



18-M-01639/COR2755

**29 AUG 2018**

Catherine Cheung  
Researcher  
Climate Justice Taranaki

Dear Catherine Cheung

## **OMV's proposed exploratory & appraisal drilling programme in the Taranaki Basin**

Thank you for your email of 13 July 2018 about OMV's proposed exploratory and appraisal drilling programme in the Taranaki Basin.

You express concern about the Environmental Protection Authority's (EPA) handling of OMV's recent marine discharge consent application. In particular, the EPA's decision not to delay processing of the application until future related applications are received (to better enable consideration of cumulative effects). You also seek clarity as to the decision-maker for non-notified activities, and ask that the EPA conduct public hearings in respect of OMV's non-notified consent applications.

As you may be aware, section 44 of the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012 (EEZ Act) enables the EPA to process related applications together. If considering a waiver or extension of time, the EPA must take into account the requirements in section 160 of the EEZ Act. This includes:

- the interests of persons who may be affected by an extension or waiver, and
- the interests of the community in being able to achieve an adequate assessment of the potential effects of a proposal.

Section 44 of the EEZ Act applies when the EPA receives more than one application for the same proposal. However, I am advised that the EPA only received one application from OMV in May 2018. Public submissions on this have now closed, and a hearing will begin in September.

You are correct that, in the case of non-notified activities, the EPA may conduct a hearing if it considers it necessary or desirable. However, the EPA may delegate its decision-making function and powers to a committee appointed by the EPA, as set out in the Crown Entities

Act 2004. For non-notified marine consent applications, the EPA appoints a decision-making committee to determine the application. The committee must include at least one EPA Board member. I am advised that, for OMV's current marine consent application, the decision-making committee appointed by the EPA will determine whether a hearing is necessary or desirable.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "David Parker".

Hon David Parker  
**Minister for the Environment**