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Queensland gas sector bolstered by 7000 jobs

There are now more than 18,500 people working in Queensland's gas industry, according to figures released by the Australian Petroleum & Production Exploration (APPEA) today.

The latest quarterly data shows an increase of almost 7000 jobs in the first half of this year while employment in NSW's CSG industry only grew by 39 to 332 positions.

APPEA Chief Executive David Byers said: "The economic story developing between NSW and Queensland couldn't be more diametrically opposed.

"CSG to LNG projects worth almost \$50 billion are progressing in Queensland, creating thousands of jobs and breathing new life into rural and regional communities.

"The Queensland industry signed 306 new landholder agreements in the second quarter of 2012 and 2898 such agreements are now in place in that state.

"There have been no formal disputes of access in either state; gas companies and landholders are working hard to ensure industry and farming can work side by side for mutual benefit."

The Queensland industry contributed an additional \$13.5 million to community projects in the last quarter and has now directly contributed \$84 million to regional Queensland. This includes investment in rescue aeromedical helicopters, hospitals, schools and sporting clubs.

By comparison, NSW CSG community contributions for the last quarter were \$85,000, bringing total contributions to \$550,000.

The release of the NSW Government's Strategic Regional Land Use Plan is crucial not only to providing certainty for all stakeholders, but also to ensuring industry can work to secure the state's energy future, address gas shortages and put downward pressure on electricity prices.

Mr Byers said: "Further delay in finalising the policy framework could jeopardise future investment in developing NSW's gas resources.

"NSW currently imports around 95 per cent of its gas from interstate despite the potential for ample reserves to be accessed through further exploration and production."

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The Australian Petroleum Production & Exploration Association represents the upstream oil and gas industry in Australia. APPEA member companies produce around 98 per cent of Australia's oil and gas.