



Tennant Creek – Andre Munckton

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Tennant Creek, Tennant Creek Civil Hall – via Video Presentation & Phone call

Speakers: Andre Munckton

Andre Munckton: I'm Andre Munckton, on behalf of myself and my wife. This is my final, submission to the Northern Territory fracking inquiry.

For me and my wife, I've been around the Elliott area, Beetaloo area all my life. My wife was born and so was her family born on the property. I had it for about, I bought it off them, I had it for about 12 years and done some development work on it and I've walked, me and the late Clancy Vostock walked a lot of the country, left our vehicles where we could and was putting in some more new bores but I really wanted to see how much water flooded down.

The Beetaloo creek runs, heads at Mungabrim and there's about a 15 kilometre gap between there and the waters from the Top End, which comes from the Limmen River and goes their OT station, which is the out station, which was one of the main parts of Beetaloo and two stations. And we had a look and we, me and the late Clancy now used to walk through the place, four or five days at a time and look around.

And we just couldn't believe the amount of water that was coming down from the top and we could see it when we was at the Beetaloo, they're clear, the Beetaloo water is a dark water but you could see it, a clear water when the other one joins up and that. And we had a look and it was up around the waist deep and that and there was a hell of a lot more water going down there than we thought coming down. So we thought the areas that I was going to put the bores, I had to reconsider and shift them otherwise the motors would have been underwater.

And I'm very concerned about the gas and anything like that going there because when they do the fracking, the fracking actually fracks the ground but it actually comes up outside of the casing and into the water table and then you get bubbles up the top, so no doubt, if someone would go into that area and have a look when it's underwater a fly in or whatever, and do a test on those wells, you will find that they are leaking. And there's two wells, both Owen one and two and the McIntyre wells are right in those water areas and they have been closed off because they have contaminated the water.



But they would be still doing it because you can block the inside off but you can't block the outside off where the fracking is and I would like it very much for the inquiry to investigate, start taking samples around these wells when they are with water and that, because it's bad for the country.

The said the basin has got a lifetime of 30 years but what happens after that? The water is going to be poisoned and there is a lot of towns and Aboriginal communities and stations that rely on the Georgina Basin, which now is called the Beetaloo Oil Basin, which is under that Georgina Basin. But, Georgina Basin is a very big basin and a lot of people depend on it.

So, I'd like the inquiry to take some more samples and have a really close look at it because it ain't safe and that's it. And I won't have it safe because when I left school, I used to be will the late Bill Gorey and we was putting in water bores and it was like winning a casket when you struck the water and how precious it was and how much they spoke well of it and that.

Today, they're going down a lot more deeper and when they frack, they use explosives and the amount of material and poisons that's going down that well, people will be dying of cancer and every other disease and if it's not our generation, it's going to be the generations after us, and the ones after that again. So, I reckon the whole lot should be stopped, myself and whoever agrees with it, well people should speak up while they have got a chance to.

So that's what I reckon about it anyway. And I know the Beetaloo area and OT very well and I spent all my life at Elliott and I spent 30 years truck driving all around but Elliott was always our base. So, you know, I think I know what I'm talking about and I've actually seen the damage and I've spoken to a geologist that was there and they showed me maps and they wasn't no longer working there but they showed me stuff and told me stuff that I didn't know and I am very concerned about it.

As a former pastoralist, I've got a fair idea of the contamination that would be caused and what concerns me is, and I think everyone else around should be concerned, that eventually the poisons and that stuff that floats to the surface in their holding ponds and stuff like that could eventually get into the meat and then, what happens to our meat industry? Does that just go to the wall? Or are everyone going to stand up and you know? And have a decent look at all this.

There's been an inquiry before I know but, you know, it wants to be a thorough inquiry because it ain't no joke and my wife's family is very concerned about it after being born on the land and they were there from the 1800s and that and they are very concerned for all of the wildlife and everything else. You see dead birds around and there is wells and that there, whether it's just, there's got to be something that is causing that and that's after the floods and that which happens every year and that.



My concern is that it's going to poison people that stuff. If it's not our generation, it's going to be the one after and it's going to get into the meat because even before, years ago with spraying the Parkinsonia trees and I had cattle on agistment there and they was concerned about the pellets might get into the meat and poison the meat. And they have got a far worsor situation with this fracking and the stuff they pour down the wells there and that's got more of a chance of getting into the meat than most other stuff and this is my concern is, it could be our, the end of our cattle industry around that area and around that basin and further on.

The Georgina Basin goes right up to Rockland Station near Camooweal and it goes up just outside of the Seven Mile and Tennant Creek here and it goes right up the top. It takes years to fill and that and you've got all these communities depending on it. It's not only the people around that basin is going to be effected, it goes right back to where the Georgina Basin starts and ends. And all of those people, it's a far larger area than just the Beetaloo Basin that they are talking about and what I'm talking about here now.

There's far more, a larger area that I don't think people even realise that. Have a good look and find out where these basins lie and that and then you'll understand how larger area and there's going to be people that are going to be effected if these things get poisoned.

And you can't tell me that those wells, that's been blocked off and are not still contaminating the underground water now. So you know, this is a concern of mine and it concerns my wife's family, it concerns my wife and it should concern everyone else around as well.

I'm very upset about it, pouring a lot of money in and they really should be, you know, doing more and just having a good look at it and make a clear decision on it. It should not go ahead, that's what I'm saying, you know.

I'd also like to say that the recent fracking they have done on Munja Munja Station is, we've already had experience, it's going to be the exact thing that has happened on Beetaloo with the closure of the two Owen wells and the McIntyre well fail, which got in and contaminated the water and that. Once it's fracked and the water starts to drip down it causes an acid thing, very similar to McArthur River Mine where they are having trouble, and when they get the rocks out and when it's in the open, it turns into acid and if you put water in it, it is acid and there's a haze there all of the time. All this might be bubbling away, still in those failed wells.

I'd like to recommend a total ban on it, because the huge cost of to the pastoral industry, it's just not going to recover after it. They say there's 30 years supply there, so what happens after the 30 years? You've just got, they've got no more water so how else, are you going, what, are you going to pipe the water from the Top End rivers and bring it down so you're going to completely ruin the Georgina Basin and the Georgina Basin is a hell of a lot bigger than what the Beetaloo Basin that the oil mob call, because it takes in a hell of a lot more towns and stuff like that.



I'd like the inquiry to really look into that and see a much larger area that's going to be effected by the Georgina Basin area, not just around that area, a hell of a lot larger area. And I think that even pastoral stations right up to where it starts at Rockland Station around that area, they've got to drink the water as well and how long does it take for this contamination to eventually get right though the lot?

So what I'm saying is that it should be really stopped because it's going to contaminate a lot more than just the Beetaloo Basin and I think that a lot of pastoralist should be really concerned about it myself and that's about all I'd like to say. Just a total ban on it and I think that would be the best for the country, the best for the environment, best for all of the sacred sites though the area.

Everything would just, you can't go into the creeks and be drinking the water because you'd be drinking the rubbish that's put down the wells that comes to the surface and everyone gets effected so it should be banned I reckon. That's all I want to say about it I think, it's wrong, it's definitely wrong and you've only got to look at the experience of other countries and what they have done.

Down south, they have put a total ban on, down south and in America, they have had a lot of trouble with it too but they are blaming the earthquakes around there, the small tremors they have been having for the plates being shifted through the rubbish that they pour down there and this is what some of the top scientists have been saying, they blame that so we don't want that sort of a situation coming here but just the stuff that goes down the well is enough to concern me. So I reckon a total ban is what should be done.

I've got a map here and it can show the Beetaloo Creek heads at Mungabrim, the water there and then you've got a bit of a gap and then the water comes actually from the Limmen right into the out station called OT Downs. It floods into the, joins into the, when the Mungabrim one and Beetaloo joins into Beetaloo Creek, which is white water.

You can tell when the water is coming from the Top End, the big floods up the top, which always happens every year. Any land holder that is in the area should be really concerned because it's not just confined to Beetaloo Basin area, it's, they will all be effected because that water comes in and then it turns clear then the creek runs right around through Newcastle waters, they should be concerned as well and it goes around to the place that people know as Longreach Water Hole and eventually ends up into Lake Woods and then when that's full, there's sort of a bit of a bank around it but it breaks that and floods out into the desert.

Any pastoralist around they should, it's not confined to that, just to the one area and I think they should be all concerned about it and if any, wants to give it the go ahead, they really should be reconsidering their decision I'd reckon because I have walked through the area and the contamination



spreads and even though they have blocked off the other wells, it's, when it floods through there, it's mixing with the underground water, that goes into everyone, what the stuff that they are pouring down the well and then the floods get through it and then that, around the bore holes and that, it can get in because there is a hell of a lot of pressure underneath the ground there when the gas, when they frack and that.

And it comes up on the outside of the casing. The inside, yes they do a good job on the inside, it will last as long as the casing doesn't rust and that will take a few years but my concern is that it comes on the outside and there is no way in the world they can block off the outside I don't care what anyone says and any inquiry that's going now, they should look more closely into that, on the outside and that goes on the outside, it feeds into the underground water supply and then it goes right up the top and then, with the force of the gas and a big flood like that, the water comes down, it can go down into the, on the side of the well, get contaminated into your underground water supply and then what happens?

So anyone that's thinking of giving the okay, they ought to reconsider because you know, it's not only them that's going to suffer, it's the generations after you know? I think that the inquiry should have a much more closer look at these things.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Yes, good afternoon, Mr Andre Munckton?

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Yes hello Mr Munckton, my name is Justice Rachel Pepper. I'm Chair to the Scientific Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing in the Northern Territory. We have just watched your very useful video. Thank you very much for pre-recording that.

Let me just introduce the panel so you're not perhaps too surprised when you hear their voices.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: I'll just get them to say hello as I introduce their names.

Professor Brian Priestly.

Professor
Brian Priestly: Hello Mr Munckton.



Andre Munckton: Yeah, hi.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Dr. Alan Anderson.

Dr Alan Anderson: Hello Mr Munckton.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Professor Barry Hart.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: Hello Mr Munckton.

Andre Munckton: Yep, hello.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Dr. Vaughan Beck.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Good afternoon Mr Munckton.

Andre Munckton: Yes.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: And Dr. David Richie.

Dr David Ritchie: Good afternoon Mr Munckton.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Yes, thank you very much Mr Munckton. I wanted to perhaps, just, first of all is there anything else you wish to tell the inquiry?

Andre Munckton: Yeh, I'd like them, if they could get a copy of Volume One, Northern Territory Water, Water Northern Territory Volume One. It was put out by the Department of Mines and Energy, Water Resources Division. It'll show the water basins and stuff like that in a much clearer for them and that.

And that and also is there anyone testing those failed wells? The Owen and McIntyre wells on the Station Beetaloo there? That's, they blocked them off because they said they was leaking and that and getting into the water. I'd just like to know if anyone has done any testing of them and is it possible if they could, during the wet season, if they could land around those wells, on a dry area of course and take some samples of, near the well heads and see what it's like there.



And also, is there any water testing for the people at Elliott and surrounding places there? Just to see that there is no contamination in the water and that, if that could be done. That's about all I want to say on that I guess.

What compensation is the pastoralist and the TOs getting for land access and all that? Is there any compensation at all they are getting out of this, or?

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

I can't answer those questions Mr Munckton but can you tell me a little bit more about these failed wells please?

Andre Munckton:

Yeah, there's two called Owen wells and one called the McIntyre well. And they failed and they said that they contaminated the waters, that's why they was closed up and I don't know whether it's still leaking into the water or has anyone been there to test them or anything like that?

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

Do you know whose wells they were?

Andre Munckton:

I wouldn't be real sure on that. No, I'm not real sure on that.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

Okay.

Andre Munckton:

A person got the information through the Freedom of Information I think it was and passed it on and it said that they were leaching and contaminating the water and that's about all the information I got out of it so I just wanted to know if anyone has tested it to see if it's still happening, even though they have been sealed off and if it's still happening or anything. If it's been tested or can it be tested or what's, you know.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

I can't, I'm sorry Mr Munckton, I can't answer that question, we're not from the government so we don't know but that's why I'm asking you about those wells.

Andre Munckton:

Yeah.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

So are they unconventional wells? Were they wells that were fracked or are they just wells that were sort of drilled? What sort of wells were they?

Andre Munckton:

Well they didn't get down to the full depth I understand, it was past the water table and that and it seems that one, is a bit bent or something like that and yeah, so I'm not too sure if one of them may have been a fracked well, I'm not real positive on that. It's just a bit of the information that I got back. All that was said was they got it through Freedom of Information and that was about all that was passed on so it's concerned me that, that has contaminated the water and I just wanted to know if it can be tested and all that.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper:

So have you got some information through Freedom of Information request did you say?



Andre Munckton: A person got it for me yes, and passed it on a while back, now though.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Do you still have a copy -

Andre Munckton: What's that?

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Mr Munckton, do you still have a copy of that information?

Andre Munckton: They sent it on me phone but I'm not too sure if I've got the copy of the whole lot of it at all. I've got to swap sim cards over to a new phone a while back and I think I've deleted a lot of the photos and other stuff that was on there so I'm not real sure of that. But, I think they should be able to get onto the Freedom of Information and get it through there again and get the full copy of it, you know?

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Who was the person who provided you with this information?

Andre Munckton: It may have been GetUp! or something I think it was, a person from GetUp!.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: I don't know, all right, if you are able to obtain that information again, certainly please send it through to the inquiry because we would be most keen to have a look at those, that information on those wells. We will do a little bit of research ourselves to see if we can't get to the bottom of it but I must say, that's the first I've heard of two wells that have failed and are now, you say, contaminating the water.

Andre Munckton: Yeah, they contaminated the water, our drinking water, yeah.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: All right. And is it in an around those wells that you said, I think in your video submission that you saw some dead wildlife?

Andre Munckton: Yeah there's wildlife, dead around the wells yeah. There's a lot of, a hell of a lot of water comes down through the, from the Top End and joins in with the Beetaloo Creek. There's a lot more water than you think there because the Beetaloo Creek is a milky coloured water and then you, when you see the clean water coming through, well you know that the water from OT, which is out of the out station -

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Yep.

Andre Munckton: And that's all coming through and that and there's a lot of dead stuff around, I've seen there before, me and the late Clancy Vostock walked, we used to walk around that area in the wet, and in the dry as well but we'd have a good look for places where, the bores and where we were going to put it and we wanted to see whether they were going to be under water or



not and we are pretty well surprised that we know the depth of the water really and yeah, well so they've got something, they've picked up something to be dropping poison and picked up something. So it's just not an ordinary bird kill sort of thing, it's just, you know, there was quite a few of them there.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Okay, well what sort of wild life did you see that was dead?

Andre Munckton:

Those cranes and that, those black and white cranes and they walk around the waters edge a fair bit and the black cockatoos, there was several of those but mainly it was those white, black and white cranes that were there, they must have been picking up something, they are always got their beak in the water and then picking up stuff and that, so it's something that they have picked up there somewhere along the line there. I'm not saying that it come out of them but it was around those areas and that so it's something there that they have ... I've never seen an amount like that. You'd get 20 here and blooming, six or seven further on and something like that. It's not going, it's not hawks or anything like that kill them, there's just too many of them.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

And how long ago was it, roughly, just approximately, how long ago was it that you saw this?

Andre Munckton:

Oh it would be four or five years ago I suppose, yeah.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Okay.

Andre Munckton:

Yeah, it would be that long yeah, because my wife's got her parents laid to rest there and we try to get out there once a year to visit the site, the graves and that so, we might have a bit of a walk around and stuff like that so that was a, it would be that long ago yeah, it would be.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Okay.

Andre Munckton:

I haven't been able to move around much lately but that was the last time I remember I was walking around and that there, so.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

All right, thank you. Mr Munckton, I'm now going to ask if there are any members of the panel who would like to ask you a question.

Andre Munckton:

Yep.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Just, if you can't hear them, please just say so all right?

Andre Munckton:

Yes.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

But I think Professor Barry Hart would like to ask you a question.



Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Thanks Mr Munckton and thank you very much for your first hand knowledge and information on the surface water resources.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: I must say that is really the first time that we've heard any first hand information on what happens, basically each wet season.

Andre Munckton: Yeah.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Great stuff. We need a lot more of that information. So if I could, just ask you a couple of questions about your experience walking in those waters at the wet season -

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: So you were saying that there's basically two, the way I understood it, two creeks. There is one that is coming down from north.

Andre Munckton: Yep, yeah.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: The creek you call Beetaloo, is it also known as Newcastle Creek?

Andre Munckton: Yes, the head of it starts at Mungabrim Station off the High Country at Mungabrim.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: So this is -

Andre Munckton: It runs down past Beetaloo and into Newcastle waters and around to Lake Woods.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Okay.

Andre Munckton: That's the Beetaloo Creek, that's their system. And then the other one -

Professor

Barry Hart AM: So the time you experienced, when you and your mate were walking in that, is that the sort of experience each wet season?

Andre Munckton: Yeah it is every wet season, you know, when you get good rains and that and you get good rains off the Top End up near Borroloola, if you get a



cyclone or something up there and there would be a hell of a lot more water come down.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Yep.

Andre Munckton: And if you, if there's not much rain up the Top End, well it will get back filled off the Beetaloo Creek itself, it will fill up there. But between the Beetaloo Creek and the stuff that comes down from OT, it goes right up to Limmen Bight and then it comes down into a place, October Creek and runs into OT where there is a spring and all of that. There seems to be a flood plain there of about 15 km I suppose but that overflows and then you'll see the clear water coming.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Okay.

Andre Munckton: And when you're at the station, well you would say, well there comes the OT water now and there's a great volume of it coming down. It would fill up the Lake Woods, there's no problem with that.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: So after the initial flush of that water, depending on the intensity of the wet season -

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: How long do the, because I presume there are some depressions, there are water holes.

Andre Munckton: A lot of water holes, a lot of creeks. A lot of them.

Professor

Barry Hart AM: Do they last though the dry or not?

Andre Munckton: Oh yes. There's creeks right up in Beetaloo and that. Every now and again you'll get a ten year drought and even the Lake Woods dries up and when I was leaving school there, we used to go with an old driller that used to have the old type drill, and we put in bores where the owner said, well put it in there but it just looked like a black soil plain and it was actually Lake Woods and I'm told, but I didn't see it, but I'm told where we put the bores in, they were checking this tank, the water tank and they said that was covered, the water was that high that it was covered and a bloke from water resources was also telling us there that he went out with his boat and that, just trying to get some depths and he said the waves was that fierce that he had to turn back and there was a lot of wind and that. It was probably about 30 mile wide it would be I suppose that lake or a bit more.



Professor
Barry Hart AM: That's Lake Woods?

Andre Munckton: That's Lake Woods, yeah.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: Yeah, yep, yep.

Andre Munckton: And it was pretty deep and that and he said it was too much for him with a little dinghy he said he had to turn back because of the waves and that, and it surprised me really that the tank where the owner said to put the bore and that was in there but it was flooded and the tank is quite high and it holds a fair bit of water and that water was right over the top of that they said. So, we wouldn't have been right, that bore wouldn't have been right on the edge of the lake then, that would have been a few km into the lake itself. The owner said, put it there, that will be about the edge of it, so they knew where they wanted it so we had to put it there.

But I only used to be just a, a few, like a week here and a week there giving a hand and that, so I just picked up a lot of stuff there and used to know, we were always taught how precious water was an that and in the bores and that.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: Yep. So could I just come back a little bit further towards the station, back into the area where Origin and I think a little bit further across east, maybe Santos exploration permit, it seems to me, and I think the panel would get this very much from your account of what it's like in a normal wet season is, we really should be cautioning or maybe even recommending banning any drilling, any well drilling in those drainage basins.

Andre Munckton: Yeah well that would be the best idea I reckon because it's a hell of a risk there you know.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: I thought that was what you were suggesting very much so.

Andre Munckton: Yeah, yeah, that's right.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: Okay, look the other thing, just to follow on from Justice Pepper's comment asking you about those failed wells and your request to us to do some sampling.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: That's not our role, we don't have enough time for it but I've got to say to you that one of the very high priority issues that exercising our mind at the moment is, the whole point about baseline, what's the situation in the



regions, in the potential gas regions, what the terrestrial point of view, from the ground water point of view, from the aquatic eco system point of view and a range of other things so we believe very strongly that, that has to be done. And while there is some information, you pointed to some from water resources, we don't think it's adequate.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: So I think you can rest assured that, that will have to be something that has to happen, good baseline studies.

Andre Munckton: Yeah.

Professor
Barry Hart AM: Thanks very much.

Andre Munckton: Okay, no worries mate, yep.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Was there anyone else who had a question? This will be Dr. Alan Anderson.

Dr Alan Anderson: Yeah, thanks Mr Munckton. I've just got a question about the leaky wells.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Dr Alan Anderson: What's your understanding that, what's leaking out of them? What are the contaminants?

Andre Munckton: Well it's the stuff that they pour down the well there and I was sent a list there by a bloke that was a geologist and he said, and I think it was in the Sunday Territorian and he said, have a look at that and it shows you the stuff that after he's done all of his trips in everywhere around Australia and he's been overseas and that and he said, this is what goes down the wells.

And I was shocked to see that uranium and all of that stuff is down there and I just couldn't believe it. I said, how can anyone do that? Put that down there? Because when the fracking miners, the thing that, when they frack, the inside of the casing, yes, they have done a good job over years and it will last until the casing rusts out which is probably 20 or 30 years or something like that. But, when they frack, the fraction comes up and hits the outside of that casing and goes right up into the water table and then it forces its way to the top. And that's the stuff I'm thinking of, comes back up to the top and it could be the stuff that's killing the wild life and everything else.

And there is a lot of Aboriginal sacred sites there in the form of trees. Now, if you've got some poisonous stuff down in there and that gets up into the water things where they have their tanks or whatever it is, the stuff that they mix up in there and that gets flooded out on these water planes and that, it gets flooded out, it just gets mixed up with everything, it gets mixed



up into the water creeks and everything and it just spreads. So that's what I'm claiming, if someone can do some testing on those wells and the other wells that have been put there.

The government just have a thing called the Water Resources and that and they was out, nearly all year in the wet and they done a terrific job those people. They used to be out testing water in towns and all that but somehow the funding was out and they were closed down and that seems a shame. But, if we had something like that again to make sure, and go around to these towns where there is drilling and fracking has been taking place, and testing that drinking water supply that people have got to drink, I think it would be a big help I think.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper: Yes. All right, we've got another question. This time from Dr. Vaughan Beck.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Yes, Mr Munckton. Just a couple of points of clarification, when were the wells drilled? Can you give me an approximate date on that please?

Andre Munckton: No, I'm not real sure of the date. It was probably about four or five years ago, something like that, six years ago.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Right.

Andre Munckton: It could have been Sweet Pea, a company called Sweet Pea or something like that, I'm not real sure of the company that drilled it or about the time. It would have been six years or something like that ago I think.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Right.

Andre Munckton: I wouldn't be real accurate, I couldn't swear that it was that but I'm sure it was about six years ago or something.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Yes, thank you very much for that. Just to help me to locate where the wells were drilled, you in the video, had a very nice map of the exploration permits that had been granted. Are you able to identify where those wells were drilled in respect to those exploration permits, numbers?

Andre Munckton: Somewhere around a place that we call Duck Hole.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Right.

Andre Munckton: It's another water course that runs into Beetaloo Creek and it comes from Munja Munja Station. There's a big black soil plane out there on Munji, just over the boundary of Beetaloo and that gathers a lot of water and that and it runs through the creek there, Duck Hole and Cow Lagoon that bit is called and then it runs into the Beetaloo Creek.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Right.



Andre Munckton: And then somewhere in that area there, it's hard to be exact, that's about where it is.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Yes. Thank you very much. And you mentioned that Sweet Pea may have been the company that drilled the actual wells.

Andre Munckton: They may have been, yes. They may have been, I wouldn't be 100% sure.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: I understand, that's fine. Do you know the company who were granted the exploration permit over that piece of land?

Andre Munckton: That's probably Falcon Petroleum, Falcon Oil.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Falcon Oil.

Andre Munckton: Before that, there was a company called Pacific Oil and Gas, because I put bores in around the place and I was getting brown coal out of it and I thought under that could be black coal and could be oil or something and I got in touch with CRA it was, I think it was and before long, they had formed a company called Pacific Oil and Gas and they was out there at that time, doing some drilling.

And I wouldn't let them, I tell them keep the camp away from the station, there are a lot of kids running around there, around the house and I put a road around for them and there was a well and they said that they couldn't go deep enough because the rig that they had at that time didn't go deep enough, but 100 yards away, they put a bore in, a water bore as well, which they would use and I got them to well the depth and everything on it. I shone a mirror, a rear vision mirror off my motor car down the well after when they left and I could see an odd bubble in the water so I don't know what was causing that because it was some leakage there, somewhere that shouldn't be really happening.

And I just screwed it back up and I told the manger about it. It was good drinking water because I drunk the water out of it, there was no worries about that. And it was good drinking water, it wasn't all that big either so I don't know what happened to that.

That was done by Pacific Oil and Gas that one and then the geologist, he come up, he said, I know we're not allowed up at the station but he said I've bought a beer up for you and I've bought some maps up for you and I want to show you that what they are telling you and what you don't know, what you know and what you don't know.

And I said, well, sit down and no worries, we'll have a talk. And he showed me this thing and he said, look, Pacific Island Gas is going to fold up in a few weeks time and everything else and he said, if you've got any shares in it, which I didn't have, there's going to be a lot of people burnt on it.



He showed me the stuff, how deep it was and he said, they haven't even got enough and when they've blocked it off now because it wasn't deep enough, they blocked it off. He said, my concern is that I can't work for a company like this because the amount of concrete they put in is not enough and he said, that's going to start moving. Then, if they hit the gas at that depth that they went down, well that's probably the cause of the bubbles that I saw in the well in the water, in the water well.

So that's another thing that really, the government wants to check out, that one too as well and I don't know whether the late John Dunecliffe I took him and his wife through when they was at Beetaloo and I showed them all the sacred sites and the other sites around there and the waters where I intended to put the bores down and stuff like that and he was taken it all in and I would stay there, we camped at OT for a couple of nights and had a good look around and got on very well and he wanted to know more about where I was going to put the bores and stuff and he says they are all good areas and decisions where you put them and that.

But, since that he done a hell of a lot more work on the place and it's a credit to him, the way they done it but I done my best to point out that there was a lot of graves there too as well. I said if you're going to do any clearing, listen, I'll put the compass on it and get the bearings and that and this is where their graves are here in these areas so if you can avoid clearing, you know, with the bull dozer anywhere here, if you're putting a new fence line in, I'd appreciate that if you can let me know. And he said, thanks for pointing those out and yeah, so.

Dr Vaughan Beck AM: Thank you very much for that additional information. That's been most helpful, thank you.

Andre Munckton: Yeah, okay.

Hon. Justice
Rachel Pepper: Thank you. Any other questions? Yes, Doctor, you're now going to hear from Dr. David Ritchie.

Andre Munckton: Yeah.

Dr David Ritchie: Mr Munckton, just to confirm that the area that you're talking about, Beetaloo, is that now Aboriginal land? Is that part of the land claim?

Andre Munckton: No, no, no.

Dr David Ritchie: I was just thinking that when you were saying, you were taking some people around looking at sacred sites, I just missed the name of the person that you were talking to.

Andre Munckton: No, the sacred sites was the bloke from the Sacred Site Society. I took him through years ago, years before it.



Dr David Ritchie: Was that John Dymock?

Andre Munckton: Wasn't no, it wasn't John Dymock.

Dr David Ritchie: Okay.

Andre Munckton: And your name, you used to work for, who do you work for?

Dr David Ritchie: I used to work for Sacred Sites, that's why you know my name too.

Andre Munckton: Yeah well there was a bloke from the sacred sites that's out there now.

Dr David Ritchie: John Avery.

Andre Munckton: We took her out there and me and the late Clancy Vostock now again and George, the late George Vostock was there as well and what we done, we put the compass on the thing and wrote the bearings down of each site. And there was other sites a bit further in and they had a different type of burial and some was buried in the trees.

Dr David Ritchie: Yeah.

Andre Munckton: They put them up on top of the trees so that's why is stopped the air strip from getting extended, they wanted to extend the airstrip and I put a stop to that straight away, the transport works wanted to put it in and they, the bloke from the Sacred Sites Society done that so all those compass bearings and that's what I showed the late John Dunacliffe when he bought the place.

Dr David Ritchie: Oh yeah.

Andre Munckton: I showed him where all these places were and told him to avoid these places. So that's about it.

Dr David Ritchie: Thank you, thank you.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper: Thank you. Mr Munckton, I think that's the end of the questions from the panel. Can I just say on behalf of the panel and the inquiry, thank you very much for your video submission and for taking the time to speak to us today on the telephone and to tell us about these wells. We are going to do a little bit more digging and find out hopefully what the story is with these wells, you've given us some really important information and certainly I think we're very interested in following it up.

Andre Munckton: Yep.

Hon. Justice



Rachel Pepper: So thank you for sharing that with us and thank you for taking the time as I said, to record the video and submit it to the inquiry, we are very grateful and have a good afternoon.

Andre Munckton: Okay, thanks a lot, thank you.