

From: unison
To: [fracking inquiry](#)
Subject: Re: Community Update #5
Date: Friday, 10 March 2017 11:59:53 PM

Dear Scientific Inquiry,

After watching the very interesting presentations yesterday from the Darwin public meeting on fracking, I wanted to write today to thank you for taking such a long day to listen and question the various presenters.

While the Lock The Gate presentation was heart felt, there were some comparisons to the US shale gas industry that I feel should be clarified. Naomi Hogan was correct in that there had been some leaks, spills and contamination of water - particularly in the Pennsylvania Marcellus shale areas, but those various problems occurred mainly due to the vast difference between the ownership of the mineral rights and a break down in the monitoring and oversight of the drilling companies in the Marcellus.

Mineral rights in Pennsylvania, and many other states in the USA, are owned by the landowner and not owned by the state. The land owners are free to sell their deep underground gas to the highest bidder and this has been the cause of most of the problems. Many of the smaller drilling operators sometimes bid too high to get the right to drill on a farmer's land and to make money - they will cut corners and not follow up with proper procedures to monitor and keep the integrity of the well intact. This has also been the cause of great deal of anger and frustration in the Marcellus as it has pitted neighbor against neighbor with some farmers selling to the highest bidder while their neighbor looks on in horror when the driller doesn't monitor or control the flow back water and mud from his neighbors land. There are many highly respected and capable drilling and completion companies operating in the Marcellus, but there are also many small operators that will take the shortest route to making money - especially since the price of natural gas in the Marcellus has dropped so much over the past few years.

Here, in the Northern Territory the mineral rights are owned by all residents of the Territory and the enforcement of regulations and monitoring of well completion operations by the Minerals dept. is a much more thorough process that is not only followed by companies like Origin and Santos, but is usually enforced by these companies at a higher level than even the regulations require.

If the fracking for shale gas is allowed to proceed in "highly regulated tightly prescribed areas" like the Beetaloo - then the errors and spills that have been documented in the Marcellus will remain an American problem due to the very different mineral rights system and shouldn't ever be a problem in the Territory. There have been ten's of thousands of very successful fracked wells and where the regulations are strong and the monitoring is enforced - there has been no problems or angst about fracking, and the financial rewards have been very significant.

Best regards,
Paul Brant

On Sun, Mar 5, 2017 at 7:30 PM, Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the NT <fracking.inquiry@nt.gov.au> wrote:

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06 March 2017

Community Update #5

6 March 2017

The independent Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing of onshore unconventional reservoirs in the Northern Territory commences its hearings and community meetings schedule across the Territory today.

Hearings will be held in Alice Springs this morning while a community meeting is scheduled for this evening, with similar events to occur this week in Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin.

The Inquiry Chair, Justice Rachel Pepper, said the hearings are an opportunity for a range of stakeholders and members of the community to present their views on hydraulic fracturing of shale and to provide comment on the issues and risks identified in the Inquiry's Background and Issues Paper.

"Today the Inquiry commences a week of hearings and community meetings in Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine and Darwin," Justice Pepper said.

"The Inquiry is seeking feedback on the issues and risks identified in our Background and Issues Paper, which

will form the basis of the Inquiry's work going forward.

"The Hearings are also a formal opportunity for members of the public, environmental groups, the gas industry and other interested persons and organisations to make an evidence based submission to the Inquiry regarding onshore hydraulic fracturing of shale."

Justice Pepper said the hearings will be streamed live on the Inquiry's website and members of the public can also attend in person to watch and listen to the proceedings.

"The Inquiry has received a large number of registrations from interested parties to present at the hearings. There will be further opportunities mid year when additional hearings are held following the release of the Interim Report," Justice Pepper said.

"There has also been significant interest from people who want to attend our community meetings to find out more about the Inquiry.

"At these community meetings I will be outlining the role and work program of the Inquiry and there will be a presentation explaining the process of onshore hydraulic fracturing of unconventional shale reservoirs.

"The Inquiry will also seek feedback from those attending the community meetings on the risks and issues identified in the Background and Issues Paper, with each panel member conducting this discussion in small groups."

Justice Pepper said people unable to make the hearings or community meetings this week still had many opportunities to express their view.

"Anyone can write or email the Inquiry with their views or submit a feedback form via the 'have your say' page on the Inquiry's website," Justice Pepper said.

"This week is the first round of consultations by the Inquiry, focusing on the content of the Background and Issues Paper. But anyone can submit a feedback form or lodge a submission with the Inquiry at any time.

"The Inquiry will be holding further hearings and consultations around the middle of this year, once we release the Interim Report.

"Comment on the Background and Issues Paper closes on 30 April 2017, but the Inquiry welcomes specific submissions and comment on hydraulic fracturing of shale, relevant to the Inquiry's Terms of Reference at any time."

Live streaming of the hearings and the schedule of appearances is accessible at www.frackinginquiry.nt.gov.au

Monday 6 March 2017 – Alice Springs Convention Centre from 9am
Tuesday 7 March 2017 – Tennant Creek Training Centre from 11am
Wednesday 8 March 2017 – Knotts Crossing Restaurant Katherine from 7.45am
Friday 10 March 2017 – Darwin Convention Centre from 8am

The Inquiry will also be undertaking regional and community consultation from 20 to 29 March 2017, with venues and times available on the Inquiry's website.

Please direct all correspondence regarding the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing to:
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