



13 August 2018

Richard Johnson
Manager EEZ Applications
Environmental Protection Authority
Private Bag 63002
Wellington 6140

Dear Richard

Thank you for your letter of 18 July 2018 requesting advice under section 56 of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 (the EEZ Act) in order to assist the Board of Enquiry (the Board) in their consideration of Tamarind Taranaki Limited's (Tamarind's) marine consent and marine discharge consent applications.

You requested the following:

1. Advice on the nature and scope of the Government's stated policy to not issue new exploration permits for future offshore oil and gas exploration;
2. The effects of that policy, if any, on existing permit holders operating within existing fields and known resources generally; and
3. Advice on the effects of that policy, if any, on the current Tamarind application specifically.

I address these requests sequentially below.

The nature and scope of the Government's stated policy to not issue new exploration permits for future offshore oil and gas exploration

On 12 April 2018 the Prime Minister announced the Government's policy position that no further offshore oil and gas exploration permits, known as Petroleum Exploration Permits or PEPs, would be granted, and that "Block Offer" would be limited to onshore Taranaki for the next three years.

The policy as announced does not apply to any other types of permit, such as Petroleum Mining Permits (PMPs) and Petroleum Mining Licences (PMLs). It also does not extend to minerals permits. As discussed below, it also does not limit or affect the ability of existing permit and licence holders to apply for subsequent rights, vary permit conditions, and extend permit or licence areas under the existing legislation.



While the Government has made its policy position clear, the process to amend the Crown Minerals Act 1991 (CMA) in line with the new policy direction is still underway. Until these amendments are enacted, the law remains as it was prior to the announcement.

The effects of that policy, if any, on existing permit holders operating within existing fields and known resources generally

As above, the announcement relates only to the issue of new offshore PEPs. It does not apply to existing permit holders.

Advice on the effects of that policy, if any, on the current Tamarind application specifically

Tamarind's current application relates to the Tui Field, for which Tamarind holds an existing mining permit. As above, the 12 April announcement does not impact on the rights of existing permit holders under the CMA, or Tamarind's current EPA applications specifically.

I trust this information will be of value to the Board as they determine their response on Tamarind's applications.

In your letter you also requested that MBIE make available a witness to attend the Board's hearing, if required. While it is our view that the policy and any contingent legislative changes should not affect Tamarind's current applications, MBIE is happy to provide a witness if this will be of use to the Board. If you determine that this is the case, please contact my EA, Aileen Gallagher on 04 901 1604 or Aileen.Gallagher@mbie.govt.nz.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Stevenson-Wallace', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

James Stevenson-Wallace

General Manager
Energy, Resources and Markets