



## ***Alice Springs – Arid Lands Environment Centre (ALEC)***

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***4 August 2017***

***Alice Springs Convention Centre, Alice Springs***

***Speakers: Jimmy Cocking, Alexander Read***

Jimmy Cocking: Jimmy Cocking, Arid Lands Environment Centre.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Thank you.

Alexander Read: Alex Read, Arid Lands Environment Centre.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Thank you, yes. Yes.

Alexander Read: I would like to apologise to the inquiring for having made inaccurate statements yesterday regarding my presentation considering the Beetaloo basin. I was making these statements on advice from-

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Which statements? You need to specify which statements you're apologising about.

Jimmy Cocking: I will, I will.

I was making these statements on advice from a phone conversation from a manager within the Department of Environment Resources. These were two statements. One detailed investment from the department into researching gas resources versus researching water resources, and this is incorrect. It is not the government who is investing money into determining the gas resource, it is industry who is doing this.

The second statement was regarding the department deferring consequences into the future about a lack of research into water resources. This is also incorrect. The department is not deferring consequences into the future. No decisions regarding licence applications have been made today.

The correct formulation of the statement is travel time analysis within the basin is necessary to prevent consequences of present day actions being deferred into the future.



The evidence on this is that they are not water section licences issued to shell gas operators yet. There are drilling permits only. They are permitted to drill for exploration purposes but not to extract water. Once the resources proved, then they must apply for a licence to extract and that has not happened yet.

There is need for dating in the water source and travel time analysis so that future consequences can be identified before decisions are made. If this is not done, there is a risk that future consequences could take place if decisions are made without due consideration.

These said statements about the Beetaloo modeling are not specifically made on the Beetaloo but relate to research done into the Daly, Rupert and Stuart plateaus.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

You attributed those statements yesterday to a particular manager. Do you mind repeating that person's name please?

Jimmy Cocking:

That was Dale Cobban.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Is it the case that Dale made those statements or did not make those statements?

Jimmy Cocking:

I misinterpreted the statements that she's made to me.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Have you apologised to her?

Jimmy Cocking:

I have, in a personal communication.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

'Cause you understand of course that by attributing incorrect information to a manager, a Northern Territory Government could have serious implications to the career of that person, don't you?

Jimmy Cocking:

I do understand that. And I take full responsibility for the misaccurate representation of those statements.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

And have you apologised to the department as well?

Jimmy Cocking:

I have not yet spoken to the department.

Hon. Justice

Rachel Pepper:

Why not?

Jimmy Cocking:

I'm still trying to navigate the processes of this situation and I will do all that I can to rectify this mistake. And I will do my best to speak to the department after this.



Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: This is the very type of misinformation that does various groups serious discredit.

Jimmy Cocking: We understand that and that's why we acted on it as soon as we're made aware of it. I also have to take some responsibility in the late night reading of it that I didn't pick up on it. So we apologise on behalf of the Arid Lands Environment Centre. We hope ... We understand the importance of evidence in these sorts of situations in an inquiry like this and we apologise wholeheartedly both to Dale and also the department and the inquiry for the impact that this has had.

Everything else, we will be able to back up with references in our submission. That was two statements, which were misinterpreted from phone conversation and we will do our absolute best to rectify it.

Thank you for the opportunity to be able to do this as well.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Did you have any authority to attribute what you said to Dale? And leaving aside the erroneous nature of the statements, did you ever have authority to attribute what you said to Dale?

Alexander Read: I asked for Dale's permission to be quoted as a personal reference and she agreed to that.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Alright, thank you.

Alexander Read: In the presentation.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: That will be checked, thank you.

Alright, any questions or comments?

Thank you very much for coming today.

Alexander Read: Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to rectify this.

Hon. Justice  
Rachel Pepper: Thank you for coming. And absolutely was the right thing to do.

Thank you.