sulphur diesel. Records of use of ozone depleting substances.
Noise emissions	Moderate impact with avoidance behaviour by marine fauna and disruption of migratory patterns over time.	 Adherence of vessels to EPBC Act Regulations for marine fauna interaction. Marine fauna awareness training conducted for core vessel crew. Implementation of sighting and recording procedures. Management of stakeholder feedback/concerns.
Marine Discharges – Liquid Wastes (vessel discharges of sewage, greywater, food scraps, cooling water, brine, deck drainage and wash down water)	Changes in water quality leading to environmental impacts to biota within the operational area.	 Waste discharge in accordance with <i>Protection of the</i> <i>Sea (Prevention of Pollution from Ships) Act 1983</i> – Part IIIB. Vessels to hold current International Sewage Pollution Prevention (ISPP) certificate. Sewage and greywater discharge from vessels will be managed in compliance with International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) 73/78 Annex IV and V. Marine sanitation unit will be utilised where installed; Food waste will be macerated to < 25 mm prior to discharge. Vessel Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plans (SOPEPs) and bunding implemented to prevent overboard release of chemicals or hydrocarbons.

Risk	Impacts	Management and Mitigation Measures
Solid waste	Low impact to marine animals through solid or hazardous waste ingestion and minor water quality impacts due to breakdown in organics. Disposal of waste causing environmental impact through surface water, ground water and soil contamination.	 Vessels to implement waste management plan in accordance with waste management hierarchy and best practice, and records maintained of waste transport and disposal onshore; and Records of loss or discharge to sea of waste.
Subsea Discharges – Control Fluid	Potential for toxic effect to fauna in close association with release point causing changes in water quality (hydrocarbon/ chemical/ temperature) leading to environmental impacts to biota within the operational area.	 Any new chemicals proposed for use will be assessed in accordance with BHP Billiton's chemical selection procedures, which require chemicals to be selected with the lowest practical environmental risk, subject to technical and economic constraints. This procedure includes preference for selection of chemicals of the UK's Offshore Chemical Notification Scheme (OCNS) Gold or Silver, or Group E or D.
Unplanned Activities		
Interference to marine fauna	Avoidance or attraction behaviour by marine fauna and disruption to migratory pathway over time Mortality or injury of protected marine species.	 Compliance with EPBC Act Regulations (r. 8.05 Interacting with Cetaceans).
Introduced marine species	Introduction of invasive marine species to area leading to major impact to native species. Moderate short term toxicity to marine organisms from antifouling treatments.	 Compliance to requirements under: Quarantine Act (1908) Regulation B-4 Ballast Water Exchange; National Biofouling Management Guidance for the Petroleum Production and Exploration Industry; MARPOL 73/78 Annex I, International Maritime Organisation Ballast Water Management Convention; and International Convention on the Control of Harmful Anti-fouling Systems on Ships (IOM, 2001).

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Risk	Impacts	Management and Mitigation Measures
Liquid and Gas Discharge – Well Head	Release of gas/condensate leading to direct impact of marine biota in the water column and indirect impact to biota surface due to water quality impact.	 Compliance with Well Integrity Critical Elements and Pressure Containment Integrity Performance Standards.
Liquid and Gas Discharge - Pipeline	Release of gas/condensate leading to direct impact of marine biota within water column and indirect impact to biota due to water quality impact.	 Maintenance of safety and cautionary zones. Compliance with Pressure Containment Integrity Performance Standards.
Liquid Discharge - Umbilical	Potential area of acute effect over very small localised area, visual pollution	 Compliance with Pressure Containment Integrity Performance Standards, and associated inspection and maintenance schedule for Hydraulic Power Unit (HPU). All chemicals will be reviewed and approved in accordance with BHP Billiton's Hazardous Materials Procedure, which includes review in accordance with the UK Offshore Chemical Notification Scheme (OCNS). The chemical selection process will have preference for products with least environmental impact (e.g. OCNS Gold or Silver; non-CHARMable Group D or E), within economic, safety and operational constraints.
Marine Spills of Stored Chemicals or Refined Oil	Potential area of acute effect over localised area (~6.1 km ²), visual pollution.	 Secondary containment storage standards for fuels, oils and hazardous chemicals. Implementation of vessel SOPEPs which meet <i>Guidelines for the Development of a Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan</i> published by IMO under MEPC.54 (32) 1992 as amended by MEPC.86(44).
Uncontrolled Leak of Diesel from Bulk Storage	Contamination / pollution of water column. Visual pollution (i.e. slicks and sheens) potential acute toxic response over localised area.	 Maintenance of safety and cautionary zones. Marine audits of vessels prior to deployment. Implementation of vessel SOPEPs which meet Guidelines for the Development of a Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan published by IMO under MEPC.54 (32) 1992 as amended by MEPC.86(44).

6 MANAGEMENT APPROACH AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING

The Minerva offshore facilities will be managed in compliance with the EP accepted by NOPSEMA under the regulations and the BHP Billiton HSEC Management System framework.

The objective of the EP is to ensure that potential adverse impacts on the environment associated with operation of the Minerva offshore facilities during both routine and non-routine operations are identified, reduced to ALARP and of an acceptable level.

Specifically, the EP details the performance objectives, controls and performance standards to be implemented for each environmental risk identified and assessed for the facilities, as well as specific measurement criteria that will be used to demonstrate that the performance objectives are achieved.

The implementation strategy detailed in the EP provides the management framework to:

- measure and achieve the EP's performance objectives;
- establish systems for the maintenance and inspection of the facilities;
- designate a chain of command with the roles and responsibilities for the planning, implementation and operation of the EP; and
- monitor and record BHP Billiton's environmental performance against the EP.

The EP also details reporting requirements for environmental incidents (recordable and reportable incidents) and reporting the overall compliance of the Minerva offshore facilities with the EP.

7 OIL SPILL CONTINGENCY PLAN

BHP Billiton has prepared the Minerva Operations Oil Spill Contingency Plan (OSCP). The OSCP forms a part of the EP submission, as required under the Environment Regulations. The OSCP establishes the processes and procedures to ensure that BHP Billiton maintains a constant vigilance and readiness to prevent and, where required, respond to and effectively manage any hydrocarbon spill incidents that may occur during operation of the Minerva offshore facilities. The OSCP also includes a First Strike Plan, which is intended to provide immediate guidance for action in a marine spill event.

Installation vessels used for BHP Billiton activities at the Minerva offshore facilities will have a vessel specific Shipboard Oil Pollution Emergency Plan (SOPEP) in accordance with the requirements of MARPOL 73/78 Annex I. These plans outline responsibilities, specify procedures and identify resources available in the event of an oil or chemical spill from a vessel. Spills that occur beyond the capability of the vessel will be managed in accordance with the Minerva Operations OSCP.

The readiness and competency of BHP Billiton to respond to incidents and emergencies at the Minerva Operations is maintained and tested by conducting periodic drills and emergency response exercises.

8 CONSULTATION

BHP Billiton conducted an active community consultation program in relation to the initial Minerva project development phase, which included initiation of an Environmental Review Committee (ERC). In 2013 the ERC was modified to become a Community Reference Group (CRG) to reflect the change in focus of the community during operation of the facilities. The CRG is the key body for consultation with the community, local government and regulators. It is chaired and run by the Corangamite Shire. The CRG remains in operation to ensure that any issues of community concern associated with the Minerva facilities are identified and managed.

There are not any Minerva onshore or offshore activities planned under this EP revision that would change the functions, interests or activities of existing stakeholders. Stakeholders will be consulted prior to any onshore or offshore activities that may affect their functions, activities or interests. Should the ongoing consultation require modifications or revision to the EP, this will be considered in accordance with the regulations.

9 CONTACT DETAILS

For further information about this activity please contact BHP Billiton Petroleum Government and External Affairs Team on 1800 110 258 or send an email to <u>bhppetexternalaffairs@bhpbilliton.com</u>.

10 REFERENCES

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