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Transparency essential for building community trust

APPEA welcomed today's announcement from Federal Resources Minister Matt Canavan that environment plans for offshore oil and gas activities will be published and open for public comment as an important step in demonstrating the oil and gas industry's commitment to transparency and community engagement.

APPEA Director Environment, Health & Safety Jason Medd said the new requirements were consistent with the industry's ongoing efforts to build trust of the communities which host its activities and the broader Australian public.

"Community support for the oil and gas industry relies on public confidence in the industry's operating standards and the manner in which it is regulated," Mr Medd said.

"Both will be more clearly evidenced by greater transparency."

The recent publication by Equinor of its draft environment plan for proposed exploration drilling in the Great Australian Bight was a sign the industry is already moving in this direction.

Any industry offshore activity in Australian waters can only proceed under the highest environmental standards, after wide community consultation and close scrutiny by the National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA).

As part of that process, Mr Medd said the industry is committed to listening and responding to the community's questions and concerns.

"The industry will continue to work with local stakeholders and the wider community to build understanding of the benefits and impacts of offshore petroleum activity to all Australians," Mr Medd said.

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