



Hon Jeff Seeney MP
Deputy Premier

Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning

Our ref: MC12/1826
MN131261

Your ref: Petitions 1909-12 and 1912-12

Level 12 Executive Building
100 George Street Brisbane 4000
PO Box 15009 City East
Queensland 4002 Australia
Telephone +61 7 3224 4600
Facsimile +61 7 3224 4781
Email deputypremier@ministerial.qld.gov.au

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Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
Corner Alice and George Streets
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 21 June 2012, forwarding Petitions 1909-12 and 1912-12 in regards to a 12 month moratorium on coal seam gas projects. I have considered the petitions and am pleased to provide the following response.

While the coal seam gas to liquefied natural gas (CSG-LNG) process is new to Queensland, it should be noted that gas has a long history in Queensland, beginning in 1961 with the powering of the Roma power station. Since then gas has represented an ever increasing portion of the state's electricity generation and domestic energy consumption. Currently, around 20 per cent of all electricity generated in Queensland is derived from gas; this power is generated with 50 per cent less greenhouse emissions than current coal generation.

The government, I assure you, is committed to ensuring the CSG-LNG industry develops in a way that complements protecting the environment with supporting the economic future of other sectors, in accordance with the government's four pillars approach, to facilitating the co-existence of the agricultural and mining industries. A measure of this is the recently announced GasFields Commission, which will manage the coexistence of rural landholders, regional communities and the CSG-LNG industry.

The three CSG-LNG projects that have obtained conditional approval underwent a rigorous assessment process, resulting in some of the strictest conditions and regulations that have been placed on projects to date. Once approved, a project is regularly monitored to ensure it meets strict environmental and safety requirements, including whether it poses a significant human health risk.

To advance this strict regulatory and monitoring regime, the LNG Enforcement Unit was established. The unit comprises specialists and regionally-based officers, which acts as a one-stop shop for landholder and other stakeholder enquiries, as well as undertaking investigations into safety, land access, groundwater and environmental incidents/concerns.

In regards to drinking water, the use of BTEX chemicals has been banned as part of the drilling process to eliminate the potential for groundwater contamination, resulting from those drilling activities. Strict water quality requirements are also imposed on proponents through the need to produce a "drinking water quality management plan" under the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* to ensure water quality is protected.

Concerning impacts on water supply more broadly, 'make good' obligations have been placed on proponents to ensure any impacts their water extraction activities have on existing water supplies are addressed either by restoring the bore's capacity or providing the bore owner with an alternative water supply.

In order to avoid potential disruption to agricultural businesses due to CSG activities, new land access laws have been implemented that improve the transparency, equity and cooperation between the agricultural and resource sectors in relation to access to private land. Importantly, the new land access laws provide landholders with greater protection of their rights, and strengthen compensation arrangements associated with resource tenures.

Our government is also establishing statutory regional plans to identify appropriate land uses for each region and to map out the social and economic needs for affected communities. These plans will balance competing interests and ensure that high quality farmland is protected from other land uses that may permanently damage that farmland.

Thank you for bringing the concerns of these petitions to my attention. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely



JEFF SEENEY MP
DEPUTY PREMIER
Minister for State Development, Infrastructure and Planning