

Dear TNR Member,

In place of the bi monthly newsletter, we have formed up this update to keep you abreast of some of our activities over the last little while.

## **2      Update**

You haven't heard too much from us directly over the last 6 months or so. That is because we have been extremely active behind the scenes.

We have had a number of articles (mainly rebuttals to the propaganda for both onshore and offshore) published in various forms of media. Particularly the regional press as this is where specific projects and local activists seem to abound, and below is a short summary of some of our activities for the last 6 months or so.

On our agenda is an upgrade to our website (coming soon!) which will include a link to all of our recent debates and successes, and occasional failures! (one is mentioned below).

In the past, you have received occasional Newsletters. This will soon be replaced by a more regular link to our media sites which will contain all of the activity updates.

Thanks for your ongoing support. Feel free to spread the word to your friends. We are always seeking new Members!

Cheers and regards

Ben Holland  
Treasurer  
The Norwood Resource

## **A      Onshore**

### **i)      South Australia**

The SA Natural Resources Committee handed down its findings from its 2 year inquiry into unconventional gas (fracking) in the South East (SE) of South Australia in late November. TNR had made a submission, and appeared before the Committee to talk through its submission. We also provided further evidence and reports of misinformation being supplied to the Committee by some of the eNGOs, as well as rebutting the myths and false assertions of the impact of fracking on the environment.

The Committee released its final report (30 Nov 16) and found that against it's first Term of Reference (**ToR**), which was the instigator for the Inquiry in the first place, which was the Committee charged to "...inquire into the potential risks and impacts in the use of hydraulic fracture stimulation (fracking) to produce gas in the SE of SA, and in particular:"

1      ToR 1 'The risks of groundwater contamination'

In regard to this specific ToR, the recommendation of the Committee is "**the specific process of ...fracking in deep shale, properly managed and regulated, is unlikely to pose significant risks to groundwater ...**"

So, this finding validated what a lot of other inquiries here in Australia and from around the world had found, that unconventional gas (fracking) if properly managed, engineered and regulated does not pose any significant risks to groundwater.

The catch cry of many of the activists who are anti unconventional gas (fracking), has been based on the potential contamination of groundwater from the fracking operation.

In this particular case in SA however, the Natural Resources Committee made a **headline 'finding'** (which was not listed in their ToR and therefore went outside their ToR scope) and focussed on the imprecise term of 'social licence' stating **'that social licence to explore / develop unconventional gas does not yet exist in the South East of South Australia'**

The activists of course picked up on the headline finding (no social licence at this current time) to declare a 'victory' and this was unfortunately followed by the State opposition (Liberals) which announced a 10 year moratorium on unconventional gas in the SE if they get elected in 2018. Unfortunately, as we have seen elsewhere politics trumps facts in this case.

We have been published in the regional press since, pointing out the critical finding that unconventional gas (fracking) is unlikely to impact groundwater and that further activism on this basis is a pure scare campaign, as well as pointing out the decision by the liberal opposition imposes a 10 year moratorium on the basis of politics and not on the facts (which is their declared basis for making environmental decision contained within their own Vision Statement 2036).

So the SA Inquiry represents both a 'win' (the key finding being 'fracking is unlikely to impact groundwater') being trumped by a loss (the headline finding being 'no social licence for unconventional gas in the SE at this current time') as well as a possible 10 year moratorium on unconventional gas in the SE if the Liberals win the next state election (March 2018).

**Very frustrating!**

## ii) **Northern Territory (NT)**

As you may know, Labor won the last election in August, and part of their platform was to place a moratorium on unconventional gas (fracking) pending an Inquiry.

Labor won, and so an Inquiry has commenced. This Inquiry is under the leadership (Chair) of Justice Rachel Pepper, and is now accepting submissions.

TNR has been recently active rebutting the usual myths and falsehood posted on social media, and we have been published in the NT News rebutting even more baseless assertions.

The NT onshore has some very good prospects with Origin recently announcing their recent well (fracked) posted good flow rates and with the mapping (preliminary at this stage) there could be many Tcf in play and recoverable. So there is a great opportunity for the NT to benefit as a society from these and perhaps more gas reserves.

We will continue to rebut the usual scare campaigns and also make a submission to the Inquiry.

## iii) **NSW**

We have over the last couple of years been somewhat active in NSW, mainly through social media forums (including twitter) from time to time.

However, we are becoming more active of late mainly because we are freeing up some resources and the recent advancement in the potential CSG development at Narrabri.

This area (Narrabri and the Pilliga Forest) is the last exploration area left in NSW following the exploration permit buy back by the NSW Govt over the last few years and the withdrawal of Metgasco and AGL both of which were actively exploring.

Over the last few years TNR have engaged in social media 'discussions' with numerous 'associations', most generally are linked or affiliated to Lock The Gate group, which manifested in the SE of SA as well. It is the usual scare and misinformation campaigns from the activists, designed to put doubt in people's minds etc

If you are a twitter person – please feel free to participate there are numerous unsubstantiated assertions, false evidence, mis quotes, information taken and used out of context etc. Try #csg to start off with – best to get armed beforehand with a nice red - but don't do it prior to retiring for the evening, as it may upset the normal sleep patterns!

Recently, Santos submitted its Application Development Plan and EIS for CSG development at Narrabri and Pilliga Forest area to the NSW Govt for appraisal etc. This EIS is now out for public comment and review. By the way, the Pilliga Forest is mainly a sandy type soil with scrub, so it's not an actual 'forest' as the activists portray it.

As you can imagine the anti fossil fuelers are going off their tree and making all manner of claims (including conspiracy theories as well).

We are participating in this debate trying to get balance into the conversation and calling out 'porkies' which are in abundance.

Unlike the SE of SA, there is quite a bit of vocal local support for the project (Yes2Gas and the local Newspaper, the Courier).

We see this as critical (local support) particularly given the outcome of the Natural Resources Committee in SA (see above). We are doing what we can to support the local community to get their voice heard and to also rebut the misinformation etc. Some of our missives have been published in the local media.

You can see the Development Application / EIS from Santos

at [http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view\\_job&job\\_id=6456](http://majorprojects.planning.nsw.gov.au/index.pl?action=view_job&job_id=6456)

## **b. Offshore**

### **i) BP and the Great Australian Bight (GAB)**

Prior to BP making its announcement that it was withdrawing from the project to drill 4 wells in the GAB, TNR was very active in rebutting the myriad of misinformation, baseless assertions and cherry picked 'facts' used by the anti fossil fuel lobby. The anti lobby groups combined together to create the Great Australian Basin Alliance (GAB Alliance) which consisted of Wilderness SA, Sea Shepherd, Environmental Defenders Office SA and others. They seem to have plenty of resources with the Sea Shepherd Vessel (MV Steve Irwin) visiting a number of locations to garner support to stop the drilling of the wells from proceeding. Funny though they also ran a campaign to seek donations for 'petrol money' for the vessel! We did take that opportunity to point out the hypocrisy of their campaign against fossil fuels and holding their hand out for petrol money!

We participated in a public session held by the Federal Dept of Industry, Innovation and Science which was associated with it's review of the 'Consultation and Transparency Requirements for Offshore Petroleum Activities in Commonwealth Waters'. The Dept. held meetings in Adelaide (as well as other centres).

This was an interesting forum as members of the GAB Alliance sat on a table next to ourselves (and DSD from the SA Govt). A 'claim or an assertion' would be made and it would be immediately rebutted! The Dept's representatives did modify and limit the throwing of 'hand grenades' though.

We also formally responded to their call for submissions.

Over the last 6 months or so we have been quite active in the social media space rebutting the misinformation coming from the eNGOs regarding exploration in the GAB (and elsewhere).

We also published a flyer entitled 'Can You Believe the Great Australian Bight (GAB) Alliance' – 'Would you Trust a Pirate?' The flyer listed out some of the claims and assertions which were regular catch cries of the GAB Alliance and then had the TNR Rebuttals against each falsehood. These had a limited circulation (due to our limitation of resources), but were distributed in areas where the Sea Shepherd (and the GAB Alliance) were due to have activities etc.

A copy of the flyer is at

<https://thenorwoodresource.org.au/2016/08/18/tnr-challenges-gab-alliance-misinformation/>

In regard to the regular catch cries by the eNGOs these consist of the following

- Why are we drilling for new oil, when the known oil reserves should stay in the ground to combat climate change? This was used frequently by an impassioned Wilderness Society (and all the GAB Alliance). We pointed out they needed 'petrol money' and they would not be able to have their nice trips on their vessel! As well as all credible forecast going forward have fossil fuels still making up a significant percentage of the energy mix even decades from now.
- The impact on marine life – we rebutted this numerous times, since even the GAB Alliance calls the GAB 'pristine' now, which has had 12 wells drilled there already, so it will most likely still be 'pristine' after another 12 wells have been drilled.
- Oil spill – GAB Alliance paid money (\$30k) for an oil spill scenario modelling, showing 2 million square kilometres being affected, even touching the coast of NZ almost! We countered with the worse spill from an accident they portray, ie the BP Gulf of Mexico incident only covered 10% of this surface area, and Australia's worse spill (from E&P activities) in the Timor Sea only being a fraction of the modelling done by the GAB Alliance. To say the GAB Alliance modelling is an exaggeration is an understatement. 'Over the Top' would be an apt description!

We also submitted a paper to the Senate Standing Committee on the Environment and Communications inquiry into Oil & gas Production in The Great Australian Bight, and following the Federal Election, we also met with Senator Nick Xenophon and his team in relation to drilling in the GAB, etc

Now that Chevron is continuing to press ahead with its plans to drill in the GAB next year, we anticipate the GAB Alliance will once again ramp up their misinformation agenda, and we will continue to rebut their falsehoods, etc.

## **General**

Hope the above gives you a snapshot of the sort of stuff we have been doing, and with more resources we could do more of course!

If you do see something or want to make a comment etc please let us know, also if anyone wants to assist please let us know about that too – the pay non existent though!

However, good practical ideas and suggestions welcome, and always feel free to rebut the activists claims too, as the more numbers who do this does really count since we see for example the outcome from the SA Inquiry into unconventional gas (fracking) where the Committee made the point also that there appeared to be little (if any) support for unconventional gas in the SE of SA as they had not seen anything or received any submission from the area that supported it. ?

So, please don't hang back if you see something that stands out – either have a crack yourself, or let us know and we will do what we can.

Cheers

Bruce Holland  
Secretary  
The Norwood Resource