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Narrabri Gas Project – safe for the environment, vital for secure, affordable gas in NSW

The Australian Petroleum Production and Exploration Association (APPEA) welcomes the latest steps forward in the development of Santos' Narrabri Gas Project.

Today, Santos submitted to the NSW Government a development application and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

"The EIS is a comprehensive study, drawing on the latest and most complete data and research," said APPEA CEO Dr Malcolm Roberts.

"It includes, for example, detailed local environmental surveys and groundwater impact assessments. The Statement finds that the project presents minimal, manageable risk to the environment.

"Without prejudging the outcome of the regulatory process – which will be exhaustive – there can be no doubt Santos has produced a high quality assessment which addresses all potential issues.

"There can also be no doubt that all gas users on the east coast urgently need new supply to be brought into the market.

"The east coast faces a supply shortfall as early as 2019. Unless new projects are developed quickly, customers will face higher prices and tighter supply. This will not only mean higher energy bills for families but also more pressure on manufacturers using gas to make products such as fertilisers, glass and plastics. In NSW alone, these industries employ more than 300,000 people.

"The need for more supply is more pressing in NSW than in any other State.

"Customers already pay a premium for buying 95 per cent of their gas from distant fields in Queensland, South Australia and offshore Victoria. That dependence is costly and risky. Local supply will mean downward pressure on prices and greater energy security.

"Unfortunately, the industry expects to see another round of activist fear campaigns against the project

"It is important some fundamental facts are not lost in the post-truth, social media frenzy from activists:



- The project will be assessed through a rigorous, independent process which will examine all relevant issues, especially environmental concerns and possible social impacts;
- The EIS includes comprehensive, new research and data, including on ground surveys and ground water impact assessments;
- Santos is not applying for approval to conduct hydraulic fracturing;
- If approved, the project will generate permanent local jobs and an estimated \$1.2 billion in State royalties over its working life;
- The project will support a \$120 million fund for local community projects; and
- Most of the project will occur on State land earmarked for multiple uses such as forestry and extractive industries.

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