

Serial 116  
Petroleum Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Bill 2019  
Mr Kirby

A Bill for an Act to amend the *Petroleum Act 1984* and the *Petroleum  
(Environment) Regulations 2016*



**NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA**

**PETROLEUM LEGISLATION MISCELLANEOUS AMENDMENTS ACT 2019**

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**Act No. [ ] of 2019**

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# NORTHERN TERRITORY OF AUSTRALIA

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Act No. [ ] of 2019

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An Act to amend the *Petroleum Act 1984* and the *Petroleum (Environment) Regulations 2016*

[Assented to [ ] 2019]  
[Introduced [ ] 2019]

The Legislative Assembly of the Northern Territory enacts as follows:

## Part 1 Preliminary matters

### 1 Short title

This Act may be cited as the *Petroleum Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Act 2019*.

### 2 Commencement

This Act commences on the day fixed by the Administrator by *Gazette* notice.

## Part 2 Amendment of Petroleum Act 1984

### 3 Act amended

This Part amends the *Petroleum Act 1984*.

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**4 Section 5 amended (Interpretation)**

Section 5(1)

*insert*

**environment**, see section 6 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019*.

**principles of ecologically sustainable development** means the principles set out in sections 18 to 24 of the *Environment Protection Act 2019*.

**5 Part IA inserted**

After section 6

*insert*

**Part IA Principles of ecologically sustainable development****6A Principles of ecologically sustainable development**

- (1) The Minister must consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making the following decisions under this Act:
  - (a) the decisions specified in Schedule 1;
  - (b) a decision made under a direction given by the Minister under section 71(1);
  - (c) any other prescribed decision.
- (2) Unless otherwise expressly provided, in making a decision under this Act and stating the reasons for that decision, the Minister is not required to specify how the Minister considered or applied these principles.

**6 Section 16 amended (Application for exploration permit)**

- (1) Section 16, heading

*omit*

**Application**

*insert*

**Release of blocks and application**

- (2) Before section 16(1)

*insert*

- (1AA) This section applies if the Minister intends to release, under section 16A, specified blocks for exploration under an exploration permit.

- (3) Section 16(1)

*omit*

all words from "may" to "Australia"

*insert*

must, by notice published in a newspaper circulating throughout the Territory

- (4) After section 16(2)(d)

*insert*

(da) the reasons why the specified blocks are intended to be released for exploration;

(db) an invitation to give submissions on the release of the specified blocks for exploration;

(dc) the period during which submissions may be made is the same as the application period;

- (5) After section 16(2)

*insert*

- (2A) A submission under subsection (2)(db) is limited to the following:

(a) if there are other existing or proposed industries for a specified block – whether exploration of the specified block is possible at the same time;

- (b) whether the land of a specified block is suitable for exploration.

*Note for subsection (2A)(b)*

*The submission may submit that the land is not suitable for exploration because the land is:*

- (a) subject to intensive agriculture; or*
- (b) of high ecological value; or*
- (c) of high scenic value; or*
- (d) culturally significant; or*
- (e) of strategic importance to nearby residential areas.*

## **7 Section 16A inserted**

After section 16

*insert*

### **16A Determination of release of blocks**

After the application period has ended, the Minister must:

- (a) consider any applications received and any submissions received; and
- (b) determine which blocks are to be released for exploration; and
- (c) release the specified blocks for exploration; and
- (d) publish, on the Agency's website, the decision under paragraph (c) and the reasons why the blocks are appropriate for exploration.

## **8 Section 18 amended (Notice of application for exploration permit)**

- (1) Section 18(1)(e)

*omit*

all words from "who" to "an application area"

- (2) Section 18(3)

*omit*



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**9 Section 19 amended (Objections)**

(1) Section 19(1)

*omit*

Subject to section 18(3), objections

*insert*

Objections

(2) After section 19(2)

*insert*

(2A) The Minister must, as soon as practicable after receiving the objections, publish the objections on the Agency's website.

**10 Section 28 amended (Variation etc. of condition of exploration permit)**

After section 28(1)

*insert*

(1A) An application under subsection (1) must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

**11 Section 41 amended (Variation, &c., of conditions of retention licence)**

(1) Section 41, heading

*omit*

**, &c., of conditions**

*insert*

**etc. of condition**

(2) After section 41(1)

*insert*

(1A) An application under subsection (1) must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

---

**12 Section 55 amended (Variation, &c., of conditions of production licence)**

(1) Section 55, heading

*omit*

**, &c., of conditions**

*insert*

**etc. of condition**

(2) After section 55(1)

*insert*

(1A) An application under subsection (1) must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

**13 Section 57A amended (Access authorities)**

After section 57A(2)

*insert*

(2A) An application under subsection (2) must be accompanied by the prescribed fee.

**14 Section 57ABA amended (Judicial review of decision or determination)**

Section 57ABA

*omit*

the Schedule

*insert*

Schedule 2

**15 Section 73 amended (Surrender)**

(1) Section 73(1B)(a)

*omit*

he or she

*insert*

the permittee or licensee

- (2) Section 73(1B)(b)

*omit*

Minister.

*insert*

Minister; and

- (3) After section 73(1B)(b)

*insert*

(c) the prescribed fee.

- (4) Section 73(1C)

*omit*

he or she

*insert*

the Minister

## **16 Section 81 amended (Compensation to owners)**

- (1) Section 81(1)(b)

*omit*

land.

*insert*

land; and

- (2) After section 81(1)(b)

*insert*

- (c) any other prescribed reason or circumstance.

*Note for subsection (1)*

*If a permittee or licensee and a person entitled to compensation are unable to agree on an amount or other benefit, by way of compensation, to which the person is entitled, either party may refer the dispute to the Tribunal under section 82A.*

- (3) Section 81(3)

*omit*

- (4) After section 81(7)

*insert*

- (7A) The Regulations may provide for a method and manner of calculating compensation payable under this section.

## **17 Section 82 amended (Compensation for right of access)**

- (1) Section 82(2), at the end

*Note for subsections (1) and (2)*

*If a permittee or licensee and a person entitled to compensation are unable to agree on an amount, by way of compensation, to which the person is entitled, either party may refer the dispute to the Tribunal under section 82A.*

- (2) Section 82(5) and (6)

*omit, insert*

- (5) The Regulations may provide for a method and manner of calculating compensation payable under this section.

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**18 Section 82A inserted**

After section 82

*insert*

**82A Jurisdiction of Tribunal for disputes**

- (1) The Tribunal has jurisdiction to deal with the following disputes:
  - (a) if a permittee or licensee and a person entitled to compensation under section 81(1) are unable to agree on an amount or other benefit, by way of compensation, to which the person is entitled;
  - (b) if a permittee or licensee and a person entitled to compensation under section 82(1) or (2) are unable to agree on an amount, by way of compensation, to which the person is entitled;
  - (c) any other kind of dispute prescribed by regulation.
- (2) A dispute mentioned in subsection (1)(a) or (b) may be referred to the Tribunal by either party.
- (3) The compensation that may be payable to a native title holder under section 82 is not determinable by the Tribunal until there is an approved determination of native title that the holder holds native title in the affected land.
- (4) A person entitled to compensation under section 82(1) or (2) includes a registered native title body corporate.

**19 Section 111 replaced**

Section 111

*repeal, insert*

**111 Certain operations prohibited**

- (1) Subject to this section, a permittee or licensee must not:
  - (a) carry out operations, which would otherwise be permitted under this Act, on land that is:
    - (i) used as, or within 50 m of land being used as, a residence, yard, garden, orchard or cultivated field; or
    - (ii) used as, or within 200 m of land being used as, a cemetery; or

- (iii) within a distance of 200 m of any artificial accumulation of water or any outlet from which water may be obtained; and
  - (b) construct a well, wellhead, pipeline or petroleum processing facility, which would otherwise be permitted under this Act, on land that is used as, or within 2 km of land being used as, a residence; and
  - (c) construct a well or well pad, which would otherwise be permitted under this Act, on land that is within 1 km of a designated bore.
- (2) The permittee or licensee may carry out operations on land mentioned in subsection (1)(a)(i) or (iii) with the written approval of:
  - (a) the owner of the land or, if the occupier of the land has, in the land, an interest registered on the Register kept by the Registrar-General under Part 3 of the *Land Title Act 2000*, the occupier; and
  - (b) the registered native title body corporate in relation to the land.
- (3) The permittee or licensee may carry out construction of a well or well pad on land mentioned in subsection (1)(c) with the written approval of:
  - (a) the owner of the land or, if the occupier of the land has, in the land, an interest registered on the Register kept by the Registrar-General under Part 3 of the *Land Title Act 2000*, the occupier; and
  - (b) the registered native title body corporate in relation to the land; and
  - (c) the owner of the designated bore.
- (4) If the cemetery is a public cemetery, the permittee or licensee may carry out operations on land mentioned in subsection (1)(a)(ii) with the written approval of the Board of Trustees of the cemetery.
- (5) In this section:

**cemetery**, see section 4 of the *Cemeteries Act 1952*.

**designated bore**, see section 60A(3) of the *Water Act 1992*.

**owner**, of a designated bore, see section 60A(3) of the *Water Act 1992*.

***petroleum processing facility*** means a temporary or permanent facility for the processing or storage of petroleum.

***pipeline*** means a pipeline constructed or to be constructed for a purpose mentioned in section 4(1)(e)(i) to (iv) of the *Energy Pipelines Act 1981*.

***public cemetery***, see section 4 of the *Cemeteries Act 1952*.

## **20 Section 117AAB amended (Interpretation)**

Section 117AAB(1), definition ***environment***

*omit*

## **21 Section 118 amended (Regulations)**

(1) After section 118(2)(p)

*insert*

(pa) land access agreements;

(pb) environmental security;

(2) After section 118(6)

*insert*

(6A) In regulations for or in relation to land access agreements under subsection (2)(pa), the Administrator may provide for any of the following:

(a) the circumstances in which a land access agreement between parties is required;

(b) the parties who are required to enter into a land access agreement;

(c) the process to be undertaken by the parties to enter into a land access agreement;

(d) the minimum requirements of a land access agreement;

(e) the process to be undertaken if a land access agreement cannot be entered into between the parties;

(f) the consequence of a breach of a land access agreement;

- (g) the requirement to maintain a register of land access agreements and the manner in which a land access agreement is registered;
  - (h) the liability of the parties to the costs associated with land access agreements;
  - (i) the requirement to maintain a register of persons with dispute resolution qualifications and the circumstances in which a person in the register would be required to assist the parties;
  - (j) the conferral of jurisdiction on the Tribunal to deal with a dispute arising from a land access agreement.
- (6B) In regulations for or in relation to an environmental security under subsection (2)(pb), the Administrator may provide for:
- (a) the circumstances in which an environmental security is payable;
  - (b) the amount of an environmental security payable;
  - (c) the manner in which an amount of the environmental security is determined;
  - (d) the manner in which an environmental security is varied;
  - (e) the manner in which an environmental security is payable;
  - (f) how an environmental security may be transferred;
  - (g) the circumstances in which an environmental security is released.

## **22 Part VII, Division 4 and Schedule 1 inserted**

After section 125

*insert*

### **Division 4 Petroleum Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Act 2019**

#### **126 Definitions**

In this Division:

***commencement*** means the commencement of Part 2 of the *Petroleum Legislation Miscellaneous Amendments Act 2019*.



**127 Application made for exploration permit before commencement**

Part II, Division 2, as in force before the commencement, applies to an application for the grant of an exemption permit for specified blocks under section 16(1) made before the commencement.

**128 Decision in relation to renewal of exploration permit**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 25(1)(a) or (b) or (2) or 27 in relation to an application under section 25(1) made before the commencement.

**129 Decision in relation to variation of condition of exploration permit**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 28(2) in relation to an application under section 28(1) made before the commencement.

**130 Decision in relation to renewal of retention licence**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 38(1)(a) or (b), (2) or (3) or 40 in relation to an application under section 37(1) made before the commencement.

**131 Decision in relation to variation of condition of retention licence**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 41(2) in relation to an application under section 41(1) made before the commencement.

**132 Decision in relation to renewal of production licence**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 52(1)(a) or (b), (2) or (3) or 54(1) in relation to an application under section 51(1) made before the commencement.

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**133 Decision in relation to variation of condition of production licence**

The Minister is not required to consider and apply the principles of ecologically sustainable development in making a decision made under section 55(2) in relation to an application under section 55(1) made before the commencement.

**134 Construction undertaken before commencement**

Section 111, as in force after the commencement, does not apply to the following undertaken, but not completed, by a permittee or licensee before the commencement:

- (a) construction of a well, wellhead, pipeline or petroleum processing facility on land that is used as, or within 2 km of land being used as, a residence;
- (b) construction of a well or well pad on land that is within 1 km of a designated bore.

**Schedule 1 Decisions subject to principles of ecologically sustainable development**

section 6A

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Provision	Decision or determination
section 9(1)	A decision to reserve blocks from exploration permit or licence
section 10(1)	A decision to revoke or vary reservation of block
section 15(3) or (4)	A decision to give directions
section 16A	A decision to release blocks for exploration
section 20(3)	A determination to grant or refuse exploration permit
section 25(1)(a)	A decision to renew exploration permit if satisfied of certain matters
section 25(1)(b)	A decision to renew exploration permit despite non-compliance
section 25(2)	A decision to refuse to renew permit

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Provision	Decision or determination
section 27	A decision to grant or renew exploration permit subject to conditions
section 28(2)	A decision to vary, suspend or waive a condition of exploration permit
section 29(3)	A decision to grant production licence subject to conditions considered appropriate
section 30(2)	A decision directing permittee to apply for production licence
section 34(1)	A determination to grant or refuse retention licence
section 38(1)(a)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew retention licence if satisfied of certain matters
section 38(1)(b)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew retention licence despite non-compliance
section 38(2)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew retention licence
section 38(3)	A decision to refuse to renew retention licence
section 40	A decision to grant a retention licence on conditions
section 41(2)	A decision to vary, suspend or waive condition of retention licence
section 42(2)	A decision to grant production licence subject to conditions considered appropriate
section 43(2)	A decision to direct licensee to apply for production licence
section 47(1)	A determination to grant production licence if satisfied of certain matters
section 47(2)	A determination to grant or refuse to grant production licence
section 52(1)(a)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew production licence if satisfied of certain matters
section 52(1)(b)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew production licence despite non-compliance

Provision	Decision or determination
section 52(2)	A decision indicating preparedness to renew production licence
section 52(3)	A decision to refuse to renew production licence
section 54(1)	A decision to impose appropriate conditions on a production licence
section 55(2)	A decision to vary, suspend or waive condition of production licence
section 57A(3)	A decision to grant or refuse to grant access authority
section 57A(4)	A decision to impose conditions on access authority
section 57A(5)	A decision to vary access authority area or condition
section 73(1C)	A decision to accept an application for surrender if satisfied of certain matters
section 79(1)	A decision requiring security be lodged
section 79(3)	A decision to vary amount of security

**23 Schedule amended (Judicial Review of decision or determination)**

(1) Schedule, heading, after "**Schedule**"

*insert*

**2**

(2) Schedule, after entry for section 16(1)

*insert*

section 16A A decision to release blocks for exploration

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## **Part 3                    Amendment of Petroleum (Environment) Regulations 2016**

### **24                    Regulations amended**

This Part amends the *Petroleum (Environment) Regulations 2016*.

### **25                    Regulation 3 amended (Definitions)**

Regulation 3, definitions *environment* and *principles of ecologically sustainable development*

*omit*

### **26                    Regulation 4 repealed (Principles of ecologically sustainable development)**

Regulation 4

*repeal*

### **27                    Regulation 5A inserted**

After regulation 5, in Part 1

*insert*

### **5A                    Decisions subject to the principles of ecologically sustainable development**

For section 6A of the Act, the following decisions are prescribed decisions:

- (a) a decision to approve a plan under regulation 11(2)(a)(i);
- (b) a decision to give an interest holder a resubmission notice under regulation 11(2)(b);
- (c) a decision to approve a plan modified in response to a resubmission notice under regulation 11(3)(a);
- (d) a decision to give an interest holder a further resubmission notice under regulation 11(3)(b)(i);
- (e) a decision to refuse to approve the plan under regulation 11(3)(b)(ii);
- (f) a decision to give notice to an interest holder under regulation 14(b) specifying that the holder's notice is accepted and the plan has ceased to be in force;

- (g) a decision to give an interest holder a revision notice under regulation 19(1);
- (h) a decision that a revision is no longer required under regulation 20(2)(a);
- (i) a decision to require a revision under regulation 20(2)(b);
- (j) a decision to revoke the approval of a current plan under regulation 27(1).

**28 Regulation 9 amended (Approval criteria for plan)**

Regulation 9(2)

*omit*

**Part 4 Repeal of Act**

**29 Repeal of Act**

This Act is repealed on the day after it commences.