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By its own admission Southern Cross University research is inconclusive

Claims today by anti-gas organisation Lock the Gate Alliance grossly misrepresent research undertaken by Southern Cross University into emissions around natural gas basins in northern NSW and the Darling Downs.

Any suggestion natural gas causes health problems in areas where it is produced, known to seep naturally or is not a cleaner-burning energy source than coal is clearly wrong and not supported by evidence.

“From our data we cannot conclusively say that the elevated concentrations are due to CSG mining activities as we have no information about the area before the commencement of CSG mining.” (SCU researcher Professor Isaac Santos – SCU media release 19 November)

In 2013, GasFields Commission Queensland undertook an historical data search that identified the existence of natural gas seeps from the landscape in some of the State's major coal basins prior to the current onshore gas industry boom.*

APPEA Chief Technical Officer Rick Wilkinson said: “Hyperventilating by anti-gas organisations who draw their own conclusions from the university's nine-page report add little to the discussion about how we produce vital energy resources.”

Since the SCU's preliminary research was released two years ago the CSIRO has also released a report *'Field measurements of fugitive emissions from equipment and well casings in Australian coal seam gas production facilities'*.

It found greenhouse gas emissions from CSG production wells to be very low especially when compared to the volume of natural gas produced from the wells.

The CSIRO report also found the median methane emission rate from all sources for the 43 wells examined was approximately 0.5 grams per minute, while the mean emission rate was about 3.2 grams per minute.

Put another way, the median emission rate is about the same as daily methane emissions from four cows.

Mr Wilkinson said: “The CSIRO report is an important and technically rigorous study that notes while there are a number of other areas requiring further investigation, it is



significant that these initial findings based on actual direct measurements show fugitive emissions are a small fraction (less than 0.02%) of CSG production.”

When Southern Cross originally released its preliminary research two years ago, APPEA wrote to the Vice Chancellor Professor Peter Lee seeking clarification on the following points:

- (a) Has the research been subject to peer-review and if so who is conducting the peer review and when will it be finalised?*
- (b) In the interests of public transparency will the university provide GPS data highlighting exactly where and how many readings/measurements were recorded in the Tara area, on which roads and when?*
- (c) Did sampling take into account other potential sources of emissions such as naturally-occurring hydrocarbon seeps? As you may be aware, natural seeps are quite common, particularly near shallow sources of gas, such as coal seam methane.*
- (d) Did sampling take into account other potential sources of emissions such as large scale feedlots in the Tara area?*

No response was ever received.

Natural gas produces much lower greenhouse gas emissions than coal – generally about 50-70% lower.

Increased use of natural gas over coal to generate power in the United States has led to some of the lowest greenhouse reduction recordings in 20 years.

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* <http://www.gasfieldscommissionqld.org.au/whats-happening/csiro-research-seeks-baseline-on-surat-seeps.html>