



5 May 2016

Inquiry acknowledges importance of natural gas industry

The interim report of the Senate Select Committee on Unconventional Gas Mining released last night confirms that the inquiry did not identify any factual or scientific evidence to support the fear campaign peddled by industry opponents.

“Despite Senator Lazarus’ best efforts to enflame the debate, the committee report contains no evidence to support his headline-seeking attacks on the industry,” said APPEA Chief Executive Dr Malcolm Roberts.

“Contrary to Senator Lazarus’ claims, there is no ‘genocide’ in Queensland.

“The industry saw the inquiry as an opportunity to put the facts on the public record. We appreciate the genuine interest shown by Coalition and Labor Senators participating in the inquiry. Most Senators acknowledge that the claims made against the industry are flimsy and anecdotal. They also acknowledge the industry’s positive economic contribution.

“A compelling body of evidence from leading scientific institutions and independent experts shows that a properly regulated unconventional gas industry does not threaten the environment or public health. Again, most Senators who participated in the inquiry recognised this point.

“Activists and others opposed to the industry are entitled to be heard but decision-making must be based on factual evidence. Unfortunately, the inquiry’s Chair, Senator Lazarus, has shown that he is not interested in the facts. His recommendations are not supported by the evidence presented to the inquiry and, not surprisingly, are not supported by the majority of his committee members.”

The following extracts are from the report.

Additional comments by Opposition Senators (Joseph Ludwig and Anne McEwen)

“The committee also heard anecdotal evidence regarding the environmental impact of unconventional gas mining activity, but heard little factual or scientific evidence to support the claims.” (page 79)

“Opposition senators also highlight that regular compensation payments which have been paid to landholders with unconventional gas mining on their land have allowed farmers to supplement their incomes and help to weather difficult conditions, including drought.” (page 80)

“Opposition senators recognise the significant opportunities which are afforded by unconventional gas mining regarding employment and regional development.” (page 81)

Additional comments by Government Senators (David Johnston and Joanna Lindgren)

“Gas both conventional and unconventional is a vital source of energy to Australia and to the world particularly our northern neighbours. Australia’s future energy security and its economic growth will be driven through diversity of supply with unconventional gas playing an increasingly vital role in our future energy mix. Australia is currently the world’s third largest, and by 2020 will be the world’s largest, exporter of liquefied natural gas (LNG).” (page 85)

“Managed well, unconventional gas has an exciting future providing a significant contribution to Australia’s Gross National Product through vital energy supply and many meaningful and well paid jobs.” (page 86)

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