

YOUR SAY

Benefits will flow from Santos 'multi billion dollar Narrabri gas project'

I write in response to the column by the People for the Plains (The Courier Thursday April 2) that suggests the Santos Narrabri Gas Project will bring little benefit to the local community.

Santos' Narrabri Gas Project is a multi-billion dollar project.

The realisation of a project of this scale and the development of what is essentially a new industry in town cannot fail to bring with it significant benefits.

It is this type of diversity in industry and employment that allows rural towns to prosper.

In the Roma area in Queensland, where Santos has been safely extracting coal seam gas for several years, we have seen employment and new businesses grow steadily each year.

In the past five years Santos has contributed more than \$572 million to local businesses and we have left a lasting positive legacy for the community by helping to fund upgrades to the Roma Airport Terminal, the Roma Hospital, the town sewerage system, local roads as well as community centre developments.

Through the Narrabri Gas Project Santos will employ up to 1200 people during construction and 200 people on an ongoing basis. Just as we do currently, Santos will continue to employ local people from the Narrabri area and use local suppliers whenever possible. In addition, the project is expected to generate a number of indirect employment opportunities.

These jobs would include engineering and management services, transportation, operational health and safety and various business services.

We will work closely with the local business community and hold regular seminars to provide information on positioning their business to work with us. Santos will continue to drive local

employment and local business opportunities for the next 20 years and beyond.

We already spend millions of dollars locally on goods and services and support a number of local community events, sports teams and local initiatives.

If the Project is approved, a \$160 million Regional Community Benefit Fund will also be established to support major regional projects and infrastructure so the area can continue to directly benefit from hosting our activities.

The Project will generate more than \$1.6 billion in royalties .

These funds will help support services like better roads, hospitals and schools for the people of NSW. The People for the Plains say that as a result of natural gas exports from Queensland, Australian customers will have to pay higher gas prices.

This is one of the reasons why Santos' Narrabri Gas Project is so important.

NSW is the only mainland state that doesn't have a material natural gas industry, importing more than 95% of its natural gas requirements.

NSW's existing gas contracts will begin to expire at the same time Queensland's LNG export facilities become operational.

NSW will need to compete for its ongoing gas supply and pay higher prices.

By developing the Narrabri Gas Project we can deliver NSW its own source of natural gas and put downward pressure on gas prices. As basic economics dictates, an increase in supply will result in cheaper prices.

The significant benefits of the Narrabri Gas Project are clear, for both the local community and NSW more broadly.

Source:
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Peter Mitchley
Santos General Manager Energy
NSW