

My name is Dayne Pratzky I live in the small parish of Wieambilla which lies about 40 km East of Chinchilla. The Western Downs is made up of several residential estates combining 3,200 blocks in total with thousands of residents. The use of these allotments varies from small-scale agriculture, Grazing to undeveloped private residential retreats.

People moved here for a reason. People like me moved to escape the city. Others were forced here because of increasing rents across rural QLD. Then there

Are people like my neighbor who came here to retire Richard had spent most of his working career as a police officer in the Northern Territory Police Force where he became a superintendent.

We have tradesmen and also a large contingent of residents who are on disability pensions.

Now we all have a new neighbor, the Queensland Gas Company (QGC) which became a nuisance the minute they stepped into our once peaceful lives. We now live in a developing Gas field with no idea of what the future holds. QGC refuse to tell us what they have planned for our estates and continue to treat us as if we are living in the way of their development plans.

I would like to refer the Senators to some of the issues raised in the Coordinator General's Report where he himself admitted that the residents of PL228 are already subject to Impacts from existing gas field development operations. This, however has not stopped the onslaught from QGC.

I refer to page 123 chapter 7.9.1 of the Coordinator General's report titled issues of concern.

Issues of concern

There are several gas field localities where the area of rural residential allotments is relatively small (12– 24 hectares). These allotments are within the following tenements:

ATP632, ATP648, ATP676,

PL228, PLA261 and PLA278

At least one of these areas (PL228) is already subject to impacts from existing gas field development operations.

I am aware that some of the rural residents have expressed concern that they are already experiencing a range of impacts from gas field activities including noise and vibration, dust and light spill.

Residents are also concerned that these nuisance issues are getting more intense and some of these impacts and others will continue after the construction activities have been completed. Others have expressed concern about health and safety from leaking gas wells and about the chemicals used in gas field development.

I have noted that the proponent has responded to these issues in documenting the Supplementary EIS.

The small size of rural residential allotments (many are 12 hectares in area) and higher population density, particularly in the Tara-Chinchilla locality, increases the risk for gas field activities to cause environmental harm and nuisance when compared to other parts of

The gas field. In particular, noise and vibration, dust and light could affect more residents
And these effects could have more severe impacts on residents who through physical and
Financial circumstances are more sedentary.

I note in the EIS, Appendix 8.1 that Table 3.32 of the SEIS shows that residents in the Tara
SLA has the highest Core Activity Need for Assistance of any of the LGAs in the study area
And that this is a measure of people with profound or severe disability. With 6.7% of the
Population in this group, Tara residents have 34% greater need for community assistance
(Including transport and health services) than Dalby LGA, generally and 43% greater than
The Queensland average.

This suggests strongly that the special circumstances of rural residents in this locality should
Be effectively addressed by quality liaison and social impact management.

QGC response was nothing more than a joke full of false promises most of which have
Already been broken, there is no one to police the activities of QGC except the residents
Themselves. I have copied QGC response and the reality of what is actually happening.

Proponent's responses

“With respect to claims of leaking gas wells the proponent has instigated additional work
Streams to its maintenance program in consultation with the regulator to confirm the safety
And integrity of gas field installations and to demonstrate compliance to the regulator. This is
An on-going commitment.”

Reality

After two residents investigated the Lauren Gas fields it quickly became apparent that there were several leaking gas wells. After contacting DEEDI they were informed that someone would be out within three weeks to investigate their claims. Not willing to wait the residents approached Channel 9 60Minutes who quickly came to investigate the issue themselves. One of the wells shown on the program was leaking so bad the well was condemned. An audit of gas wells over south east Queensland revealed 34 wells that were leaking to the lower explosive limit. Enquiries were made to Chief Inspector Petroleum and Gas Inspectorate Safety and Health's Stephen Matheson to the true number of leaking wells. He has refused to release the complete audit for public scrutiny. To say there are only 34 leaking wells is a misrepresentation of the truth as the report was never fully released. After I had a face to face meeting with a representative from DERM, it was admitted that gas wells were allowed to leak as long as they were being monitored which is unacceptable seeing how gas wells are allowed to be within 200 meters of homes.

See attachment 5

Proponent's response

"The proponent has addressed community concerns about dust suppression by proposing

Use of treated CSG water, where approved by the Department of Environment and Resource Management to do so.

The limitations set by the relevant government agencies, DERM and DEEDI relate to Management of the salinity and control of road runoff."

Reality

Dust suppression was carried out however it quickly became apparent there was a problem., The runoff entered our dams and creeks killing wild life including ducks and birds who drank from the contaminated water, frogs and a wide range of insects also disappeared for a period of 18months until the contamination was flushed out after heavy rain. Gardens and fish also died. We also had a case of a resident's hand becoming infected after coming in contact with contaminated water. My own personal experience over this period was also frightening; my skin began to flake off my body as well as my dogs. On the 7th August 2009 we received a letter from DERM stating that on the 15/05/2009 QGC exceeded their allowable limit of total dissolved salts, we were informed by DERM that QGC had been prosecuted for this breach however none of the effected residents were notified of any clean up attempts to dams and streams throughout the estates. Some pictures have been supplied by the residents.

Referee to picture 4 of residents hand after coming in contact with produced water

See attachment 1, 1(a), (b), (c) and letter

Proponent's response

“The proponent states that noise issues will be addressed through a combination of Planning to avoid noise, best available design, appropriate selection of equipment and Mitigation measures. In respect to a specific noise source at the existing Kenya facility, QGC Is currently applying a range of measures that are aimed at upgrading the noise mitigation.”

Reality

The noise is constant and can be heard even as I lie in bed. You could describe it as water Torture it just doesn't go away. After speaking to DERM about this they referred the problem Back to QGC who promised they would do some noise modeling and testing to see what the problem was.

Months passed when finally I received a letter from QGC advising me they were going To proceed with the noise testing. QGC would have a microphone placed at the Field Compressor Station, one between my house and the FCS, one at my front door and a fourth microphone at another Resident's home about 5 km further away from my property.

After 10 days they returned, removed the monitoring devices and said they would be in Contact with the results. QGC informed the other resident that he was a winging trouble maker. It took a further 3 months before I received an email that simply said the noise was Within their environmental authority and that was it. Then a funny thing happened. QGC Decided that they would spend 30 million dollars on noise mitigation at the FCS. If the noise

was inside their EA, why would they spend that much money on noise mitigation? One
Could only suspect that QGC were not adhering to their EA and were forced to try and fix
The problem, which, to QGC's credit they have suppressed the noise so it can only be heard
Under certain conditions but still it's a disturbance that interferes with sleep and the day-to-
Day living experience of being in the country. It gets worse QGC EA for the Kenya gas field has just
been approved with a further ingress to their noise limits. The limit for short, medium and long
term noise limits have just been increased to 55db inside our houses considering a 45cc
chainsaws max noise is 85db I find it hard to believe that DERM has except the amendment to
the Kenya EA.

Proponent's response to full development of the gas field

“While detailed mapping of rural residential allotments showing the future location of
wells, pipelines and other equipment for the project is unavailable, QGC has stated that a
Rural Residential Code of Conduct has been adopted to establish a basis for development
Activities and minimizing their impact on residents. The Code is a key element of the draft
Social Impact Management Plan.

The main elements of the code are founded on liaison, consultation and minimizing
Disturbance to land owners and residents. Where the size of allotments is less than 12
Hectares or the activity is to be located within 200 meters of an occupied dwelling, no
Activity will take place without the consent of the owner.

Also, in order to avoid or mitigate impacts, the code specifies consultation arrangements
With landowners likely to be affected by well, access track and other construction activities.
Vehicle movements will also be controlled by speed limits and by operations during daylight

Hours (6.00am to 6.00pm).”

Reality

QGC only have a draft Rural Residential Code of Conduct and the Code of Conduct in its current form has definitely not been accepted by the community.

In QGC’s own words they would like to minimize disturbance to land owners and residents

Which is impossible? How is it going to work if a neighbor who doesn’t live on their land?

Gets a gas well? The impact on the surrounding properties will always be felt. It is unavoidable, yet the

Neighbor will in no way be compensated for the disturbance. A disturbance they don’t

Deserve.

Coordinator General’s conclusions

“Noise from gas field activities is likely to have a significant long term influence on the gas

Field areas and the lives of its occupants.

Equipment likely to generate low frequency noise might best be placed where there

Is a substantial earth mass to absorb sound, such as below the brow of hills, in quarries or

Borrow pits or in purpose-designed pits.

I am advised by landholder liaison officers that personal injuries can occur through lack

Of knowledge of risks associated with gas field activities and reasonable care taken during Development and operation of activities. The proponent can address these matters by Providing educational and training information to occupiers to explain the nature and purpose Of the activities and equipment. The training should be equivalent to that required for any Person undertaking an inspection.”

I note that QGC is committed to undertaking effective community liaison. In this regard I am Of the view that the above provisions and safeguards in the Code will have better effect if Before each new activity is to commence, the proponent undertakes on-site liaison with the Affected residents ensuring that there is adequate lead time to accommodate the residents’ Requirements. In the first instance of contact, it is essential that this should be with direct Representation of the principal, rather than an operational subcontractor.

Further, occupiers of land not directly affected by QGC activities, who could also be affected By issues by virtue of proximity to sources of nuisance, should be included in liaison Arrangements.

I therefore have set Condition 12, Appendix 2 Part 1 to require a revision of the Rural Residential Code of Conduct to encompass the above matters, before the Environmental Authority is issued over Petroleum Leases that contain rural residential areas.

Reality

In regards to gas field safety we are expected to be gas well inspectors including our children for residents to undertake this sort of training is not only an inconvenience is nothing short of a joke.

Even though the coordinator general requested QGC consult with all affected residents before each new activity is to commence this has not been done. Recently QGC brought on line 5 wells near my home. Not ounce was I consulted about their activities all I got was a letter telling us work would commence as far as I am concerned that is not consulting I was mealy told what was going to happen. The work lasted

over 100 days and was clearly auditable inside my house. Security guards would patrol the area 24hrs a day. I experience reverse beepers going off at 1 am in the morning over trucks and vehicles run up and down the road causing dust and damage to the road. The road was repaired only after the work had been finished. The road was only unusable for 4wd vehicles.

The coordinator general said noise from gas field activities is likely to have a significant long term influence on the gas field, we know that because I live next to QGC Kenya processing plant. Recently DERM approved higher noise limits for the Kenya facility which is going to have a further impact on residents.

In closing my submission the residents have been impacted to the point that people are suffering depression family break downs. We have been abandoned by the farmers and politicians even though it was us who brought the issue into many Australians lounge room through the media. It's not fair that a company can come into our neighborhood and make billions of dollars off our back and destroy our lives. All resident want is the chance to relocate some are happy to stay however we should not be forced to stay and live with what is happening around us we just want a fair go from the companies and to have DERM listen and act on our concern's which at this point in time has not taken place.

Thank you



1 Deposits of salt after water was dumped into our creeks and on the roads.



1(a) Deposits of salt after water was dumped into our creeks and on the roads.



1(b) Deposits of salt after water was dumped into our creeks and on the roads.



1(c) a dead duck that you could assume drank from the water run off



Resident hand after coming in contact with water dumped on our roads



Hon Stephen Robertson MP
Member for Stretton



Queensland
Government

Minister for Natural Resources,
Mines and Energy and
Minister for Trade

MC5756
MO/10/1839

23 APR 2010

Mr Howard Hobbs MP
Shadow Minister for Local Government and Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships
Member for Warrego
Warrego Electoral Office
PO Box 945
ROMA QLD 4455



Dear Mr Hobbs

Thank you for your letter dated 12 April 2010 in relation to emails sent to you by Tara resident Ms Debbi Orr of the Western Downs Alliance (WDA) about coal seam gas activities in the region.

The Department of Employment Economic Development and Innovation (DEEDI) is currently investigating issues raised by landholders' concerns of leaking wells in the Tara area. An inspection of wells in the area of the Tara 'block estates' has found no leaking wells. One well that was known to be leaking was fixed prior to the inspection occurring.

The Chief Inspector, Petroleum and Gas has also issued a compliance direction to ensure Queensland Gas Company (QGC) provide additional information in regard to their inspections of the wells, any gas sampling undertaken and to verify their compliance with the legislation. This work has been carried out in a timely and professional manner and is currently awaiting gas sample test results. The sampling included testing for any potential toxins in the gas. Results of this sampling program will be made available to all relevant stakeholders in the near future.

I note the three emails forwarded by you from Ms Debbi Orr which discuss a range of concerns. Issues of "gas leaks" and safety issues arising from the wells will be addressed in the report when it is complete. Some of the other matters raised relate to issues in other countries and situations which are not relevant to the coal seam gas extraction in the Surat Basin.

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5 Letter from Stephen Robertson admitting gas wells were not leaking

I am not aware of any specific health issues or any public health studies that may have been undertaken in recent times in relation to coal seam gas extraction in Queensland. Wells are designed specifically not to leak, but if a leak did occur, as the gas is approximately 98% methane in composition and is lighter than air, it will rise and disperse quickly. Any leaks would also be quickly fixed by the well operator to eliminate the unlikely possibility of fire. Methane, while flammable in a narrow air/methane mixture, is not a toxin and the well sites are fenced and sign posted to keep ignition sources and persons away.

With regard to the allegations that the gas leaks are potentially having an affect on the health of the community, there has been no specific reported public health issues lodged with the department as a result of gas activities. Given that leaking wells have not been identified, and persons are not permitted in close proximity to the wells, the risk of exposure is extremely small. I would welcome any specific evidence that can be provided that may support the claims made by Ms Orr.

If Ms Orr has any particular concerns about any specific coal seam gas operations these should be raised directly with the company concerned.

Should you have any queries regarding my advice to you, Mrs Jenny Downie, Assistant Policy Advisor, will be pleased to assist you and can be contacted on telephone 3225 1861.

Yours sincerely



STEPHEN ROBERTSON MP

COPY



**Queensland
Government**

Enquiries Elizabeth Dunlop
Telephone (07) 3225 1056
Your reference
Our reference BNE36566

Environmental Protection Agency
Incorporating the
Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service

7 August 2009

Tara and District Rural Resident and Private Landholders Group
c/- Michael Bretherick
Lot 237 Happiness Road
TARA QLD 4421

Dear Mr Bretherick

Tara Residents Meeting - Queensland Gas Company (QGC)

I refer to the Tara residents meeting held on 28 July 2009 at the Tara Council Chambers to discuss various issues regarding Queensland Gas Company operations in the Tara area. Upon return to the office, the Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) have located information contrary to that given at the meeting regarding the application of CSG water on roads and would like to take this opportunity to provide you with more accurate information.

On 15 May 2009, QGC reported an exceedence of the EA limit of 2000 mg/L of Total Dissolved Solids for CSG water being applied to roads on their project area. In April 2009, DERM set more rigid TDS limits in the EA PEN100020207, limits which QGC cannot regularly comply to. The lowest levels of associated water in the region are in the range of 2200 to 2500mg/L.


In order to comply with the EA limits set by DERM, QGC are proposing to install as an interim measure, a number of small (1.6ML/day) Reverse Osmosis water treatment units. These units will have the capability to treat the CSG water to a good quality which will see QGC comply with the conditions of their EA.

It is not envisaged that these RO units will be online until December 2009. Therefore, QGC have applied to DERM for a temporary increase in the TDS limit in the EA PEN100020207. This application has not yet been assessed by DERM.

DERM apologises for any confusion caused and hopes you find the above information useful. DERM would also like to express its thanks to those who attended the meeting and the manner in which the residents presented their concerns.

If you would like to further discuss the contents of this letter, please do not hesitate to call Liz Dunlop on (07) 3225 1056.

Regards


Parma Nand
Manager
Petroleum and Gas Unit
Department of Environment and Resource Management

A letter confirming QGC dumped water outside their allowable limit.