

PIRC - Submission - Resources Safety and Health Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026

Submission No: 010

Submission By: AgForce Queensland

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18 March 2026

Primary Industries and Resources Committee
Parliament House
George Street
Brisbane Qld 4000

By Email: PIRC@parliament.qld.gov.au

RE: Submission to the Primary Industries and Resources Committee Resources Safety and Health Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026

Dear Mr Stephen Bennett MP,

AgForce Queensland Farmers Ltd is the peak representative body for Queensland's cane, cattle, grain, and sheep, wool and goat producers. Together, these industries generated approximately \$11.2 billion in on-farm value of production in 2022-23. AgForce's purpose is to advance sustainable agribusiness and to support the long-term growth, viability, competitiveness and profitability of Queensland agriculture. More than 6,000 farmers, individuals and agribusinesses support AgForce through membership, collectively owning and managing approximately 55 million hectares—around one-third of Queensland's land area. Queensland producers supply high-quality food and fibre to domestic and international markets, contribute significantly to the social and economic fabric of regional, rural and remote communities, and play a central role in stewardship of the State's natural environment.

AgForce will predominantly focus on Part 4 of the Resources Safety and Health Queensland and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2026, with particular focus on the amendments to the *Land Access Ombudsman Act 2017*.

AgForce is extremely concerned with the significant structural reform within Clause 19 of the Bill, which redefines the Land Access Ombudsman as the Chief Executive Officer of Coexistence Queensland.

AgForce has grave concerns that the Bill prioritises administrative restructuring over substantive reform and fails to improve protections for landholders impacted by resource activities on their land. This fundamentally alters the role of the Land Access Ombudsman from an independent statutory decision-maker to head of a government entity with broader coexistence objectives.

The key risks that AgForce sees with this amendment are as follows:

Reduced independence

By embedding the Ombudsman within Coexistence Queensland creates structural dependence and the risk of influence from Government, whether that be actual or perceived, undermining public confidence in the ombudsman's functions.

Conflicting Mandates

AgForce has concerns with the conflicting mandates of Coexistence Queensland and the Ombudsman. Coexistence Queensland is tasked with facilitating coexistence between landholders and coal seam gas companies, renewable energy companies and resource companies. This has the real potential to conflict with acting as an impartial arbiter in disputes.

Therefore, AgForce's position is that the Ombudsman should remain as a statutory standalone role.

However, if the model proposed in the Bill is adopted there needs to be functional separation, independent decision-making and a legislated requirement that landholder interests be the primary consideration in dispute resolution.

AgForce also has concerns that the Bill does not address fundamental issues, including:

1) Limited Jurisdiction

The Act does not allow access to the ombudsman for disputes concerning pre-agreement disputes, negotiation conduct or cumulative impacts.

The Act limits the jurisdiction of the Land Access Ombudsman to disputes arising under existing agreements, such as Conduct and Compensation Agreements (CCAs) and Make Good Agreements. As a result, the Ombudsman is generally unable to consider disputes where no agreement is in place.

This restriction has the practical effect of excluding certain affected parties—particularly neighbouring landholders who do not have a direct agreement with a resource company—from accessing the Ombudsman, even where they experience impacts from resource activities.

2) Power Imbalance:

Landholders are placed in a position where they must negotiate with a significantly better-resourced company.

AgForce acknowledges the intent of the Bill to modernise governance arrangements, however, the amendments do not strengthen landholder rights, expand dispute resolution powers, or address systemic imbalance in the land access framework. Instead, the Bill risks weakening independence, reducing confidence, maintaining ineffective dispute resolution processes.

AgForce urges the committee to amend Clause 19 to preserve independence, strengthen the purpose and powers of the Ombudsman, expand jurisdiction to reflect real-world disputes and deliver practical, enforceable protections for landholders.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.



If you have any questions or require further information please contact Anna Fiskbek, Policy Advisor by email [REDACTED] or mobile [REDACTED].

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Niki Ford
Chief Executive Officer

