

Purpose: To set the direction for how NOPSEMA will work with its stakeholders to ensure that decommissioning of wells, structures, equipment and property is undertaken in a timely, safe and environmentally responsible manner and is considered across the full life cycle of a project. The strategy intends to reinforce and clarify decommissioning related requirements of titleholders under the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* (the Act) and ensure appropriate planning for, and execution of, decommissioning activities in Australia's Commonwealth waters.

<i>Decommissioning of offshore petroleum wells, structures, equipment and property completed in a timely, safe and environmentally responsible manner</i>			
Objectives	Ensuring titleholders have appropriate plans for decommissioning all wells, structures, equipment and property, and are executing activities to complete decommissioning in a timely manner	Providing certainty to the oil and gas industry regarding the obligations to decommission all wells, structures, equipment and property	Improving understanding and capacity building of safety, well integrity, and environmental outcomes for the decommissioning of wells, structures, equipment and property
Actions	Coordinate assessment and decision-making of permissioning documents to ensure decommissioning related requirements have been met and considered throughout the life cycle of a petroleum project	Develop and communicate NOPSEMA's regulatory policies in relation to decommissioning related legislative provisions including Section 270 and 572 of the Act and supporting regulations	Collaborate with oil and gas industry, government and other stakeholders so that there is a common understanding of challenges, solutions and expectations of government
	Pursue revisions to in-force permissioning documents when titleholders have failed to adequately provide for the planning, maintenance and/or decommissioning of all wells, structures, equipment and property	Collaborate with oil and gas industry and other stakeholders to develop guidance to assist titleholders in preparing decommissioning permissioning documents and explain how NOPSEMA makes its decisions	Promote greater research by oil and gas industry and government to address gaps in knowledge associated with short- and longer-term consequences of offshore petroleum decommissioning activities
	Undertake compliance monitoring of titleholders to understand their organisational approach to decommissioning and complete risk-based inspections to verify specific planning for, and execution of decommissioning activities	Collaborate with oil and gas industry and other stakeholders to understand the risks and benefits of alternatives to full removal and provide a pathway for obtaining deviations where appropriate	Work with stakeholders to identify opportunities for the development of an oil and gas industry property register to provide greater situational awareness of number, type, condition and status of wells, structures, equipment and property
	Apply appropriate compliance action (e.g., serving remedial and general directions) to ensure compliance of titleholders with their decommissioning obligations	Streamlining of the environmental approval (e.g., Sea Dumping Act) process for petroleum decommissioning activities in Commonwealth waters to minimise burden and duplication of effort	Collaborate with oil and gas industry to promote and share good practice approaches to decommissioning of offshore wells, structures, equipment and property
	Investigate and undertake appropriate compliance action including enforcement and prosecution in cases where a titleholder has not maintained property and equipment and this compromises the ability to remove it, or the titleholder has failed to decommission it following cessation of production	Provision of advice to NOPTA and the Joint Authority to assist with informing their decision-making regarding title related decommissioning compliance matters	Prepare guidance and promote the publication of environmental performance reports describing a titleholders' performance and reports describing NOPSEMA decision making related to permissioning documents for decommissioning activities
Targets	<i>End 2021</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All new and revised permissioning documents demonstrate how decommissioning requirements have been considered 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Titleholders are aware of decommissioning requirements in place and how to prepare permissioning documents Suite of NOPSEMA guidance available outlining expectations in relation to the different phases of decommissioning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research project/s have scopes and inputs identified, to better understand and address information gaps Guidance released clarifying requirements and expectations in relation to decommissioning
	<i>End 2023</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decommissioning plans are in place for all structures, equipment and property that have ceased production All wells have been risk assessed and have accepted abandonment plans in place Moored or tethered buoyant infrastructure removed within 12 months of permanently ceasing operation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrangements are in place for a single environmental approval for decommissioning activities in Commonwealth waters Suite of NOPSEMA guidance published 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Property register established Environmental performance report published for all decommissioning activities Key information gaps addressed through research projects and collaboration and outputs applied in permissioning documents
	<i>End 2025</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All structures, equipment and property decommissioned to approved end-state within 5 years of permanently ceasing production All wells have been plugged and closed-off with accepted abandonment report within 3 years of permanently ceasing production Successful prosecution or enforcement action taken when deemed necessary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduction in average assessment timeframes for decommissioning plans 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased coordination and collaboration in the execution of decommissioning activities Increased adoption of innovative and best practice decommissioning solutions

Background: The decommissioning challenge is significant given Australia's remote location, as many offshore structures are now approaching the end of their operational lives and because of the relative infancy of Australia's offshore petroleum industry in undertaking large scale decommissioning projects. Decommissioning will be complex, expensive, span many years and introduce many new and significant safety, environmental and well integrity risks. This strategy has been prepared to assist in setting the direction for how NOPSEMA will discharge its regulatory functions to ensure the proactive, safe, and environmentally responsible decommissioning of wells, structures, equipment and property. It has been developed in accordance with the wider expectations of government set out in the current Ministerial Statement of Expectations for NOPSEMA. The strategies will be developed, in most cases, collaboratively with stakeholders with more detail and direction provided in a tailored compliance plan.

The scope of this strategy covers the requirement to maintain and remove wells, structures, equipment and property as required under section 572 of the Act. The strategy does not cover financial assurance, capacity or capability of titleholders or extend to entry or exit requirements for titleholders into the offshore petroleum regime or other specific environmental management, well integrity or health and safety improvement initiatives already underway.