

COMMUNIQUE 21

NARRABRI GAS PROJECT COMMUNITY CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (CCC)

About the CCC

The Narrabri Gas Project Community Consultative Committee (CCC) brings together community, industry, local and state governments to explore and discuss issues relating to the exploration and extraction of natural gas in the Narrabri Gas Project area.

Chaired by the NSW Land and Water Commissioner, members of the dialogue include Narrabri Shire Councillors, independent community members, senior Santos representatives and senior agency officers from the Division of Resources and Geoscience (DRG), the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), the Department of Primary Industries Water (DPI Water) and the Department of Planning and Environment (DPE).

Summary of 8 August meeting

- Santos Operations Update
- EPA Monthly Update
- Department of Planning and Environment EIS update
- Introduction of the Water Expert Panel

The Department of Planning and Environment (DPE) gave an update on the progress of the Narrabri Gas Project assessment process. It was explained that Santos had been asked to provide a response to submissions, which a Santos representative told the CCC was expected to be complete towards the end of the year. The Department said that a Planning Assessment Commission review should need to be factored into the assessment timeframe, although the Minister has not yet announced whether a PAC review would take place.

The DPE representative introduced the four member Water Expert Panel to the CCC. He explained that the NSW Government had decided that in addition to Government agency experts and the Commonwealth's Independent Expert Scientific Committee, it would appoint eight additional independent experts to provide advice on specific areas of the EIS. As well as the four water experts, experts had been appointed to review cultural heritage, land use safety hazards and risk, economic impacts and social impacts.

The Water Expert Panel will be asked to supply a report and independent advice on the EIS. Their report won't be finalised until after the Panel has reviewed Santos' response to submissions. The DPE representative said it is likely the Panel will continue through to the PAC stage and that the PAC may also use these experts.

While in Narrabri, the panel members visited Santos operational sites, and met with a number of landholders, People for the Plains and Namoi Water representatives.

The Expert Panel each spoke briefly about their credentials and experience. Collectively their specialties cover geology, water modelling, produced water and well integrity.

The Panel Chair, Professor Peter Cook, stated they have a broad view of their mandate and aren't constrained by the Department. There was general discussion around remit of the panel, the large amount of water data from various sources that should be collated, and the importance of good baseline data to give the community confidence that any impacts from the project can be accurately assessed.

Members raised the EIS proposal to discharge treated water into Bohena Creek and the issue of salt disposal as matters of community interest.

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Members discussed the perception by some in the broader area that large parts of NSW would have gas development, for example along the proposed Western Slopes Pipeline route. Discussion highlighted that there is limited gas development potential in most of those areas; Santos has no on-ground activity in those areas; and DPE advised that current exploration status is minimal. The Chair noted the need to have this more clearly communicated in those areas with information about actual natural gas prospectivity available.

Following a request from a member, a DPE representative will contact Forestry Corporation (FCNSW) with an invitation to attend a future meeting of the CCC to give a presentation to the Committee on the FCNSW role as a landholder and to provide further information on matters such as rehabilitation.

A Santos representative provided copies of the Monthly Activity Update that is emailed to members each month and answered questions arising from the update. A copy of the Monthly Activity Update for August is available from the Narrabri Gas Project website. A Member raised a number of questions relating to licence conditions at various sites and undertook to email these questions to Santos so that a response can be provided to all members out of session.

An EPA representative provided a draft copy of the monthly Narrabri CCC EPA Newsletter to members for July 2017, with the final newsletter being available from the EPA website and via the subscription service.

As a number of members will be unavailable for the September meeting, the Chair in liaison with committee members advised that there would be no meeting and items would be held over to the October meeting.

The next CCC meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 10.

Please see the following table for each nominated community/industry group delegate contact details:

Name	Organisation	Contact details
Matt Norrie	NSW Farmers	matthewnorrie@bigpond.com
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Russell Stewart	Narrabri Chamber of Commerce	fourstewarts@bigpond.com
Jocelyn Cameron	NSW Country Women's Association	dcandjccameron@bigpond.com
Tony Pickard	People for the Plains	deere@activ8.net.au
Lynn Trindall	Narrabri Local Aboriginal Land Council	admin@narrabrilalc.com.au
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NOTE: The content contained within the document above is a record of the Narrabri Gas Project Community Consultative Committee meeting. The views expressed are not necessarily endorsed by all Committee members.