

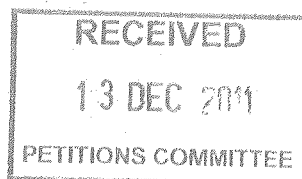


The Hon Tony Burke MP

Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

C11/9647

The Hon John Murphy MP
Chair
Standing Committee on Petitions
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600



12 DEC 2011

Dear Mr Murphy

I refer to your letter of 15 September 2011 to the Minister for Resources and Energy, the Hon Martin Ferguson AM MP, advising of a petition opposing the Casino-Ipswich Pipeline presented by the Member for Page, Ms Janelle Saffin MP. Your letter has been referred to me as Minister for Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities.

On 29 November 2007, the Casino-Ipswich Pipeline (EPBC 2007/3877) was referred under the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (the EPBC Act) by Metgasco Limited and on 20 December 2007, the proposal was determined to be a "controlled action". As such, the proposal requires assessment and a decision on approval under the EPBC Act if it is to proceed. On 14 May 2008, finalised guidelines for the preparation of the assessment were issued. For the process to continue Metgasco must finalise assessment documentation, consistent with those guidelines and the company would subsequently be required to publish a draft of that documentation for public comment. Metgasco has not yet finalised that documentation. All relevant milestones and documents relating to the proposal will be published on the website of the Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities at:

www.environment.gov.au/cgibin/epbc/epbc_ap.pl?name=current_referral_detail&proposal_id=3877.

The project requires assessment under the EPBC Act because of its likely impacts on listed threatened species and communities protected under the EPBC Act. The petition refers to impacts on the Gondwana Rainforests World Heritage area. In making the decision that the project is a controlled action, my delegate considered the potential impacts of the proposal on National and World Heritage values. However, it was determined that those impacts were not likely to be significant, primarily because the proposed pipeline route follows existing roads. The pipeline would be buried, except for service points, and installed using conventional trench and backfill techniques

Thank you for bringing the petition to my attention. I note that Ms Saffin has also raised this matter with me directly, in writing and in person.

Yours sincerely

Tony Burke