

Economics Legislation Committee
ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE
Industry, Innovation and Science Portfolio
2016 - 2017 Additional Estimates
2 March 2017

AGENCY: COMMONWEALTH SCIENTIFIC AND INDUSTRIAL RESEARCH ORGANISATION

TOPIC: Unconventional gas fugitive emissions

REFERENCE: Written Question – Senator Waters

QUESTION No.: AI-69

1. Media reports in recently have questioned the claim that CSG is any cleaner than coal once you include the leakage from wells, pipes and other equipment. Tim Forcey from the Melbourne Energy Institute at the University of Melbourne has been using a Forward Looking Infra-Red (FLIR) video recorder to observe methane leaking out of CSG wells. Wells near Chinchilla in Qld look more like smokestacks venting methane into the atmosphere – have you seen that footage?
2. Can you provide an update on the DoE-funded CSIRO research fugitive emissions from CSG which is supposed to help us assess to true climate impact of CSG?
3. Is the funding still \$190,000?
4. Can you confirm the scope of Phase 2 for us? I.e.
 - a. Whether it is looking at shale / tight gas fracking
 - b. Whether it is looking at water treatment infrastructure
 - c. Whether it is looking at decommissioned / old wells
5. Can you confirm the sample size of Phase 2?
6. When is this phase 2 report scheduled to be complete?
7. When published?
8. Is it with the Minister now?
9. Minister Josh Frydenberg is very keen to roll out fracking for unconventional gas across the country, including in NT, Vic and NSW where there are restrictions – have you ever briefed him on the potential hidden climate impacts of this leaking methane?
10. When did those briefings take place? Who was present?

ANSWER

1. Yes.
2. See answer to AI-14.
3. See answer to AI-14.

4. See answer to AI-15.
5. See answer to AI-15.
6. See answer to AI-14.
7. Under the terms of our agreement with the Department of Environment and Energy publication of the report is a matter for them.
8. Provision of the report to the responsible Minister is a matter for the Department of Environment and Energy.
9. CSIRO has not formally briefed Minister Frydenberg on this matter, but has on occasion had informal interactions with him on this topic.
10. Not applicable.