

# TRANSCRIPT

## STANDING COMMITTEE ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING

### Inquiry into unconventional gas in Victoria

Sale — 30 June 2015

#### Members

Mr David Davis — Chair

Ms Samantha Dunn

Ms Harriet Shing — Deputy Chair

Mr Shaun Leane

Ms Melina Bath

Ms Gayle Tierney

Mr Richard Dalla-Riva

Mr Daniel Young

#### Participating Members

Mr Jeff Bourman

Mr James Purcell

Ms Colleen Hartland

Mr Simon Ramsay

#### Staff

Secretary: Mr Keir Delaney

Research officer: Ms Annemarie Burt

#### Witness

Mr Glen Maher.

**Necessary corrections to be notified to  
executive officer of committee**

**Mr MAHER** — My name is Glen Maher. In the year 2000 I was elected to the Sale GSPA, which is the ground supply water for the Boisdale aqueduct out this way. I live 4 kilometres from the Gippsland Lakes and I am surrounded by farmers who are dependent on the underground water — the Boisdale aqueduct. The township of Sale is also on the Boisdale aqueduct and they have a 3500-megalitre water right. I do not think they will be impressed if something goes wrong with the aquifer.

The question raised about how deep the bores are — whether they are 100 feet or 5000 feet — is not the issue. The issue with the aquifer is inter-aquifer interference — that is, waters going from many other layers of aquifers through to this one, that one, or other impurities from further down rising up the outside or inside of a bore casing of a well affecting and polluting the other aquifers. This is what you see when you have gas coming up through the water in all those Chinchilla-type things and American things. The effects on the water quality will have a dramatic effect on a lot of rural product.

One of the neighbours behind me has quite a large dairy which they have set up out there. John Vardy was actually a director of Murray Goulburn, and he is a Lock the Gater for fear of what might happen to the aquifer. There is a tomato grower opposite him, there are vegetable growers up and down the road — they are all reliant on that good-quality water that comes from that aquifer. All the other amazing stuff is relevant, but the science is not clear. That is what we really need — more science, more clarity and more understanding of the potential for the destruction of a very valuable and good aquifer.

**Witness withdrew.**