



Policy

Visits to Proposed Facilities and Inspection of Newly Arrived Facilities.

1. Introduction

NOPSA's strategic vision is to ensure health and safety risks in the Australian offshore petroleum industry are properly controlled. We intend to achieve this vision by the delivery of world class health and safety regulation. Within this mission our role is to administer offshore petroleum health and safety legislation, and one of the objectives is to reduce the likelihood and consequences of major accident events across Australian offshore petroleum operations.

Vessels of various types enter Australian Commonwealth Waters in order to operate as facilities. NOPSA's policy is to visit these vessels at the earliest possible opportunity. This policy document sets out the differences in approach NOPSA inspectors will take between facilities, and those vessels proposed to be facilities, such as an FPSO when it is in port. It also describes the specific issues that will be dealt with the first time a facility enters the regime.

Legislation and Jurisdiction

NOPSA has two primary functions: to "promote occupational health and safety" and to "implement monitoring and enforcement strategies to secure compliance". NOPSA considers the presence of OHS Inspectors in the field as a key means of achieving both functions.

NOPSA's OHS Inspectors can only use their normal powers of inspection and enforcement on facilities. A NOPSA Inspector visiting a vessel that is not a facility will only be able to carry out the promotional aspect of their role, and may only make recommendations and provide advice to operators. It is for this reason that NOPSA makes a distinction between inspections and advisory visits.

It is NOPSA's policy to not undertake visits to vessels located in foreign countries. Any variation of this policy requires the written permission of NOPSA's Chief Executive Officer.

2. Visits to Proposed Facilities

It is acceptable for NOPSA inspectors to visit vessels or mobile units that are in Australian Territorial Waters but are not yet facilities.

(Refer to N-02100 series "Promotional Visits", for details of this policy in documents N-02100-PL678 and N-02100-PL679).

The intention of such a visit would be to:

- Form an opinion about the condition of the potential facility and its general suitability to operate in Australian Commonwealth Waters.
- Form an opinion on the likely implementation of the management system based on existing safety culture, crew competence, training programs and crew familiarity with the facility.
- Inform the operator's project team and on-board crew about NOPSA's regulatory approach and expectations; and to provide guidance on issues specific to the Australian regime.

3. Inspections of facilities newly arrived in Australian waters

It is NOPSA's intention to inspect mobile facilities at an early stage after their becoming a facility.

NOPSA will adopt a risk-based approach to determining the inspection schedule, taking into account:

- The knowledge NOPSA have of the facility and the operator based on previous performance, or reports from other regulatory agencies;
- Current operator's duration of ownership or control of the vessel/mobile units;
- Number of people working on the facility;
- The nature of operations being undertaken or proposed to be undertaken; and
- Crew manning arrangements.

For facilities that are operating in Australian Commonwealth Waters for the first time, it is NOPSA's policy to carry out an inspection within **six weeks** of the commencement of operations.

The scope of the initial inspection will include the following topics:

- The Management of Asbestos, where a facility is known to have 'in-situ' asbestos
- That the workforce has an adequate understanding of the risks and hazards to which they may be exposed to.