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13 June 2019

Dear Mr Payne

## **FREEDOM OF INFORMATION REQUEST – ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND NOTICE OF DECISION**

I refer to your request received on 4 June 2019 to the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA) for access to certain documents under the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* (the FOI Act).

I am the decision maker in this matter, having been authorised under s 23 of the FOI Act.

This notice contains my decision in relation to access to documents that were requested under the FOI Act.

### **Scope of your request**

Specifically, you requested minutes of meetings with Equinor and government officials that occurred between January 1st 2019, to May 31st 2019.

### **Decision and reasons**

Under s 24A of the FOI Act, I am required to undertake reasonable searches to find requested documents before refusing access on the basis that documents cannot be found or do not exist.

What constitutes a reasonable search will depend on the circumstances of each request. I have therefore taken comprehensive steps to locate documents, having regards to:

- the subject matter of the documents;
- the current and past file management systems;
- the record management systems in place; and
- the individuals within an agency who may be able to assist with the location of documents.

NOPSEMA retains all records through a digital records management system (Objective), in compliance with the *Commonwealth Archives Act 1983*. Furthermore, NOPSEMA's archive and IT policies require that all correspondence is stored in Objective, not staff email mailboxes, or in paper-based filing systems.

I performed searches of Objective using the relevant titleholder name (Equinor) and individual key words taken from your scope of request, such as the date range. Specifically, I searched for all records

of meetings with Equinor from January 1 to May 31 2019. There were no documents found in any of these searches that match the scope of your request.

I then requested further searches to be undertaken by NOPSEMA's Information Technology and Management team, who confirmed that there were no records of meetings for this time period. Lastly, I also made verbal enquiries with NOPSEMA's Environment Division line area manager responsible for receiving environment plan submissions for exploration activities from titleholders. He confirmed to me that there were no minutes recorded during the time period specified in your scope of request.

For the purposes of s 24A(1) of the FOI Act I am satisfied that:

- a) NOPSEMA has taken all reasonable steps to find documents that fall within the scope of your request; and
- b) Those documents do not exist.

### **Information published by NOPSEMA**

NOPSEMA publishes information regarding the current status of activities on our web page (<https://www.nopsema.gov.au/environmental-management/activity-status-and-summaries/>).

You can subscribe to receive alerts in regards to a particular activity, once NOPSEMA receives a submission for that activity (such as an environment plan).

Further information in regards to the assessment process can be found here: <https://www.nopsema.gov.au/environmental-management/assessment-process/environment-plans/>.

### **Your review rights**

If you are dissatisfied with my decision, you may apply for internal review or Information Commissioner Review. We encourage you to seek internal review as a first step as it may provide a more rapid resolution of your concerns.

#### ***Internal review***

Any application for an internal review of the decision must be made in writing within 30 days of receipt of this decision. No fee is required for an application for internal review. A request for internal review should be directed to the following address:

The Internal Reviewer, Freedom of Information  
NOPSEMA  
GPO Box 2568  
PERTH WA 6001  
Email: [information@nopsema.gov.au](mailto:information@nopsema.gov.au)

No particular form is required but it is desirable to set out in the application the grounds on which you consider that the decision should be reviewed.

#### ***Information Commissioner review***

Alternatively, you may make an application to the Information Commissioner under s 54L of the FOI Act. An application for review to the Information Commissioner must be made in writing within 60 days of receipt of this decision. An application can be made in one of the following ways:

online: <https://forms.business.gov.au/aba/oaic/foi-review-/>  
email: [enquiries@oaic.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@oaic.gov.au)

post: GPO Box 5218, Sydney NSW 2001  
in person: Level 3, 175 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW

More information about Information Commissioner review is available on the Office of the Australian Information Commissioner website. Go to [www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-reviews](http://www.oaic.gov.au/freedom-of-information/foi-reviews).

Yours sincerely

**Freedom of Information Coordinator**