

**Submission  
No 28**

## **INQUIRY INTO COAL SEAM GAS**

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Simon &amp; Robyn Chance

Thursday, 25 August 2011

The Director  
General Purpose Standing Committee No. 5 - C.S.G  
Parliament House  
Macquarie Street  
Sydney NSW 2000

Dear Sir,

We are writing to the committee to express our concerns regarding the Coal Seam Gas Mining Industry and its effects on land use, water and air. There are many problematic aspects to the effects of Coal Seam Gas mining, such as human and animal health, social detriment, social justice, environmental damage, local government concerns and food and water security.

Lack of landholders rights to deny mining or exploration is a major concern. How is it, given that the landholder does not own the minerals under his ground, that he loses legal control of the part of the land he does 'own', the surface? This is patently unjust! The land holder does not even receive full and proper compensation. A lifetime of work and monetary input can be swept aside in an instant in these circumstances and these laws are not fair and equal nor respecting public rights.

Another concern to landholders are the very negative effects that CSG mining has on property values, not only the affected land holder, but also all of the adjoining neighbouring properties.

The roads, bridges and culverts in rural shires are not designed or built to cope with the level of traffic that CSG mining will impose. Rural local councils will be greatly effected by damage to the existing infrastructure caused by the huge increase of very heavy vehicle traffic use on our roads and in all weathers. Rates will have to rise to levels unaffordable to many rural residents, leading to wide spread social disruption.

The issues of water security and safety are of the highest concern. How do we repair damage to underground aquifers? We suggest that present knowledge is greatly deficient in this area and so claims of protection and control of damage are not in any way credible.

Huge amounts of water required by Coal Seam Gas extraction present huge problems such as -

1. Lowering water tables to such an extent that the ground water will no longer be accessible to agriculture.
2. This also applies to the Great Artesian Basin and if effected, food security will become problematic as well as effecting employment and rural industry.
3. Coal Seam Gas mining processes use vast quantities of water, which then become contaminated by the chemicals used in this production and those released from the coal seams. This 'produced water' has to somehow be either stored or disposed of. Already we have seen that Coal Seam Gas mining companies have resorted to illegal methods of disposal in Queensland by spraying this contamination onto roadways (see Sixty Minutes Report on CSG mining in the Tara area) or releasing the contents of the holding ponds into rivers during floods or selling it for agricultural use, leading to the unwitting contamination of crops and meat and resulting legal issues.
4. The safety of many of the chemicals used by the CSG Industry is in doubt because of lack of scientific testing. Would it not be prudent to carry out the necessary testing BEFORE these chemicals are released into the environment? Our past experience of using untested chemicals in the environment and on our food and water should give us all reason to pause and act on the side of caution and safety.

CSG mining releases huge amounts of contamination into the air through fumes from compressors to burnt gas and chemicals. All of which move through the air, uncontained, into the environment to eventually fall on to houses, schools, water supplies, crops, trees and animals. There is no possible control of this contamination and the reported health concerns in areas around CSG production are already very alarming.

The CSG Industry operates 24/7 and causes noise and light pollution over large areas and distances from their sites, leading to extreme sleep deprivation, causing health and social issues for humans. This also greatly impacts animals both domestic and native.

Land clearing and building multiple tracks for pipelines in gridded patterns across the countryside is causing vast areas of land to be eroded and is causing destruction and disruption to the native flora and fauna.

We urge the committee to call for a complete halt to all Coal Seam Gas mining activities until all the issues surrounding this activity have been properly addressed. As a society we do not want to act in haste, and repent a leisure.

Yours sincerely

S & R Chance