



STANDING COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PLANNING (Legislation and References)

Terms of Reference 58th Parliament

Inquiry into Unconventional Gas in Victoria

On 26 May 2015 the Legislative Council agreed to the following motion:

That pursuant to Sessional Order 6 this House requires the Environment and Planning Committee to inquire into and consider matters relating to the exploration, extraction, production and rehabilitation for onshore unconventional gas and present an interim report no later than 1 September 2015 and a final report no later than 1 December 2015 and, in particular, the inquiry should include, but not be limited to, the following —

- (1) the prospectivity of Victoria's geology for commercial sources of onshore unconventional gas;
- (2) the environmental, land productivity and public health risks, risk mitigations and residual risks of onshore unconventional gas activities;
- (3) the coexistence of onshore unconventional gas activities with existing land and water uses, including —
 - (a) agricultural production and domestic and export market requirements;
 - (b) the legal rights of property owners and the impact on property values; and
 - (c) any implications for local and regional development, investment and jobs;
- (4) the ability of potential onshore unconventional gas resources contributing to the State's overall energy sources including —
 - (a) an ability to provide a competitive source of energy and non energy inputs for Victorian industries;
 - (b) an affordable energy source for domestic consumers; and
 - (c) carbon dioxide emissions from these sources;
- (5) the resource knowledge requirements and policy and regulatory safeguards that would be necessary to enable exploration and development of onshore unconventional gas resources, including —
 - (a) further scientific work to inform the effective regulation of an onshore unconventional gas industry, including the role of industry and government, particularly in relation to rigorous monitoring and enforcement, and the effectiveness of impact mitigation responses; and
 - (b) performance standards for managing environmental and health risks, including water quality, air quality, chemical use, waste disposal, land contamination and geotechnical stability;

- (6) relevant domestic and international reviews and inquiries covering the management of risks for similar industries including, but not limited to, the Victorian Auditor-General Office's report *Unconventional Gas: Managing Risks and Impacts* (contingent upon this report being presented to Parliament) and other reports generated by the Victorian community and stakeholder engagement programs.