



Not reasonably satisfied decision

Caldita-Barossa 3D Marine Seismic Survey Environment Plan

This document provides notification of NOPSEMA’s decision made under regulation 10 of the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Environment) Regulations 2009 (Environment Regulations). In this instance, NOPSEMA is providing an opportunity to modify and resubmit the environment plan as it is not reasonably satisfied that the plans meets the acceptance criteria set out in the regulations.

Submission information

Titleholder¹:	ConocoPhillips Australia Exploration Pty Ltd
Environment plan:	Caldita-Barossa 3D Marine Seismic Survey Environment Plan (ALL/HSE/PLN/027) Rev 1
Petroleum title(s)/Application number(s):	NT/RL5 and NT/RL6
Date submitted to NOPSEMA:	26/04/2016
Activities type(s)²:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seismic Survey
Activity overview: <i>As described on the NOPSEMA website.</i>	<p>ConocoPhillips is proposing to acquire three dimensional marine seismic data in an area of the Timor Sea, 300 km north of Darwin, Northern Territory.</p> <p>Data will be acquired in Retention Lease Permits NT/RL5 and NT/RL6, known as the Barossa and Caldita fields, as well as some adjacent open acreage. The permit areas are in Commonwealth waters of the Bonaparte Basin. The data acquisition area is approximately 3,186 km² and is surrounded by an 18 km buffer area, to take into account the vessel’s required turning circle, making a total operational area of 10,332 km².</p> <p>Water depths in the operational area range from approximately 75 m to 550 m. Data will be collected using a purpose-built seismic vessel towing dual acoustic source arrays and hydrophone cables (streamers). Acoustic emissions from the source arrays are detected by the hydrophone cables and recorded on the vessel. The vessel will tow 16 hydrophone cables, at a length of 6 km at depths of 20 m. The distance between the hydrophone cables will be an average 50 m. The total volume of the seismic source proposed for the survey is 4,130 cubic inches. This source size was selected to meet several criteria regarding operational stability, predictable behaviour and fit-for-purpose subsurface seismic imaging (vertical focus).</p> <p>The vessel will collect data along a series of pre-determined sail lines at an average speed of 8-9 km/hour. There are a total of 109 sail lines in the acquisition area, with a total length of 8,384 km and a separation distance of 400 m. The seismic</p>

source will be discharged at a nominal interval of 8 seconds along each sail line. The seismic source will produce peak at source (i.e. within a few metres of the airgun array) sound pulses of zero-to-peak sound pressure level of approximately 246 dB re 1 μ Pa @ 1 m, and sound exposure levels of approximately 223 dB re 1 μ Pa 2 .s @ 1 m across a frequency range of 10 Hz to 2 kHz.

One or two other vessels would be present at all times – a logistics support vessel and potentially a chase vessel that ensures other vessels do not come in close proximity.

The actual vessels to be used will be determined when the seismic company is awarded the contract. Commencement of the survey is subject to gaining the required regulatory approvals and availability of a suitable seismic vessel for conducting the survey. The latest information indicates regulatory approval to access to part of the operational area will not be received until early July. It is estimated that the survey will take ~82 days but could range in duration from 58 days to 110 days depending on operational efficiency. It is ConocoPhillips' preference to complete as much of the data acquisition as possible within the period of lowest fishing activity (June – August).

Decision:	Not reasonably satisfied
Decision date:	24/05/2016
Resubmission due date³:	23/6/2016
Decision made by:	Representative of NOPSEMA: Environment Manager - Seismic & Production Operations

Basis of decision

NOPSEMA has assessed the environment plan in accordance with its assessment policies and procedures. On completion of assessment, NOPSEMA has decided that it is not reasonably satisfied that the environment plan meets the criteria below as set out in regulation 10A of the Environment Regulations:

- (b) demonstrates that the environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be reduced to as low as reasonably practicable
- (c) demonstrates that the environmental impacts and risks of the activity will be of an acceptable level
- (g) demonstrates that:
 - (i) the titleholder has carried out the consultations required by Division 2.2A
 - (ii) the measures (if any) that the titleholder has adopted, or proposes to adopt, because of the consultations are appropriate

Titleholder requirements

In accordance with regulation 10, the titleholder is required to modify and resubmit the environment plan. Upon resubmission of the plan, NOPSEMA will continue to assess the submission in accordance with its assessment policies and make a decision under regulation 10. After a titleholder has been provided with reasonable opportunity to modify and resubmit an environment plan, NOPSEMA will make a final decision on whether to accept or refuse to accept the environment plan.

How to get further information

If you have any further questions regarding the activity it is suggested you contact the titleholder's nominated liaison person for the activity.

If you would like to access any further information regarding this decision, or would like to contact NOPSEMA please email environment@nopsema.gov.au.

¹ A titleholder includes an applicant for a petroleum access authority, petroleum special prospecting authority, pipeline licence, greenhouse gas search authority or greenhouse gas special authority under sub-regulation 9(2).

² Activity type as listed in the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage (Regulatory Levies) Regulations 2004

³ NOPSEMA sets the proposed timeframe for resubmission; after which NOPSEMA may determine a reasonable opportunity has been given and NOPSEMA may refuse to accept the plan. Titleholders can request an extended timeframe.