

Senate Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Department of Industry, Science and Resources
Inquiry into Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Legislation Amendment
(Safety and Other Measures) Bill 2024 [Provisions]
14 March 2024

AGENCY/DEPARTMENT: Department of Industry, Science and Resources

TOPIC: Questions concerning the Bill

REFERENCE: Written Question - Senator Andrew Bragg

QUESTION No.: 1

1. How similar are the changes to WHS within this Bill to the changes proposed by the review conducted by the previous Government?
2. How much new consultation was undertaken by the Department prior to the introduction of this Bill?
3. How important is the EPBC carveout – which has existed for a decade – to the continued flow of offshore approvals, particularly considering the blowout which happened under this Government?

ANSWER

1. The Bill will amend the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* (OPGGGS Act) to implement all the recommended policy reforms identified in the Offshore Oil and Gas Safety Review (Safety Review) which concluded in 2021. It also makes additional offshore safety reforms which were developed subsequent to that review.
2. Consultation was undertaken with key stakeholders throughout the development of the Bill, including but not limited to industry, unions, the offshore workforce and Australian and state and territory governments. Further details on consultation are included in the Explanatory Memorandum.
3. Schedule 2 Part 2 of the Bill will enable subsequent amendments to be made to the OPGGS Environment Regulations to clarify and strengthen the offshore framework, while maintaining streamlined arrangements for NOPSEMA approvals under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Without this measure, proponents would need to seek separate approvals under both the OPGGS Environment Regulations and the EPBC Act. This would significantly increase regulatory burden on industry and government, and consultation burden on stakeholders, for no increase in environmental protection.