

# Performance Report

## EPBC Streamlining

1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025



Presented to:

**The Hon Murray Watt MP, Minister for the Environment and Water, and  
The Hon Madeleine King, Minister for Resources**

On 28 February 2014, the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority's (NOPSEMA) environmental management authorisation process was endorsed by the Minister for the Environment as a Program that meets requirements of Part 10 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 (EPBC Act; the Program). The Minister for the Environment also approved a class of actions which, if undertaken in accordance with the endorsed Program, do not require further assessment and approval under the EPBC Act. These decisions removed duplicative environmental approvals processes and made NOPSEMA the sole regulator for the environmental management of petroleum activities in Commonwealth waters. Further information is available at [nopsema.gov.au](http://nopsema.gov.au).

This report provides a summary of NOPSEMA's performance under the endorsed Program for the period 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025. In financial year (FY) 2024-25, NOPSEMA provided decision notices in relation to the Offshore Project Proposals and Environment Plan below within legislated timeframes 100% of the time.

| Regulatory activity                    |                                                                                                                                                   | 1 July 2024 to 30 June 2025 |
|----------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Submission type                        | Category                                                                                                                                          | Number                      |
| Offshore project proposal <sup>1</sup> | Accepted for public comment <sup>2</sup>                                                                                                          | 3                           |
|                                        | Accepted <sup>3</sup>                                                                                                                             | 1                           |
|                                        | Assessments in progress – for public comment <sup>4</sup>                                                                                         | 0                           |
|                                        | Assessments in progress – for acceptance <sup>4</sup>                                                                                             | 2                           |
| Environment plan                       | Accepted <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                                             | 35                          |
|                                        | Assessments in progress <sup>4</sup>                                                                                                              | 13                          |
|                                        | Decisions - refuse to accept <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                         | 0                           |
|                                        | Assessments stopped/cancelled <sup>5</sup>                                                                                                        | 6                           |
|                                        | Acceptances that pose unacceptable impacts to matters protected under Part 3 of the Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999 | 0                           |
|                                        |                                                                                                                                                   |                             |

1. The offshore project proposal (OPP) process streamlines decision-making on the overall environmental acceptability of offshore projects in Commonwealth waters and is designed to deliver equivalent environmental outcomes to the environmental impact assessment process under the EPBC Act.
2. NOPSEMA publishes OPPs that are open for public comment following its determination that the OPP is suitable for publication. The public then have an opportunity to review and provide comment on the OPP. Based on year of acceptance for public comment (1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025)
3. The final accepted OPP. Based on year of completion (1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025)
4. Based on year of submission (1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025)
5. Based on year of completion (1 July 2024 - 30 June 2025)

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In addition to the environmental management assessment and authorisation process which forms the foundation of the Program (see annual statistics above), NOPSEMA continued to discharge complementary compliance monitoring and enforcement functions under the Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006. During FY2024-25 NOPSEMA:

- Conducted 37 environment inspections to monitor duty holder compliance, which found overall good levels of compliance across activity types and environmental control measures. Where improvements have been needed in systems or control measures, these resulted in titleholders being required to take action to address. Where warranted under the law, enforcement action taken as per NOPSEMA's enforcement policy (see enforcements below). Findings from compliance inspections in the reporting period did not identify significant impacts to matters protected under Part 3 of the EPBC Act.
- Received and investigated 10 environmental reportable incident notifications from titleholders. These found instances of failures of controls but concluded that in most instances low to no environmental consequences. Notable incidents involved unplanned release of plastics and release of wastewater including hydrocarbons during decommissioning activities. Where warranted, the findings of incident investigations were also considered through enforcements mentioned below.
- NOPSEMA continues to investigate an incident associated with a marine seismic survey that occurred in early 2020 that may have been undertaken contrary to the environment plan in force and related to compliance with requirements arising from the National Recovery Plan for the blue whale. To date the investigation has not identified harm to blue whales or other animals but it is continuing to establish what system or other control measure failures were associated with the incident to ensure lessons can be shared. NOPSEMA has already incorporated lessons into assessment of new EP submissions for seismic surveys.
- Issued one environmental improvement notice, one general direction for environmental management matters and two requests for revision of an environment plan. Environmental improvement notice 1952 was issued in response to a release of hydrocarbons to the sea from a facility in the Bass Strait and required the titleholder to take a number of specific actions to address deficiencies in management of the activity that contributed to the release. General Direction 1947 was issued (8 July 2024) to ensure appropriate steps are taken by the titleholder before and after cessation of petroleum production to reduce risks to the workforce and environment. Two requests for a revision of an environment plan were made to ensure that titleholders complied with regulatory requirements. While outside of the reporting period of this report, NOPSEMA revised and reissued three General Directions on 24 July 2025 to ensure the safe and environmental responsible completion of decommissioning activities following safety and environmental incidents across a number of activities (General Direction 2022, General Direction 2017, General Direction 2016).

Key areas of focus for NOPSEMA in environmental assessments, compliance monitoring and investigations over the reporting period have continued to be decommissioning of offshore petroleum infrastructure, marine seismic surveys, oil pollution risk management, management of greenhouse gas emissions, and compliance with statutory instruments for the protection and conservation of EPBC Act listed threatened species.

During the reporting period, NOPSEMA continued to implement administrative arrangements between NOPSEMA and the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) that are in place for the endorsed Program. This includes sharing information with DCCEEW about relevant regulatory activities such as environment plan assessments, compliance monitoring, incident investigations, and enforcement actions. NOPSEMA and the Director of National Parks also completed the five-year review of the Memorandum of Understanding and published an updated version.

NOPSEMA engages with DCCEEW on a regular and ad-hoc basis covering a range of matters, including application of EPBC Act instruments, guidance materials and DCCEEW's geospatial tools in regulatory assessments, and maintaining appropriate executive oversight of each agency's Program-related workstreams and initiatives.