

Senator Barnaby Joyce

Shadow Minister for Regional Development, Local Government and Water

1 Our History

2 Our Concerns

Our family acquired our land not from family succession but from making calculated business decisions and a lot of hard work. We have two properties North of Roma the first was purchased in 1999 and the second in 2002. We have three children whom are all successful in their chosen fields, independent and not connected to the rural industry at this stage. To date we have five grandchildren and maybe anyone of them including our children may choose to go down the rural path. At this point we have not started any succession planning but it is in our future to do so. We hoped the direction we have chosen would have taken us comfortably into our self funded retirement and to the very end with no assistance from the government. With further sensible and calculated business decisions we would like to leave the same legacy to our children and grandchildren.

ENTER THE COAL SEAM GAS INDUSTRY!

All our careful planning and hard work have now been thrown into disarray. To a government whom has a huge debt and needs revenue to repay that debt our story may seem insignificant and maybe a little ho hum. It may seem as though we are anti resource but his is not so. In a perfect world we would not need the revenue from resource companies, but we understand that is not so and we need to work sensibly together to achieve successful outcomes to benefit all concerned. In our case this being us The Landholder, The Government and The Resource Companies.

Below is a list of our concerns

1 Firstly our health without this we are nothing. When CSG comes knocking on our doors it totally consumes our lives. (I'd rather not be sitting here compiling this submission)We must as custodians of our land negotiate with the CSG companies as our decisions now are very important to the next generation. These negotiations in our case are very stressful and have had a huge impact on our mental and physical well being as we are now very unsure of the direction our lives are now taking as we feel very unsure of our future.

2 Water is also a major concern for us as we rely on underground water when in a drought situation. As landholders we pay yearly water licence fees and indicate approx how much water that licence will use.

CAN THE GOVERNMENT ASSURE US THE SAME RULES APPLY FOR CSG?

We feel very insecure with the MAKE GOOD RULES the government has applied. (When the well is dry there is no more and no amount of money can then compensate)

How is the Government monitoring contamination of our underground water supply? (from chemicals CSG are using)

Has our Government investigated the impact that will occur when huge amounts of water are extracted as a by product of CSG. It was initially there for a purpose and can only assume will damage our underground eco system which in turn will eventually damage our above ground eco system.

3 Planning..... Development Planning on our property has come to a standstill for us, as the CSG company we are dealing with are very reluctant to give us any indication as to any further activities and future development for our property.

We only ask for a open and transparent relationship and this would surely be common ground for a healthy business partnership.

4 Compensation For us to be a profitable and successful business we need to be fairly compensated for devaluation of our land, the time it takes away from our business to deal with and administer CSG issues, the impact it makes on our business, regarding loss of income for the footprint CSG leaves on our asset and the insecurity regarding future planning

Recently we had an overseas visitor to our property and his comment after viewing the current Impact from CSG "YOUR GOVERNMENT IS RUINING YOUR COUNTRY"

When it is so obvious to an outsider it makes us more determined to make it right.

Thank-you for taking the time to read our story.

Regards

Steve and Robyn White