

The Senate

Environment and Communications Legislation Committee

Environment Protection and Biodiversity
Conservation Amendment (Independent
Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam
Gas and Large Coal Mining Development)
Bill 2012 [Provisions]

June 2012

© Commonwealth of Australia 2011
ISBN 978-1-74229-656-2

This document was printed by the Senate Printing Unit, Parliament House, Canberra

Committee membership

Committee members

Senator Doug Cameron (ALP, NSW) (Chair)
Senator Mary Jo Fisher (LP, SA) (Deputy Chair)
Senator Catryna Bilyk (ALP, TAS)
Senator Bridget McKenzie (NATS, VIC)
Senator the Hon. Lisa Singh (ALP, TAS)
Senator Larissa Waters (AG, QLD)

Committee secretariat

Ms Sophie Dunstone, Acting Secretary
Ms Toni Matulick, Inquiry Secretary
Mr Chris Lawley, Senior Research Officer
Ms Jacquie Hawkins, Estimates Officer
Mrs Dianne Warhurst, Administrative Officer
Ms Dianna Harris, Administrative Officer
Ms Jo-Anne Holmes, Administrative Officer

Committee address

PO Box 6100
Parliament House
Canberra ACT 2600
Tel: 02 6277 3526
Fax: 02 6277 5818
Email: ec.sen@aph.gov.au
Internet:
www.aph.gov.au/Parliamentary_Business/Committees/Senate_Committees?url=ec_ctte/index.htm

Table of Contents

Committee membership	iii
Acronyms and abbreviations	vii
Chapter 1 - Introduction	1
Purpose of the bill.....	2
Outline of the bill.....	2
Note on inquiry	5
Report structure	6
Chapter 2 - Background.....	7
Coal seam gas mining.....	7
Coal mining	11
State and territory regulation	13
Commonwealth regulation	14
Coal seam gas projects approved by the Commonwealth	17
National approach to coal seam gas and coal mining	19
Chapter 3 - Discussion of key issues.....	23
Support for decision making to be based on evidence	23
Failure of the current regulatory approach	24
Duplication of regulation.....	25
Committee comment	26
Definitions	27
Committee comment	30
The independence and expertise of IESC members.....	30
Committee comment	32
Public notification	32

Committee comment	33
'Stop the clock'	33
Committee comment	35
Additional comments from the Australian Greens.....	37
Appendix 1 - Submissions and answers to questions taken on notice	41
Submissions	41
Answers to questions taken on notice	42
Appendix 2 - Public hearings.....	43