

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

19 October 2011

**Question:** SR23

**Topic:** Proposed Heritage Listing of Tarkine

**Proof Hansard Page:** Written

**Senator Bushby asked:**

1. Has the department had any involvement in the proposed heritage listing of the Tarkine in Tasmania?
2. Has the department done any modelling on the economic impacts if the area is listed?
3. Has the department received any feedback from companies regarding the possible heritage listing?
4. Does the department know how many mining exploration permits have been granted this year? How many are waiting on approval?
5. What impact would such a listing have on the ability to extract minerals from or near the region? What impact will it have on attracting investment in the sector?

**Answer:**

1. The Department of Resources, Energy and Tourism (RET) has not been involved in the assessment process conducted by the National Heritage Council (NHC) as part of either the Emergency listing or the proposed National Heritage Listing processes of this area.
2. RET has not conducted any modelling on the economic impacts should the area be listed on the National Heritage List.
3. No, the Department has not received any direct feedback from companies regarding the possible heritage listing of this area.
4. As at 17 August 2011, RET understood the following leases and licences were in place:
  - 67 Exploration leases;
  - 2 Special Exploration licences;
  - 3 Retention Licences; and
  - 14 Mining Leases.
5. RET's understanding is that any lawful existing use of land and sea may continue in the area. This includes mining and exploration activities that are currently permitted and activities currently under state management planning. Any mining lease expansion, intensification or exploration leases granted over a place following a decision by the Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (SEWPAC) to include on the National Heritage List, which may have or is likely to have a significant impact on the heritage values of that that place, must be referred for approval under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* to the Minister for SEWPAC.

In terms of what impact will it have on attracting investment in the sector, as indicated above, RET has not undertaken any modelling or quantitative analysis in relation to this matter. RET is unable to comment on investor decisions should the area be included on the National Heritage List.