

Senate Standing Committee on Economics

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Supplementary Budget Estimates

18 October 2012

Question: SR12**Topic: Lord Cullen Report recommendations****Proof Hansard Page: 22****Senator Cameron asked:****Senator CAMERON:** Let's come back to the question of the legislation and how it is operating. As I understand it, the genesis of this legislation was following the Piper Alpha tragedy in the UK?**Ms Cutler:** The concept of a performance based regime for regulating the safety of workers at facilities in the offshore industry had its genesis following the Cullen inquiry into the Piper Alpha regime.**Senator CAMERON:** As a result of that investigation there was a mass of recommendations, including enforcement and workforce involvement.**Ms Cutler:** Yes. There was a substantial report by Lord Cullen. It

contained a mass of recommendations, and I would have to take on notice the contents of each-

Senator CAMERON: I am not going to ask you about the contents in great detail. But one of the recommendations was that there had to be a voice for offshore workers in the health and safety of their installations, is that correct?**Ms Cutler:** I would have to take the specific wording of the recommendation on notice.**Senator CAMERON:** You are not sure about "having a voice"?**Ms Cutler:** I am not saying that. You referred to it specifically-**Senator CAMERON:** This was the genesis, but you are not aware of some of the basics.**CHAIR:** Wait a minute.**Ms Cutler:** Can I clarify?**CHAIR:** You should, Ms Cutler, because you said something different.**Ms Cutler:** Yes. I am saying that I am not aware of the specific wording of the Cullen report. The principle of workforce involvement is one that is deeply enshrined in the legislation that I am responsible for administering.**Answer:**

Recommendation 27 of the report of The Public Inquiry into the Piper Alpha Disaster under "Safety Committees and safety representatives" states, "The regulatory body, operators and contractors should support and encourage the involvement of the offshore workforce in safety. In particular, first line supervisors should involve their workforce teams in everyday safety." Furthermore, the principles around the role and powers of safety representatives established in recommendations 27-31 of the report have been incorporated into the OPGGSA. In particular, Part 2 of Schedule 3 to the Act refers to the duties of an operator regarding occupational health and safety, including consulting members of the workforce of a facility on development of an OHS policy. In addition, Part 3 of Schedule 3 to the Act refers to workplace arrangements, including the establishment of a designated work group, health and safety committee and health and safety representative.