



13 June 2017

Amy Allen
Project Officer
Protected Areas Unit
Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources
GPO Box 1047
Adelaide SA 5001

Via email

Dear Amy

Witjira National Park Draft Management Plan 2017

The South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy (SACOME) is pleased to have this opportunity to make a submission to the Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) on the *Witjira National Park Draft Management Plan 2017* (the draft Management Plan).

Risk Based Approach

The resources sector advocates a risk-based approach to decision making. This approach is also consistent with the government regulatory approach to the approval of mineral and petroleum resources development in South Australia. Consistent with the intent of the dual proclamation of the Witjira National Park, the draft Management Plan should ensure the existing rights to sustainable economic development of resources can continue to be exercised while remaining sensitive to environmental objectives.

Management Plan

The draft Management Plan emphasises that exploration, mining and petroleum production is assessed on a case by case basis and may be subject to conditions being included in the licence. However the prohibition on activity, in this case within the Dalhousie Springs area, does not accord with a risk-based approach as outlined above.

SACOME

SACOME's position is that it is not the purpose of a management plan to introduce or describe additional prohibitions in parks or reserves where there is no legislative basis. Management Plans should complement established regulatory frameworks by identifying key threats and important values that require protection.

Under the dual proclamation of the park (clause 4(c)) *if a management plan is in operation under section 38 of the National Parks and Wildlife Act 1972, in respect of Witjira National Park, the person shall have regard for the provisions of the plan of management.* The 'person' being those holding rights under the *Mining Act 1971* and *Petroleum and Geothermal Energy Act 2000*.



In other words, regard for the environmental and heritage attributes of the park when undertaking activities. It is not the intended purpose of the clause to enable the introduction of restrictions, nor to bind the holder of mining rights.

The Program for Environment Protection and Rehabilitation (PEPR) and Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Statement of Environmental Objectives (SEO) processes provide for appropriate risk-based mechanisms for managing exploration and production activity. Both are developed in consultation with the Department of the Premier and Cabinet and, where activities relate to State Reserves, DEWNR.

The methods, risk assessments, mitigation strategies, rehabilitation requirements and other conditions approved through the PEPR and EIR/SEO processes put in place operational mechanisms to avoid and minimise the potential impacts exploration, development and production may have on sensitive receptors (environment, culture and heritage).

While the ecological community associated with the Dalhousie Springs are recognised and listed under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999*, the listing in and of itself does not prohibit activity, rather it is a trigger for referral of projects for assessment and decision through the commonwealth legislation.

The assessment of projects at a State and Commonwealth level applies two layers of risk assessment and enforces the necessary conditions to protect environmental and heritage assets.

Recommendations

- 1. That conditioning not be imposed on activity in the Dalhousie Springs area with in the Management Plan.**
- 2. That the Management Plan provide an outline of the regulation of petroleum and mineral exploration and production activities in South Australia to a level of detail that is more informative to all stakeholders. This should be in a manner that summarises the approval process as it relates to exploration licencing, environmental assessment and production authorisation. A good example is the break out box on page 25 of the Innamincka Regional Reserve Draft Management Plan 2017.**

Should you wish to discuss this submission further, please contact me on 08 8202 9999 or via e-mail at nlong@sacome.org.au.

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nigel Long".

Dr. Nigel Long
Director, Industry & Government Advocacy

South Australian Chamber of Mines and Energy Incorporated

Mines and Energy House | Level 1, 290 Glen Osmond Road Fullarton, South Australia 5063
T: +61 8 8202 9999 | F: +61 8 8202 9900 | sacome@sacome.org.au | www.sacome.org.au