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Clearing incident at Wickham Point

Dr Chris Burns, Minister for of Environment and Heritage, said today that he had been advised that site clearing has inadvertently occurred outside the approved footprint for the Darwin LNG plant at Wickham Point.

"I was extremely disappointed to learn of this incident, particularly as it has occurred so soon after clearing activities commenced at the site, and despite the extensive planning that has been put in place.

"I have conveyed my concern to ConocoPhillips in the strongest of terms," said Dr Burns.

"I have received a briefing from the Office of Environment and Heritage and I am advised that a site inspection has been conducted by senior officers of the Office of Environment and Heritage in the company of ConocoPhillips staff.

"I understand that a small tract of land approximately 5 metres by 120 metres adjacent to the project site was wrongly identified as forming part of the boundary and was mistakenly cleared."

Dr Burns said the Government was absolutely determined that the correct procedures for protecting the environment will be followed. He said the Government has been assured by ConocoPhillips that they are undertaking a thorough examination of the incident and will do everything in their power to ensure that mistakes like this do not happen again.

"I am advised that the incident has not resulted in any significant damage to the environment.

"Nevertheless, I am pleased that ConocoPhillips have committed to an immediate plan for the revegetation of the cleared area, and I have instructed the Office of Environment and Heritage to monitor the remediation program."

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