



Submission

Denise Gilbert to: csg.review@chiefscientist.nsw.gov.au

26/04/2013 03:08 PM

History:

This message has been replied to and forwarded.

Please find attached my submission to the Chief Scientist Review into CSG activities in NSW .

Thank you,



Denise GilbertChief Scientist CSG Review.pdf

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26 April 2013

NSW Chief Scientist
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Review of CSG activities in NSW

I understand you are conducting a review of CSG activities in NSW with a focus on the impacts of these activities on human health and the environment.

This submission is a very personal one and will focus on the situation which me and my neighbours find ourselves in. There are other individuals, groups and organisations who will be able to provide more scientific, in-depth submissions to you, so I do not attempt to replicate those submissions.

I live in Forbesdale, just 7 km south of Gloucester, on a slight spur overlooking the Gloucester Valley. There are over 30 families living in Forbesdale. Stage 1 of the AGL CSG project is contained within the part of the Gloucester Valley which we all overlook. The recently introduced CSG 2 km exclusion zone for residential areas does nothing to assist us for two reasons.

1. Our cluster of homes does not have a big enough population to meet the size deemed to warrant protection. It is obvious to us that there are different rules for towns and cities and that small populations are deemed to be collateral damage.
2. We are told that any exclusion zone would not apply to the AGL Gloucester project because it has been approved – even though AGL still needs to meet a number of “conditions” before it is allowed free reign over our Valley.

The result is that the residents of Forbesdale will be forced to endure the multiple effects of a CSG gas field well within 2 km from their homes.

These multiple effects include:

- Health impacts from air quality and noise pollution (see submission by Barrington Gloucester Stroud Preservation Alliance with comments by Dr Steve Robinson)
- Mental health impacts from having stressful living conditions thrust upon you and a loss of control over some aspects of your life
- Financial implications such as reduced property value, or even a total inability to sell (which of course has a huge impact on mental health)

Additionally, there is concern for potential contamination of the water supply as the proposed CSG field is in a geologically complex valley and on a floodplain, as well as loss of agricultural land.

Of course no one ever wants to consider cumulative impacts and therefore are uninterested in the fact that the Forbesdale area is also the proposed site of an open cut coal mine just 900 metres from the nearest property. And there is also the Yancoal open cut mine at Stratford which is seeking to extend the mine area with at least 3 new pits. The cumulative impact of all these developments will result in the death of Forbesdale, not only the area but the people who will, in effect, be killed by mining but only classified as collateral damage.

Although outside the scope of this review, I would like to draw to your attention that whilst there has been some protection for large communities from CSG wells and wind farms with a 2km exclusion zone, the exclusion zone for open cut coal mines is only 200 metres. Given the nearly unbearable burden of the huge impacts on people of open cut coal mines this situation is one which is in dire need of a review. And this need is urgent.

The lack of scientific data in regard to fugitive emissions from CSG is worrying, especially given that organisations such as APPEA are promoting CSG as a “green” fuel. In fact it could be that if the CSG industry had to factor in the cost of fugitive emissions then the industry would not be so “green” after all. The possibility of a reasonably high percentage of well casing failures will also contribute to emissions, as well as water contamination.

I invite you to visit Forbesdale and Gloucester and meet with residents, see the AGL operations and consider how much my area will have to bear.

Given that the industry (eg APPEA) is busy lobbying to persuade people that there is nothing wrong with CSG, I would like to request that you seek out or commission truly independent sources of information for your fact sheets. To rely on information given out by industry is not acceptable.

And if you could offer any advice as to how over 30 families can live with 330 CSG wells and an open cut coal mine within 2kms of their homes, we would all be very pleased to hear from you.

(signed)

Denise Gilbert