

QUESTION ON NOTICE

No. 833

asked on Friday, 14 June 2024

MR P WEIR ASKED THE MINISTER FOR RESOURCES AND CRITICAL MINERALS (HON S STEWART)—

QUESTION:

Will the Minister give assurance to landholders that exploration drilling holes will not discharge into the Condamine Alluvium if Coal Seam Gas extraction proceeds?

ANSWER:

Queensland's resources industry is subject to a comprehensive regulatory framework with responsibilities spread across multiple agencies—the Department of Resources; Resources Health and Safety Queensland; and the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation. The Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment within the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water also plays an important role in the independent assessment and monitoring of impacts from resource development, including coal seam gas.

Petroleum and gas activities are required to comply with the Code of Practice for the Construction and Abandonment of Petroleum Wells and Associated Bores. The code sets the minimum acceptable standard for long-term well integrity, and addresses safety and environmental issues associated with all stages of well life, including construction, operation and integrity management. The code ensures the containment of the resource and the protection of groundwater resources such as the Condamine Alluvium. The Department of Resources and independent statutory body Resources Safety and Health Queensland have joint responsibility for monitoring compliance with the code.

Petroleum and gas activities must also have an environmental approval issued by the Department of Environment, Science and Innovation under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. Environmental authority holders are required to monitor, identify and manage any potential risks to the environment associated with their activities, and to notify of any environmental harm.

Separately, the Office of Groundwater Impact Assessment regularly assesses the impact of depressurisation from the coal seam gas activities on underground water. This assessment has determined low level of connectivity between the Walloon Coal Measures and the overlying Condamine Alluvium.

The community can be satisfied that our strict regulatory framework ensures that coal seam gas activities in Queensland are undertaken in a safe and effective manner, and that important underground water resources like the Condamine Alluvium are protected.