

Meeting Date: Wednesday 8 November 2023

Meeting objectives:

To seek the group's feedback and provide a variety of community perspectives on specific matters of interest to NOPSEMA or members of the reference group, relevant to offshore energy environmental management, to help guide NOPSEMA's approach to regulation of environmental management.

Meeting details:

The meeting was held via Microsoft Teams at 10:00am AWST on Wednesday 8 November 2023.

Attendees included representatives of NOPSEMA and members of the Community and Environment Reference Group (CERG), as listed in Attachment 1.

Meeting record:

Agenda Item 1 – Introduction and welcome

The Chair opened the meeting and welcomed all new and returning participants.

NOPSEMA provided an overview of the intent of CERG and how it is of benefit to both NOPSEMA and the community.

All participants gave a short introduction to the group.

The agenda and objectives for the meeting were confirmed.

Agenda Item 2 – Register of interests

The Chair noted the update to the register by Mr Levings and stated it was unlikely to present any issues for the meeting.

New members were asked to provide any relevant information to the Secretariat.

Agenda Item 3 – Confirmation of record of Meeting 11 and review of actions

The record of the meeting of 23 March 2023 were accepted.

The action items were reviewed and updated as appropriate.

Agenda Item 4 – Introductions and recent community interactions

Agenda Item 4.1 – Introductions by new and returning members.

CERG members provided an introduction of their background and their initial perspectives of NOPSEMA and the offshore energy industry from any previous engagement.

Common themes included:

- recognition of the difficult position of the regulator in current times with the increase attention from the public eye and general community interest.
- the strain on resources for consultation being experienced by some in the community suffering consultation fatigue.

- a narrative of social licence to operate that can see opinions of industry rub off on the Regulator.
- a general lack of understanding of what consultation is by those in the community now being required to participate in consultation, for example, that consultation does not mean agreement.
- other environmental and community related issues such as State issues or the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* reform project, can be confused together with the result that objections to one may be conferred onto work by NOPSEMA.
- concern that general misinformation and disinformation is abundant making it more difficult to educate and consult with communities.
- consultation processes often have no obvious close out leaving communities to wonder if they were heard and trust their concerns were addressed.

Agenda Item 5 – Topics for discussion/information

Agenda Item 5.1 – NOPSEMA Compliance Strategy

NOPSEMA provided a brief overview of the Compliance Strategy and its purpose and invited feedback from the CERG members. CERG suggested that the monitoring of compliance, both in alternative sources of monitoring and in the transparency of existing reporting and monitoring could be better communicated and accessible to the community.

Agenda Item 5.2 – Update on relevant persons consultation and environment policy review

NOPSEMA gave an overview of the environment policy review and the general update on relevant persons consultation and how they relate.

CERG members discussed the review and the discussion paper presented with common themes including:

- the language used in relation to impacts of regulation requirements and consultation requirements can be misleading. The term burden can reflect negatively on both industry and community and suggest fault. Different terminology for frustration of communities for poorly conducted consultation needs to be highlighted.
- the regulator needs to display it is capable to evaluate and place the appropriate weight on sources of information received and can authenticate the information it assesses; this is increasingly challenging with the complexity of false information and non-traditional information that may be of cultural or spiritual nature.
- the current regulations make it difficult to confidently impose a decision either way.

ACTION: Secretariat to circulate background on the regulation of the offshore energy industry.

See below:

[Offshore oil and gas | Department of Industry, Science and Resources](#)

Agenda Item 5.3 – Topics for future meetings

The Chair welcomed suggestions in addition to those provided and advised a survey would be sent out following the meeting to prioritise the topics of most interest which would then be used to inform future meeting agendas.

ACTION: NOPSEMA to provide members with a survey of possible topics to discuss at future meetings.

Agenda Item 6 – Review and close out

Agenda Item 6.1 – Date of next meeting

Secretariat will contact CERG in the new year with a proposed next meeting date.

The Chair thanked everyone for their participation and closed the meeting at 12am.

Attachment 1

Attendees list

NOPSEMA representatives
Sue McCarrey, Chief Executive Officer (Chair)
Cameron Grebe, Head of Environment, Renewables and Decommissioning Division
Amanda Nardi-Wallace, Secretariat, CERG
Community representatives
Jacqueline Hine
Robyn Glindemann
Jess Lerch
Kirsten Rough
Stuart Field
Andrew Levings
Sander Scheffers
Piers Verstegen
Jason Froud
Luke Skinner
Terry Atkinson
Danielle Hartshorn
Apologies
Sean-Paul Stephens