

25 January 2013

Dr Kathy Munro
 Research Director
 State Development, Infrastructure and Industry Committee
 Parliament House
 George Street
 BRISBANE NORTH 4000

Via email: sdiiic@parliament.qld.gov.au

Dear Ms Munro

GasFields Commission Bill 2012

Thank you for your letter inviting a submission from APPEA on the *GasFields Commission Bill 2012*.

As you would be aware APPEA is the peak national body representing Australia's oil and gas exploration and production industry. Our member companies currently account for around 98 per cent of Australia's total oil and gas production and the vast majority of exploration. APPEA also represents over 200 technical, legal, and service companies providing goods and services to the industry. Further details about APPEA can be found at our website at www.appea.com.au.

It should be noted that Rick Wilkinson, the Chief Operating Officer for APPEA's Eastern Region is also a GasFields Commissioner, and APPEA has a representative on the Commission's Community Leaders Forum.

Fully realising the once in a lifetime opportunity offered by development of Queensland's vast natural gas endowment will require long term positive relationships between all key stakeholders and we see the Commission as performing a key role in achieving this objective.

The Commission occupies a unique position in Queensland's regulatory environment as a source of independent advice on government policy, industry practice, and issues affecting regional communities and landholders. APPEA also believes that separation should continue to be maintained between the advisory role performed by the Commission and the policy development, compliance, and enforcement roles which are performed by Minister's and their departments.

Given the functions and objectives of the Commission APPEA considers that the Bill as drafted strikes an appropriate balance with the exception of how confidential information is treated.

With regard to confidential information APPEA is concerned that the Bill does not anticipate the need to protect commercially sensitive or proprietary information



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which is provided by companies to the Commission. This is a critical issue for industry and could be resolved by expanding the definition of *Confidential Information* from:

“...would be likely to damage the commercial activities of a person to whom the information relates”,

to

*“...would be likely to damage the commercial activities of a person, **entity or business**, to whom the information relates”.*

We also consider it appropriate that a defined review period be set to provide the opportunity for refinement of the Commission’s role.

Should you wish to discuss this submission further, please contact Matthew Paull, Director - Policy Queensland, on 0423 592 722 or email mpaull@appea.com.au.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'N. Mullen', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Noel Mullen
Deputy Chief Executive