



Australian Government

Department of Transport and Regional Services

File Reference: X2006/0755

Senator the Hon Bill Heffernan
Chair
Senate Standing Committee on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Senator Heffernan

**Subject: Correction to Response to Question On Notice TLG 08, Hansard p 108
(30/10/06)**

Senator Siewert sought information about the environmental performance audit of Phosphate Resources Limited's (PRL's) mining operations on Christmas Island. In response to the Senator's question the Department of Transport and Regional Services (DOTARS) stated that PRL's Environmental Performance Review Report was an in-confidence document that could not be disclosed because of the confidentiality agreement between PRL and the Commonwealth. This was established by PRL's 1997 mining lease.

I seek to update our answer. I have recently learned that on 15 December 2006 PRL made available to the public its Supplement to the Phosphate Resources Limited Draft Environmental Impact Statement at http://www.christmasislandeis.com/pdf/EIS_CIP_SUPP_Dec_06.pdf. This document contained PRL's confidential 2005 Environment Performance Review Report commissioned by DOTARS, the subject of Senator Siewert's question. The publication of this document was done without consulting DOTARS and in apparent breach of the confidentiality provisions in its mining lease.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Susan Page' in a cursive script.

Susan Page
Deputy Secretary
Department of Transport and Regional Services

5 February 2007