

04 November 2015

Mr Keir Delaney
The Secretary
Environment and Planning Committee
Parliament House, Spring Street
EAST MELBOURNE VIC 300

Dear Keir

Additional information to assist Inquiry into Unconventional Gas

I am writing to provide additional information as requested by the Standing Committee on Environment and Planning during the VFF presentation to the Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria (22 July 2015).

I have attached the complete questions and responses of VFF members to a survey on Onshore Gas to address Mr Dalla-Riva's question made during the Inquiry.

There were two other questions of Ms Hartland that were taken on notice. One in relation to the costs borne by farmers in VCAT disputes with mining companies and the second in relation to compensation farmers receive for mining exploration or mining development on their land.

The VFF is unable to answer these two specific questions of Ms Hartland as they relate to details that are agreed to between two parties. The VFF does not have access to an example that could be provided to the Committee at this present time.

However, in light of the tabling of the Committee's interim report, the VFF would welcome an opportunity to meet again with Committee members to discuss the VFF policy position over power of veto, commercial payments and the extension of the moratorium until 2020.

VFF members continue to raise concerns that existing land acquisition and compensation legislation and processes do not ensure farmers are treated fairly, or with respect by the party requiring access or acquisition. Strengthening the legislation, regulation and processes around power of access is crucial in protecting the rights of the private landholder.

To arrange a meeting or obtain further information please contact Emily Waters, Senior Policy Adviser – Land Management on 03 9207 5526 or ewaters@vff.org.au.

Yours sincerely



Gerald Leach
Chair of VFF Land Management Committee

Complete responses of VFF members to a survey on Onshore Gas

Do you understand the differences between the different types of onshore gas - coal seam gas, shale gas and tight gas?	Total	Percentage
No	37	38%
Yes	60	62%
Are you aware of the compensation arrangements that can apply to farmers when approached by mining and onshore gas companies for exploration on their land?	Total	Percentage
No	63	66%
Yes	32	34%
Do you know what hydraulic fracturing is?	Total	Percentage
No	15	15%
Yes	82	85%
As a landowner, do you know what your rights are if you are approached by a company seeking to undertake mining or onshore gas exploration on your property?	Total	Percentage
No	59	62%
Yes	36	38%
Would you support the current moratorium on onshore gas exploration and extraction being lifted?	Total	Percentage
No	67	71%
Yes	28	29%
Do you support the VFF's current policy of supporting a five-year moratorium on exploration and extraction of onshore gas in Victoria (until 2020)?	Total	Percentage
No	25	26%
Yes	71	74%
Do you:	Total	Percentage
Support a moratorium until such time as peer-reviewed research shows onshore gas extraction can co-exist with agriculture?	43	44%
Support a total ban on onshore gas exploration and extraction?	36	37%
Support lifting the current moratorium immediately?	12	12%
Support the lifting the current moratorium if the Parliamentary Committee's report makes that recommendation?	6	6%
Do you believe onshore gas exploration on your farm would:	Total	Percentage
Undermine its value?	66	73%
Make no change?	14	16%
Increase its value?	10	11%

Do you believe onshore gas exploration on neighbouring farms would undermine the value of your farm?	Total	Percentage
No	22	24%
Yes	69	76%
Do you believe onshore gas development could tarnish the image of food produced from your region?	Total	Percentage
No	27	28%
Yes	68	72%
Do you support the VFF's existing policy that farmers should be given the power of veto over all mining, quarrying, oil and gas extraction on their agricultural land?	Total	Percentage
No	17	18%
Yes	80	82%
Do you believe the current regulatory framework administered by Government and its agencies, such as water authorities, is adequate?	Total	Percentage
No	67	78%
Yes	19	22%
Please identify your key concern in regard to the environmental and health impacts of onshore gas extraction (Choose one only).	Total	Percentage
Aquifer cross contamination (leakage from a saline to fresh aquifer, via a gas well)	45	47%
Chemical use (fracking chemicals)	15	16%
Food safety	5	5%
Land contamination	9	9%
Land rehabilitation	4	4%
No concerns	12	13%
Public health	4	4%
Waste disposal	1	1%
Do you believe the current compensation arrangements are sufficient for an unconventional onshore gas industry in Victoria?	Total	Percentage
No	34	36%
Yes	3	3%
Don't know	58	61%
Do you agree with farmers receiving commercial payments for any mining or petroleum activity taking place on their land?	Total	Percentage
No	14	15%
Yes	82	85%