



Queensland  
Government

Department of  
**Environment and  
Heritage Protection**

Ref CTS 23407/17

- 7 SEP 2017

Dr Sean Turner  
Acting Committee Secretary (Additional Committee Support Unit)  
Senate Standing Committees on Environment and Communications  
PO Box 6100  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

Dear Dr Turner

Thank you for your letter dated 24 August 2017 concerning the inquiry into the rehabilitation of mining and resources projects as it relates to Commonwealth responsibilities (the hearing) and evidence given by witnesses relevant to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection.

With reference to pages 50-56 of the transcript from the inquiry, I appreciate the opportunity to respond on behalf of the department to comments made by Mr Kane Booth and Mr Trond Smith. The department does not have any concerns regarding the public release of the information contained in this response.

The department is aware of some matters relating to subsidence and rehabilitation over some areas of pipeline and other infrastructure on Mr Booth's property 'Brentleigh'. The department alleges that these matters are breaches of environmental authorities for coal seam gas activities on the property.

QGC has undertaken to rectify the alleged non-compliance, however have been unable to gain Mr Booth's permission for access onto the property. Mr Booth's permission to gain access to rectify these matters is conditional upon there being a broader catchment overland flow study at QGC's expense. Mr Booth's specific concerns regarding the overland flow of water for the catchment is not a matter that is regulated under the relevant environmental authorities.

The department has facilitated meetings in an effort to gain agreement between Mr Booth and QGC. While significant progress has been made, access remains an issue.

Mr Smith (on page 50 of the transcript of the inquiry) suggests that the department should issue an environmental protection order to have the alleged breaches rectified. The use of a statutory tool to force QGC to rectify the alleged breaches while the department knows that access cannot be obtained, will affect the enforceability of the order, making the action futile.

The department remains hopeful that agreement can be reached between QGC and Mr Booth in order to have the alleged breaches of environmental authorities over the property rectified. However given the current impasse, alternative compliance responses are currently being considered.

The matters raised by Mr Booth and appearing on page 51 and 52 of the transcript of the hearing are very serious matters. I take all matters that could be considered corrupt conduct very seriously and I invite Mr Booth to submit any evidence he has, so that I can determine whether the evidence meets the test for referral to the Crime and Corruption Commission.

To this end, I have instructed an officer, not currently directly associated with this matter, to contact Mr Booth personally, so that he can pass on any evidence he or others have of corrupt conduct.

Should the inquiry have any further queries, please ask them to contact Mr Mark Venz, Director of the department on telephone 3330 5534.

Yours sincerely

Jim Reeves  
**Director-General**