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2/03/2018

By email

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Central Petroleum and Macquarie Mereenie Application for authorisation
AA1000398—interim authorisation and draft determination**

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission (the ACCC) has issued a draft determination in respect of the application for authorisation lodged by Central Petroleum Limited and Central Petroleum Mereenie Pty Ltd as trustee for the Central Petroleum Mereenie Unit Trust (**Central**) and Macquarie Mereenie Pty Ltd (**Macquarie**) on 4 October 2017.

Central and Macquarie are seeking authorisation to jointly market gas from the Mereenie gas field and to make and give effect to gas supply agreements with customers for the supply of Mereenie gas that contain common terms and conditions (including as to price). The applicants also sought interim authorisation to commence joint marketing activities immediately.

Draft determination & interim authorisation

A copy of the ACCC's draft determination and summary of its reasons is attached.

For the reasons set out in its draft determination, the ACCC proposes to grant authorisation for a period of three years, with gas supply agreements made during this period to expire on or before 31 December 2028.

Interim authorisation protects the arrangements for which authorisation is sought from legal action under the relevant provisions of the *Competition and Consumer Act 2010* while the ACCC considers and evaluates the merits of the application.

The ACCC decided to grant interim authorisation to enable the applicants to commence joint marketing activities, on the condition that any gas supply agreements entered into during the period of interim authorisation would be subject to and fully conditional upon the ACCC making a final determination to grant authorisation and any conditions and terms contained in the authorisation determination.

As noted in the attached decision, the ACCC may review its decision on interim authorisation at any time.

Next steps

Once the ACCC issues a draft determination, the Applicant or any interested party may make a written submission and/or request that the ACCC convene a 'pre-decision conference'.

If you wish to make a submission in response to the ACCC's draft determination, please lodge your submission by **16 March 2018**. "Submissions should be emailed to adjudication@acc.gov.au with the subject "A1000398 – Central Petroleum and Macquarie Mereenie – submission".

A pre-decision conference provides the opportunity for interested parties to make oral submissions in relation to the draft determination. Conferences are conducted informally and while legal or professional advisers are able to attend they are not entitled to participate in the discussion.

If you wish the ACCC to hold a pre-decision conference in relation to the draft determination you must notify the ACCC in writing by **16 March 2018**.

The ACCC will consider any submissions it receives, including any oral submissions made should a pre-decision conference be called, and will then release a final determination in relation to these applications.

Submissions will be placed on the ACCC's public register subject to any request for exclusion. Please see the ACCC's publication [Guidelines for excluding information from the public register](#).

Timetable

The ACCC will continue to progress its assessment of the application in a timely manner. An updated indicative timetable is set out below for your information.

Indicative date	Stage in assessment process
4 October 2018	Lodgement of application and supporting submission.
11 October 2017	Public consultation process begins.
2 March 2018	ACCC decision regarding interim authorisation and draft determination
March 2018	Public consultation on draft determination including any conference if called.
March / April 2018	Final determination.

This letter has been placed on the ACCC's public register. If you wish to discuss any aspect of this matter please do not hesitate to contact me: adjudication@acc.gov.au.

Yours sincerely



Luke Griffin
Assistant Director
Adjudication