

16 January 2014

Submission on the exposure draft of the proposed exploratory drilling for oil and gas regulations under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012

1. This submission is from the Dunedin City Council, PO Box 5045, Moray Place, Dunedin 9058. The submission was considered by the Council on the 23 January 2014.
2. The Dunedin City Council appreciates the opportunity to submit on the exposure draft of the proposed exploratory drilling for oil and gas regulations under the Exclusive Economic Zone and Continental Shelf (Environmental Effects) Act 2012.
3. The Dunedin City Council would like the Ministry for the Environment to note that the timing of the consultation period, with the deadline for submissions on 31 January 2014, made it difficult to respect the political process that councils must go through to get a submission signed off. The consultation period was over the Christmas and New Year holidays, and the first Council meeting for the year to consider business other than the Annual Plan and budget is 24 February 2014. The draft submission had to be added to the Annual Plan meeting agenda on the 23 January 2014 for discussion, which is far from ideal.
4. The Dunedin City Council understands that local government has no jurisdictional control over activities in the territorial sea, Exclusive Economic Zone or Extended Continental Shelf.
5. The Dunedin City Council is clear, as evidenced by feedback from the Dunedin community to date, that there are strong community views on oil and gas exploration and production in New Zealand, both in favour and opposed, within Dunedin.
6. The Dunedin City Council suggests that changing the classification of exploratory drilling for oil and gas to non-notified discretionary presents two challenges, in that it removes the Government's opportunity to hear from the community at an early stage on proposed exploration activity and also removes the opportunity for the community to voice its opinions on oil and gas exploration in a meaningful way.
7. The Dunedin City Council recommends that the Government retain the existing discretionary classification for exploratory drilling for oil and gas, and benefit from the engagement and knowledge of the community.
8. The Dunedin City Council is happy to discuss this submission if required, and looks forward to working with the Ministry for the Environment to continue to strengthen engagement with the community around the exploration, and potential development, of the petroleum sector over the coming years.