

Galen White

20/9/13

Attention: Ms Margaret Liveris, Committee Clerk, Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs, Legislative Council, Parliament House, GPO Box A11 Perth WA 6837.

This submission comes in two parts.

Firstly, regarding the inadequacy of the terms of reference:

The following should have been included, and without these the inquiry will be deliberately hamstrung in its findings.

1. Groundwater contamination from failed wells, migration via natural fissures and abandoned wells.
2. Human health impacts.
3. Air pollution.
4. Fugitive emissions and climate change impacts thereof.
5. Adequacy of regulatory frameworks.
6. Cumulative field impacts on landscapes of shale and tight gas development.
7. Ability of the Department of Mines and Petroleum to impartially regulate the industry.

Secondly with regard to the terms of reference:

TOR1:

I am concerned about who has liability for abandoned sites after well abandonment. What mechanisms exist to ensure proper accountability of operators, such as appropriately set bonds etc.

I also believe that Conservation parks must not be degraded by fracking. They have been established and maintained at great expense to the State, and any degradation of these assets would represent a willful wastage of that investment.

TOR2:

New laws should ensure that no pollutants are to enter our precious aquifers. Our continent is the driest on earth and water is our most precious long term resource. To damage this asset is a crime of national significance.

These laws should also include chemicals that might enter aquifers from the shale and tight stone bodies themselves, not merely those added during the fracking process.

TOR4:

I am concerned about who is liable for contamination of water that occurs after a well has been abandoned? It would appear that companies are obliged to 'monitor' for two years after well abandonment, but beyond this it would be possible for contamination to take place without the knowledge or ability to remediate of the Government of WA.

Kind regards,

Galen White