

**Senate Standing Committee on Economics**

**ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS ON NOTICE**

Resources, Energy and Tourism Portfolio

Budget Senate Estimates

31 May 2011

**Question:** BR23  
**Topic:** Re-injection of Water  
**Proof Hansard Page:** 44

**Senator Joyce asked:**

**Dr Pigram:** We were asked to comment on all of those issues. The report, if you read through it, is actually very conservative in the recommendations of requirements to be placed on industry. The primary recommendation in relation to the management of water was that, unless it could be otherwise demonstrated that there were no major impacts, it had to be reinjected. It had to be put back underground so that these effects could be minimised, if not removed altogether.

**Senator JOYCE:** Are they reinjecting water at the moment?

**Dr Pigram:** I am not aware that they are reinjecting water at the moment.

**Senator JOYCE:** So we are talking about something that nobody does.

**Dr Pigram:** Reinjection of water is done in other locations. It is not being done in that region at the moment.

**Senator JOYCE:** Whereabouts, Dr Pigram?

**Dr Pigram:** Let me take that on notice and I will provide you with some information. I am not aware of it happening in the area that you are talking about, in the Surat and Bowen basins.

**Senator JOYCE:** Are you aware of it happening in Australia?

**Dr Pigram:** Elsewhere in Australia? I will take that on notice.

**Answer:**

In Canada and the United States where coal seam gas production has been operating for a number of decades, associated water is generally reinjected into subsurface aquifers.

Currently, Australia Pacific LNG, Origin Energy and Santos are undertaking trials to test the reinjection of water produced through coal seam gas production in the Surat and Bowen Basins of Queensland.

More broadly, the reinjection of recycled water into aquifers through managed aquifer recharge is emerging as an important water management technique in Australia and internationally. It is in use for water supplies at a number of sites in Australia including around Adelaide, in the Angus-Bremer region (South Australia), and the Jandakot Aquifer Storage and Recovery scheme (Western Australia). Its feasibility is also being investigated as an option for securing Broken Hill's water supply.