



Reference Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities in NSW, Terms of Reference

Pauline Roberts

to:

[Redacted]

17/07/2013 04:24 PM

Hide Details

From: Pauline Roberts <pjr@divstrat.com.au>

To

[Redacted]

Please respond to pjr@divstrat.com.au

History: This message has been forwarded.

[Redacted]

Reference Review of Coal Seam Gas Activities in NSW, Terms of Reference

Good to see Professor O'Kane and her team at Narrabri last week to hear the local community's concerns with the way CSG industrialisation is being carried out in this rural area. As time was short and I did not have the opportunity to ask these questions at the time, I would be grateful if you would ask Professor O'Kane the following questions for me regarding the Terms of Reference.

Thank you for passing this on.

Dr Pauline Roberts
(interested rural community member)

TOR main para - the focus on human health

- a) How can this study focus on the effects of CSG industrialisation on human health when no previous benchmarking studies have been done?
- b) Is it proposed to access medical records for the communities surrounding existing CSG activities and those of the CSG workers?
- c) Will the team take into account the work of the Doctors for the Environment [http://dea.org.au/images/general/Unconventional %28CSG-Shale%29 Gas DEA.pdf](http://dea.org.au/images/general/Unconventional_%28CSG-Shale%29_Gas_DEA.pdf) ? and the reports from Queensland GP, Dr McCarron et al on current potential health impacts, given that the Queensland government does not accept any health impacts are occurring at all?

TOR 1: Compliance audits by govt departments

- a) Will the Office of Water be one of these departments?
- b) Will the panel interview scientists formerly working for this department about their CSG audit concerns and also determine the extent of the experienced skill set left to assess these concerns now? (The Office has had quite a loss of staff recently)

TOR 2: Identifying and assessing gaps in the identification and management of risk

- a) How can gaps in risk management be identified and assessed if scientific benchmark studies of health, environment and water catchments (quality or quantity) have not been done before exploration or pilot production facilities were permitted? How would such impacts be assessed scientifically without baseline data?

TOR 3: Identify best practice, manage the interface

- a) Why are rural communities not included here, merely 'residential' and 'urban' - doesn't that imply lack of interest in rural NSW? Why should rural properties and their inhabitants be treated differently?
- b) 'Best' - what does that really mean? What scientific evidence is this 'best practice' based on? What are the parameters applied?
- b) What if there is NO best practice that can be identified (ie. that does not result in short term or long term health/environmental damage?) based on peer-reviewed scientific studies. Is that conclusion allowed?
- c) What does 'manage the interface' really mean?

TOR 4: Compare and contrast nationally and internationally

- a) Will this review panel visit Queensland and talk to CSG affected/impacted rural residents there? Or will political sensibilities intervene? Queensland rural communities appear to have real, on the ground, experience of the impacts.
- b) There appear to be huge problems with CSG around the world according to urban and rural communities with unfolding developments, what if nothing positive can be said about this industry in terms of health and environmental impact? Is that conclusion allowed?

TOR 5: Inspect and Monitor

- a) When can we (the public) access information on the background benchmarking that was carried out to make 'inspect and monitoring' of the water, fracking and aquifer protection scientifically valid? If it wasn't done, how can inspect and monitor now be scientifically valid?
- b) Is an assessment of monitoring capability part of this assessment? ie. Which public office has sufficient expert staff to undertake sufficient monitoring?

TOR 6: Paperwork and public messages

- a) Will the public have access to these information papers (advice to Government) or will they merely be released like MinFacts (aka spin) later on? (MinFacts did not inform, they condoned).
- b) Does the committee accept that many of the public have more understanding of the health, environmental and social impacts of this industry - through direct experience - than the government appears to?
- c) If the team determines that there is a huge lack of scientific data around this industrialisation to enable informed decision making, can the team suggest the precautionary principle should apply?

and finally d) Is this latest review merely another way to try and make peace with the restless natives? Or is it a **SERIOUS, SCIENTIFIC AND RIGOROUS** review of the impacts without fear or favour of the NSW Government, given that the NSW Government wants this industry to go ahead?

As you can imagine, the Great Artesian Basin, rural water supplies, people's lives and livelihoods are at risk here as is the integrity of our environment as a whole. CSG-impacted rural communities are not un-informed. They have schooled up on the science and technical aspects of this industrialisation in order to write the countless submissions and presentations to NSW and Federal

government about this industry. The communities have been leading the accountability, not the companies or the government. It would be a shame if this review did not truly reflect the community's grave concerns due to a rigged ToR. I hope for all our sakes this is not the case.

Thank you for your time, Professor O'Kane.

Your sincerely,

Dr Pauline Roberts
(interested rural community member)



Groundwater Protection and Unconventional Gas Extraction
Pauline Roberts to: [REDACTED]
Please respond to pjr

21/08/2013 08:13 AM

History: This message has been replied to.

1 attachment



Groundwater Protection and Unconventional Gas Extraction_GW2013.pdf

[REDACTED]

Further to my email of 17/7/2013 please find attached a paper which explains, quite clearly, the whole problem with groundwater protection from an experiential view point. It is out of Canada and encompasses all variables showing clearly that 'best practice' is a misnomer. The same problems are already evident in the Western Darling Downs. Perhaps you have already read this paper. Irrespective, please could you acknowledge receipt of this email, I was surprised not to receive some receipt of my email to the Chief Scientist last time.

Thank you.
Pauline Roberts
02 6721 3667
0407 011 733