

Contact: Tony Keyes

17 March 2016

Ms Toni Matulick
Secretary
Senate Select Committee on Unconventional Gas Mining
SG.64
Parliament House
PO Box 6100
CANBERRA ACT 2600

By email only: gasmining.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Ms Matulick

Dr Penny Hutchinson

I act on behalf of Dr Penny Hutchinson and write in response to your letter to her of 9 March 2016 in relation to the Committee's hearing at Dalby on 17 February 2016. By way of response, my client makes the following remarks.

In relation to the comments made by the witness Dr McCarron on page 35 of the transcript, my client agrees that a Gasfields Community Support Group meeting took place on 24 March 2013. At that meeting Dr Gerard Neville presented the findings of a Queensland Health investigation into the alleged health effects of exposure to CSG activities. The findings were that only a small proportion of the population from the region where CSG mining was occurring had symptoms. The symptoms described are common symptoms in the general community and there was no clear association between the symptoms and CSG activities.

My client acknowledges that she had a conversation with Dr McCarron after the meeting. However, she rejects any suggestion that she was prepared to disregard any professional or ethical obligation for the sake of job security. She has only ever sought to perform her public responsibilities in the public interest. I submit that, in light of the Committee's terms of reference, no finding can be made against my client. Even if the terms of reference

included such matters, Dr McCarron's evidence does not properly support any finding: it consists of only a fleeting reference to my client, and would not reasonably support any finding against her.

Please contact me should you wish to discuss this matter further.

Yours sincerely,

A D Keyes
Senior Deputy Crown Solicitor
for **Crown Solicitor**