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The Honorable Minister,

**RE: MONTARA WELL HEAD PLATFORM UNCONTROLLED HYDROCARBON
RELEASE**

I wish to make a submission to the enquiry.

I have expert technical knowledge of similar projects and I am involved in programming a similar project in the near future.

From the terms of reference my submission refers to the investigation Item (s) 1, 2, 3 & 4. Further based on the outcomes I would have an interest in Item 10.

There appears to have been a failure to follow what are industry standards. The Mud Line suspension system provides adequate barriers to address failure of down hole plugs. I submit that all drilling programs and development plans need to conform to what are adequate industry standards.

I believe that had these norms been adhered to this incident would not have occurred.

The process of tying back wells has been undertaken without serious incident for more than forty years. During that time the tools have been made more sophisticated.

Further to the failure to correctly tie the string it appears that the down hole plugs that were left during the suspension process were inadequate. These plugs definitely failed.

The fluid left in the hole has been shown to be inadequate. Whether the incorrect fluid was left in the well or the fluid in the hole deteriorated must be investigated.

The decision to penetrate the casing at 2,600 m must be examined in light of what is considered to be a usual approach. The usual aim would be to flood the shoe of the casing with heavy mud.

I would like to take this opportunity to support the decision of the authorities, i.e., to make the platform a no go area. This possibly prevented significant personnel injuries that could have been occasioned at any time.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.

Brian Holland is a drilling engineer with more than forty years experience in the upstream oil and gas sector. I have international experience and have worked with majors, independents and service providers.

This submission is personal and Mr. Holland is not associated with any company or supplier.