



THE UNIVERSITY  
OF QUEENSLAND  
AUSTRALIA

Postal address:  
Centre for Marine Studies,  
University of Queensland,  
Qld. 4072.

Submission No: ..... 3 .....

Date Received: ..... 27-6-08 .....

Secretary: ..... *[Signature]* .....

The University of Queensland  
Brisbane QLD 4072 Australia  
Telephone 07 3365 2120  
Email: [m.white@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.white@uq.edu.au)  
Internet <http://www.cms.uq.edu.au>

Standing Committee on Primary Industries and Resources

## **Inquiry into the Draft Offshore Petroleum Amendment (Greenhouse Gas Storage) Bill**

27 June, 2008

### Re: Renumbering of Sections of an Act to be Avoided

I understand that the present shape of the Offshore Petroleum Amendment (Greenhouse Gas Storage) Bill 2008 proposes that the OPA will not only be re-named, but the existing sections of that Act will also be re-numbered.

I write to recommend that you take what steps you can to avoid actually re-numbering existing sections of the Act. Major amendments to major Acts are not new and in most cases the existing Act is left intact and the amendments are given new section numbers, generally using the letters of the alphabet; as is the case with new Chapters, Parts and Divisions etc. This works fairly well in that the huge number of references then do not need amendment, but the new sections can be easily referred to without going to the effort to accommodate changing existing references. Major Acts that use this procedure, such as the Income Tax Assessment Act, the Navigation Act, etc all assist in this way. Not only does this save much work in further amending Acts, but practitioners and, in my case academics, need not re-write so much. In my own case I have agreed to deliver a new book to Federation Press (*Australian Offshore Laws*) at the end of this year, in which there will be numerous references to the OPA, including as amended. When the book comes out during 2009 its references to sections may well be inaccurate, which can easily be avoided if the amending Act does not re-number existing sections. This is only one of numerous examples and having a correlative table is not a complete answer.

In short, I suggest that the committee recommends new section numbering for the amended OPA rather than changes to the existing numbering. (The change of title will have to be borne I presume).

Yours sincerely,

*Michael White*

(Dr Michael White QC,  
Adjunct Professor,  
(Centre for Marine Studies; and also of the Marine & Shipping Law Unit);  
University of Queensland.  
Ph: (0)7 3365 2120; Email: [m.white@uq.edu.au](mailto:m.white@uq.edu.au))