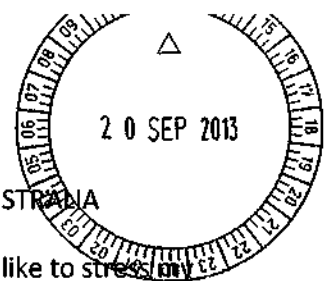


LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL INQUIRY INTO GAS-FRACKING IN WESTERN AUSTRALIA



In adding my voice to those objecting to gas-fracking in W.A., I would particularly like to stress my concerns regarding the colossal amount of water required in the fracking process, moreso when individual wells are normally fracked many times.

As it happens, in today's West, Wed. 18 th Sept. 2013, the Water Corporation stated that despite the wet end to winter, our dams are only 34 % full, adding that since the 1970's there has been a 10 metre drop in groundwater levels under the Perth hills.

Earlier in the day on 720 A.M. a Watercorp spokesperson said that were it not for the desalinated water being pumped into our dams they would be dry!

Furthermore, because a typical gas field consists of hundreds, even thousands of wells, the potential for accidents, particularly those involving the contamination of aquifers with carcinogenic and even radioactive substances, must be taken into account.

Even if best engineering practice in this technology is said to be "guaranteed" 99% (or even 99.9%) failsafe in each frack, that still amounts to an unacceptable risk when it involves our most precious resource, water, to which may I add in a rapidly drying state like W.A. the real value of water is worth much more than the gas.

Consideration must also be given to the findings of Cornell University's Professor Tony Ingraffea who has worked with the gas fracking industry for many years regarding the release of vast amounts of methane and other polluting gases during extraction and processing, right through to the distribution network, pointing out that the methane can be up to a 100 times more powerful greenhouse gas than C.O.2, debunking the myth that methane is the answer to greenhouse gas reduction.

There is also the question that has to be asked, in fact should have been asked long ago.

At what point do we say enough is ENOUGH?

Planet Earth is in such bad shape now, it's capacity to maintain a healthy global environment for life in all its manifestations is being seriously compromised by the Business As Usual doctrine slavishly pursued by the industrialized nations.

Bearing in mind Australians, and West Australians in particular, have one of the heaviest global footprints per capita, making this country potentially a prime destination for hundreds of thousands of environmental refugees from the South Asia region.

The issue is not new. It has been the subject of much discussion over a number of years in the United Nations at the highest level.

John R. Budge