

To whom it may concern.

This is my submission for the Barnaby Joyce's Senate Enquiry into Coal Seam Gas.

We live in the tenement area PL228, and as recognized in the Coordinator Generals report, are, along with many others, being impacted by existing gas field development operations.

<http://www.dlqp.qld.gov.au/resources/project/curtis-Ing/queensland-curtis-Ing-project-cg-report.pdf>

7.9.1 Managing rural residential land

Given the fact there is only a small amount of infrastructure in place at the moment, and people are already being impacted by it, we feel it is totally inappropriate to allow the development of gas fields in residential areas to go ahead.

It is our understanding that QGC will not come onto blocks under 15 hectares without the landowner's permission, and yet if my neighbor consents to having gas infrastructure on their property it is the surrounding landowners who are also impacted. We believe this will cause disputes between landowners.

There have been several landowners come forward with claims of being impacted.

Attached is documents from landowners describing their impacts.

Now while we cannot claim all these impacts are definitely from CSG, we do have serious concerns that they have developed since the arrival of CSG into our area, and they are consistent with impacts suffered by those people who live in and around the gas fields in the United States.

So far there have been no health studies done in QLD into the impacts of CSG.

If you require further information, please don't hesitate to contact me.

Debbi Orr

Attachment A.

The arrival of CSG to my area, has been at great personal cost to my family.

Since the very first gas well was installed within 1km of our home, my son has experienced severe nose bleeds, severe headaches, asthma.

Every time there is drilling in our particular area, we smell a dirty, sulphury, rotten egg smell, the nosebleeds are more severe and more frequent, the headaches increase, not just for my son but several family members.

The whole family becomes sleep deprived because the noise from the drill rig is just unbearable and all the trucks on the roads all hours of the day and night.

Since first researching CSG and having to continually do submissions, and keep informed and up to date on CSG information, I have not had the time to put into my family.

Since deciding to stand up against the CSG Company QGC, my children have suffered.

We had a Tara school teacher laugh at and ridicule residents in the gas field area for speaking out about concerns they had, whilst teaching my daughters class. (The teacher, who is married to a QGC land consultant, was fully aware that my daughters father was actively involved in fighting CSG in our area.)

This caused my daughter great distress as the teacher, having not only referred to residents as feral blockies, ridiculed a letter that was written to the local newspaper referring to concerns over CSG. (As I myself had written a letter to that particular newspaper, my daughter felt it was aimed at me in particular. When the teacher started referring to the residents as "feral blockies" my daughter felt it totally necessary to use the voice recorder on her mobile phone to record the rest of the conversation.

The teacher told the class that incidents that my own daughter had been experiencing just didn't happen, and that we didn't know what we were talking about.

Once I had complained to the school, and removed my other children from that particular teachers classes, the teacher unfortunately decided to target my eldest daughter instead. This caused us to remove all of our children from Tara School and re enroll them at Chinchilla State High School, (causing great financial strain to our family.) My boys have really struggled with the change of schools, going from straight A students to now averaging a C.

The increased time I have had to spend researching CSG and keeping up to date with submissions etc, has taken and continues to take up time I should be spending with my children and helping them with their studies.

Our dam has cracked and started to drain, and since the dumping of CSG product water on our roads, we believe became contaminated, as when we were putting some posts into the dam to measure the

depth of our dam and assess how much water it was losing, my husband had his hand in the water which within days had swollen up and was obviously infected.

He was treated at Toowoomba hospital outpatients, who could not determine a cause of infection, but did note if he had not sought medical advice when he did, he could have lost his finger. They prescribed antibiotics, which took 2 courses before it started to heal.

Other residents of the gas fields, who have decided to fight the CSG expansion into our area, (myself included) have also experienced abuse and ridicule from business owners and town people who are benefitting from the CSG industry.

At recent protests in the Tara Estates, we have had QGC personnel cause distress to my 3 year old daughter after trying to distribute letters to protestors, QGC's letter reader decided to place the letter inside my silver Barina through an open window, where my daughter was playing. I must add that my vehicle was the ONLY vehicle he left the letter inside of despite the fact all other vehicles had the windows open as well.

Most recently we have had QGC security following our little silver Barina (appropriately named 'Toybox' as its where our 3 year old spends her time playing with her toys while we are at protests) to the bus stop of a morning.

We have spent over two years asking questions of Our Government and the Gas Companies and NOT getting any answers!

Newspaper article

Gas company invades blocks

Couple's concerns force QGC to review procedures

BY JOHN FARMER

A Tara couple who lived next door to a drill rig for a week believe they have seen the future for a whole district if coal seam gas companies get their way.

Shaun Connor and his partner Shelley Seaton endured 24-hour-a-day lights, noise and dust from a rig drilling for gas 200 metres from their front door on Bell Bird Road, 30km north of Tara.

Shaun revealed the couple's privacy had been invaded as they contended with the constant presence of the rig's crew and sleepless nights.

"They were going all night," he said.

"The lights came straight

into our bedroom window."

Queensland Gas Company is undertaking an extensive exploration program across areas of the Tara and Chinchilla districts heavily populated by rural-residential properties.

A QGC spokesman said the company faced unique circumstances in these areas due to the blocks being significantly smaller than the majority of blocks on which it operates.

"As a direct result of the issues in this unusual situation, QGC is reviewing its procedures in small-block development areas including



Tara district homeowner Shelley Seaton points to where the drill rig towered about the tree line and shone lights straight into her bedroom window.

this area," he said.

The review by QGC will consider if existing buffer zones between its activities and residences in "small-block" areas are adequate.

"QGC acknowledges that its operations will, from time to time, create temporary disturbances including noise, light and dust. Every step is taken to reduce temporary disturbances wherever possible," the spokesman said.

Senior director technical operations Ian Wilson from the Department of Environment and Resource Management said the matter could have been investigated if the couple had informed the department while the rig was operating.

He said the environmental authority that related to works conducted by QGC did not have a prescribed separation distance between the

activity and the house.

"However, it states that work hours will be between 7am and 6pm when working near sensitive areas which include residential housing, and that they must meet certain noise limits," Mr Wilson said.

Meanwhile, a series of wells sunk along Bell Bird Road and another at the rear of Shaun's property is making the concrete by trade

A PHONE CALL AWAY

Landowners affected by coal seam gas exploration or drilling can contact:

Department of Mines and Energy deputy mining registers located in Roma on 4624 1512 or 4624 1536

or

Department of Environment and Resource Management on 1300 130 372

feeling slightly boxed in.

"I'm dirty," he said.

"I've been out here 15 years; I never thought I'd have gas wells all around me."

QGC offered the couple accommodation in Tara for the week but Shaun said it was a short term fix for a problem that could plague the district for years.

"Their solution was to put us up at the pub for a week.

"The bigger picture is I don't want to be live in a gas field.

"They're going to absolutely pepper the place them (gas wells)."

"The bigger picture is I don't want to live in a gas field."

Shaun Connor



Attachment C -2 pages

Time line of Events/ Health Effects from

TIMELINE OF EVENTS / HEALTH EFFECTS.

MARCH - APRIL - MAY 2008

Initial drilling of gaswell directly across road from house @ Tara.

Headaches, nausea, blackouts, vomiting, bowel disturbances, sleep deprivation, constant noise, vibrations rattling glass in brackets & cracking louvers, joey rook panicked and hit glass doors - causing severe damage to door and injuring joey, dust, truck near misses on road, STRESS. No offer of relocation or alternative accomodation ~~during~~^{for} duration of drilling.

OCTOBER 2008 - JAN 2009

Constant lack of energy, headaches, bowel disturbances (black stool with bloodstains), weak lungs with wheezy cough.

full check-up @ Tara Medical Centre + full blood test for - Jan 2009.

24 - 06 - 2009.

Start riding pushbikes to bus-stop on roads illegally watered down with C.S.G water. Severe headaches, vomiting and blackouts after 1 week, noticed bloodstains when blowing nose After 1 1/2 weeks both started getting small nosebleeds.

started coughing up blood stained mucous.

10th - 07 - 2009

woke up in pool of blood on pillow from nose and ears. Continued on and off for almost 2 weeks, gradually stopping. Medical advice sought via phonecalls. Stopped riding to bus stop 16-07-09

1st September - 2009

develops rash on stomach legs and face. Taken to Tana Medical Centre for check. ~~stutter~~ Rash gradually disappeared after 2 weeks.

Developed stutter, memory loss, motor co-ordination difficulty, vision blurred. Most symptoms easing.

Attachment D -2 pages

Dear Sirs,

I am writing to voice a concern about the slipshod manner in which the Coal Seam Gas extraction is performed and its consequences.

I have spoken to two men that had worked on the Moomba Gas and Oil field and pipeline. At Moomba all the wells were pre-collared with concrete to a depth between sixty and seventy meters if not more, using stainless steel fittings that were welded to the pipeline with shutoff valves that shut down automatically when there is a pressure differential in the pipes. All the welding of the pipes was X Rayed. Both men are appalled at the short cuts that are taken in our area.

I have watched a D.V.D. showing local Gas Well Heads that are leaking at a rate of over 10,000 parts per million. Of forty that were tested thirty nine were leaking and their casings were all corroded. There was no visible evidence that the wells were pre collared.

I have observed with my own eyes the placing of two pipes on both sides of Mary and Josephs roads. The welding of these pipes were not X Rayed as the Moomba to Sydney pipeline was. A family living 100 meters from these pipes has had such severe skin problems that they sold up and moved north.

Many other people, myself included, are experiencing health problems which started over a year ago and these problems are escalating. They vary from person to person, consisting of eye irritations, skin irritations, constant headaches and acute diarrhea. I am sure that there are many others in the same situation that I have not been told about.

I have also observed an oil film on my dam on very windy days. Also my goldfish in the fishpond died and subsequent replacements also died. I then placed mosquito fish in the pond and three weeks later they also died. Each time I put in new fish I replaced all the water as a precaution, yet they still died.

I moved to the Tara area for the lifestyle and previous improved health. This is now not the case. A young couple that were living 100meters from the pipeline had so many problems with skin rashes, that they left the area to go north when they found out the irritants were in their rainwater. Unfortunately they do not wish to be named because of the repercussions.

It is obvious to me that the government and companies are in too much of a hurry to get the coal seam gas extraction up and running to implement basic safety procedures. Not only the residents, also the workers will be adversely affected over time.

The leaking gas well heads are a disaster waiting to happen with regards to bushfires and sabotage. We are in a green zone which means we are completely surrounded by trees and dense bush. All it takes is one spark to ignite these leaking wells and the percussion of the blast would kill everything within a couples of kilometers radius of the well. Without shut off valves this would travel across the entire coal seam gas field. Also it would only take one person lighting a cigarette in the wrong location to do the same amount of damage.

For an extra \$20,000.00 per million dollar producing well, which would be recouped by lost gas, we, the residents would be so much safer. I do not know how much X raying the pipeline would cost but think of the lives that would be saved that would be lost should an explosion occur.

The government of the day saw to it that the Moomba Gas and Oil Field was constructed safely and totally secure. WHY? Is the Rudd and Bligh government in so much of a hurry with the local gas field that they deny many jobs that are created by doing the job properly. We cannot rely on British Gas to sink gas wells unsupervised, they historically take as many shortcuts as they can.

We do not want to have the same situation as America, portrayed in their D.V.D. "Split Estates".

We are Australians and uphold our Australian way of life. We are exercising our freedom of speech and our will of rights to have our say before it's too late, if it isn't already.

Attachment E - 6 pages Case Study

CASE STUDY

Use of Waste water for dust suppression-Golden Downs Estate Tara Qld

At the time this activity was occurring, the Environmental Authority (Petroleum Activity) Permit number PEN10020207 Section 312D Environmental Protection Act 1994 stated that waste water of no more than 200mg/L of total dissolved salts was to be used for Dust Suppression.

This level was suspected to have been exceeded in the water used in the Golden Downs Estate. Surface ponding of waste water occurred and also released into surface water- Jack Creek.

This continuous use of waste water for dust suppression lasted several weeks, leading to the total saturation of the road base, causing deep rutting and at times rendering the road unusable to non 4WD vehicles and trucks.

Jack Creek crossing on Fortune Drive became a 2 meter deep 5 meter wide sloppy mud hole that was unpassable and required reconstruction. This was partly caused by the continuous heavy dumping of waste water and partly due to the continuous truck traffic associated with QGC CSG well construction.

Topsoil staining was clearly visible on the road and a crusty residue was recorded as pooled waste water evaporated.

Water and soil samples were taken for testing from various placements throughout the affected area , eg puddles left by water tankers. Results of samples analysed indicated that levels of total dissolved salts exceeded allowable levels for waste water use.

Although legal action was sought the true outcome of this situation has not been confirmed.

Disturbing health concerns were also brought to light when a 29 year old mother and her 11 year old son, who frequently rode pushbikes to and from the school bus stop (approximately 7.5km each way) started to experience increasing headaches, nausea, dizziness, rashes, diarrhoea and eventually nosebleeds whilst traversing the roads wet down with waste water.

After 3 weeks of ill health, mother and son gave up pushbike riding and travelled daily to the bus stop by car instead. Symptoms gradually decreased over the following 2 weeks. Consultation with a local doctor revealed that many similar symptoms had been presenting in the local area.

To date there has been no explanation for this dramatic and disturbing experience.

RECORDED ACTIVITY- 24/06/2009 through to 10/08/2009

DATES OF SAMPLES TAKEN- 24/06/2009 , 11/07/2009 , 15/07/2009 , 10/08/2009

ROADS KNOWN TO HAVE BEEN AFFECTED- Fortune Drive, Lucky Road, Daybreak Road, Bellbird Road

CASE STUDY-

Unstable Well Site-Corner of Daybreak and Bellbird Roads, Golden Downs Estate Tara Qld.

During the initial drilling of QGC CSG exploration well Codie no 16,extreme disturbance of the substrate occurred, causing several deep holes ranging in size from 30cm in diameter up to 1.5mtrs in diameter to appear in the surrounding compacted area. The largest of which was able to have a basketball sized rock dropped down it's shaft without a resulting thud being heard.

This experiment was carried out by a 10year old boy who had defied orders to stay away from the site. No fencing or signage was in place at the time and no barrier of any kind was covering the open steel shaft protruding from the ground.

Weeks after concerned phone calls were made to QGC , a heavy steel plate was installed over the pipe and a loose 3 strand fence was stung. However several dangerous holes still remained, causing significant threat to children and wildlife. During rain the holes collapsed in on themselves thus increasing in size with more holes appearing.

Some time after the first attempt to make the site safer, and coinciding with the arrival of a second drilling rig, the area surrounding the well was repacked with gravel, and after yet more phone calls and another waiting period of several weeks a properly strung 4 stand fence was erected around the perimeter of the site.

A well head was installed and finally a mesh panel barricade was put in place (albeit roughly) around the well.

The neglectful construction of this gas well was easily observed from neighbouring properties and the bordering roads, causing serious concerns for the safety of local children and wildlife. The many witnesses to this event were deeply shocked by the hazard they saw.

If the typically curious 10 year old child had slipped or fallen into one of these holes the outcome of this report could have been very different.

The basic safety of local residents was grossly overlooked in this less than isolated incident.

CASE STUDY

Contamination of 9 Mile Creek system, Vanrenans Road Chinchilla Qld.

Observations of possible contamination in 9 Mile Creek were first made in mid August of 2009 by concerned locals. Initial investigations beginning on the 27th of August 2009 revealed substantial markers for concern. These are as follows;

- Deceased animals were found at 2 of the 3 causeways where 9 Mile Creek crosses Vanrenans Road. The first was a week old duckling laying approximately 30cm from the waters edge. There were no identifiable injuries or pronounced cause of death. The second was a cat that had been deceased for several days laying approximately 80cm from the water edge. There was no obvious cause of death.
- Water colour varied dramatically in various sections of 9 Mile Creek, from 'normal' clear tannin stained low volume pools, to abnormally high volume milky fluro yellow and orange coloured lengths of creek.
- Fast transitioning topical scum on water that formed as a thick oily residue, broke into patchwork sections, flocculated then dispersed. All in a time period of less than 5 days. No rain, heavy winds or altered temperatures were experienced during this period.
- Inconsistencies in water levels from pool to pool, even when side by side. Normal low levels were observed on the northern side of second causeway, whilst on the southern side of causeway the level was excessively high then 3 days later levels were so low pool was nearly empty. Pool returned to excessively high levels without rain and within 1 week. The northern pool was at the same level consistently.
- Severe headaches were experienced for 48 hours after prolonged exploration of suspected contaminated pools in 9 Mile Creek.

On the 3rd September 2009 EPA officers attended the sites of concern to conduct official water sampling for analysis. Results were to be forwarded through but to date have not been received.

LETTER OF CONCERN: Regarding recent bird deaths in Western Downs.

To whom it may concern,

Please be advised that the following is an account of what could potentially be a prelude to serious environmental disaster. Observations and information has been gathered from several local sources including landowners, wildlife enthusiasts, licensed wildlife carers and bird specialists.

During December 2009 and January 2010 a sudden increase in sick, dying and dead birds caused alarm with locals in the Golden Downs Estate near Tara in the Western Downs region of QLD. Over 90% were one species of small native dove known as the Peaceful Dove (*Geopelia placida*).

Over a period of approximately 2 months a total of 22 Peaceful doves were found. This is nearly half the number previously cared for and released by Tara Wildlife Support Association - a local wildlife group – over a 10 year period.

Thorough checks could not find any obvious cause of illness, and the longest any of the birds survived for was only a few short days. All died despite extensive veterinary treatments and specialist care.

Autopsy's carried out by Echidna Ridge Sanctuary could not determine any obvious cause of death, although poisoning was suspected. 2 birds showed signs of throat disease and 3 of the 5 birds dissected showed signs of liver distress. All were in poor condition when found, and died quickly.

Consultation with local landowners has confirmed a significant drop in dove numbers, and several other small bird species such as wrens, finches and lorikeets. As Peaceful Doves are flock or group birds it is generally very easy to access numbers, and reports indicate an estimated drop in localized group numbers from 100-200 birds, down to as low as 3 or 4.

The concern is that it may be too late already to stop the localized extinction of what was once an incredibly abundant bird species. However it may also be the start of something larger and potentially catastrophic.

Immediate investigation and extensive tests must be undertaken to determine the cause of this sudden decline. At present the land known to be affected covers an area of approximately 3500 ha of rich diverse bushland, and as local enquiries continue this problem is starting to look much larger than expected.

I urge you to please take this matter seriously as this really is a very alarming situation that needs immediate action.

Please note;

For privacy protection a list of witnesses and contacts is not included but available upon request.

Information compiled

Tara Queensland 4421