

Questions on Notice to the Senate Committee Inquiry into the Landholder Right to Veto (CSG and Coal) Bill 2015

Question One: Senator Waters sought evidence to show that the resources industry can coexist without any detriment to agricultural productivity.

There have been many studies undertaken in Queensland regarding coexistence between the Coal Seam Gas (CSG) and coal industry. QRC would like to outline the following studies that aim to draw out the issues for coexistence, including impacts on agriculture. There are also attached (4) case studies from Peabody Energy (including a United States example) and Rio Tinto.

With any activity, there is some impact whether mining activity or urban development activity, however the issue is whether the *net* impact is substantial, its nature and duration and whether it goes beyond what is acceptable. QRC understands there are community concerns of potential for irreversible impacts from the resources industry and in this particular case, CSG extraction. No research has found evidence of any long term detrimental impact on agriculture, however there is an impact (i.e. compaction). Many of the studies below offer valuable insight for industry and farmers on how to best manage, mitigate or minimise those impacts.

Interactions of coal seam gas development with agriculture (This research is still ongoing, however is highly relevant), Centre for Coal Seam Gas, University of Queensland.
<http://www.ccsq.uq.edu.au/Research/SocialPerformance/Agricultureandcoalseamgas.aspx>

The effects of coal seam gas infrastructure development on arable land, Gas Industry Social & Environmental Research Alliance
http://www.gisera.org.au/publications/tech_reports_papers/GISERA-Agland-5-Final-Report-150807.pdf

Coexistence research lead by the Springsure Creek Agricultural Coexistence Research Committee (ongoing research). This research looks at the impact of underground mining on agriculture from subsidence.
<http://www.springsurecreekproject.com.au/agricultural-project/coexistence-research>

Assessing soil properties of rehabilitated grazing pastures for sustainable and economically viable beef cattle operations (ongoing study)

This study is being undertaken by the University of Southern Queensland on the site of New Hope Group New Acland rehabilitated mined land. So far the study has found greater success (weight gains in cattle) on areas that had been rehabilitated as compared to those that had never been mined.

<http://eprints.usq.edu.au/26655/>

Case studies

Peter Thompson's story on coexistence with Origin Energy

<http://www.theaustralian.com.au/national-affairs/good-times-flow-from-well-of-discontent/story-fnaxx2sv-1226747210575>

Simon Drury, a farmer with a property along the Condamine river

<http://www.appea.com.au/2012/10/csg-a-farmers-story/>

The Gasfields Commission has published a range of landholder experiences with resource companies. <http://www.gasfieldscommissionqld.org.au/news-and-media/grazier-gas-companies-respect-landholder-advice.html>

The New South Wales Minerals Council also have a number of case studies displayed on their website which can be accessed at <http://www.nswmining.com.au/menu/media/case-studies>

Question Two: Senator Waters sought advice on whether companies are threatening landholders with the Land Court. Senator Waters asked if this behaviour is appropriate in negotiating conduct and compensation agreements.

A number of QRC's CSG members have expressly ruled out any resort to the Land Court, preferring to negotiate directly with landholders.

QRC does not condone threatening behaviour in any form. This is a serious claim which QRC is deeply disappointed to hear alleged. QRC encourages anyone who receives a threat to report it to the proper authorities – being the CSG Compliance Unit in the Queensland Department of Natural Resources and Mines. QRC would also encourage informing the Queensland Gasfields Commission which has statutory powers to act on any negative behaviour.

Question Three: Senator Waters mentioned that there had been some cases when landholders were negotiating with companies plans could be changed once they reached the head office. Senator Waters said the *'rhetoric of allowing people to have some sense of control over where coal seam gas wells in particular go is not matched by the action.'*

QRC believes for coexistence to work there must be flexibility on both parties to make it work. It is a difficult balance for a company to place wells and infrastructure in areas that have the highest efficiency as well as being placed in an area that is least disruptive to the landholder.

QRC believes it is in the best interests of its member companies to accommodate landholder preferences where they can to minimise impacts (as outlined in many of the case studies listed above). There are a number of new technologies companies are using aimed at minimising the size of the impact to landholders (e.g. Arrow Energy pilot drill pads).

Flexibility on all parties is needed for genuine coexistence to work well. QRC encourages its members to work constructively with landholders and where beneficial, employ agronomists to maximise agricultural production opportunities.