

**Landholder compensation review**

Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal

PO Box K35,

Haymarket Post Shop NSW 1240

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Landholders Compensation Review

I am a Narrabri Shire resident living about 25 km from the project area. I belong to farming family from Spring Plain, we grow irrigated and dryland grain, pulses and fibre crops. We currently employ four family members and three others as full time employees, most of our employees work for us for decades. We kept a full work force during the last draught and take seriously our community obligations. We live in this area by choice because of the deep fertile soils and the water security that Keepit and Splitrock dams provide as well as our reliable and excellent quality ground water. As irrigators we realise the importance of clean water and managing it properly.

I have a few areas that have been particularly concerned with when it comes to compensation regarding access agreements. The more I consider the problem the more I have come to realise that one size template does not fit all, multiple factors need to be considered when working out compensation packages. It is not just monetary compensation that needs to be taken into account but working with the land holders into the future and managing the ongoing problems and concerns of both parties and their obligations as regard to land management. These conditions need to be stated at the very beginning of the agreements as part of the compensation packages.

Compensation of Infrastructure

What is included in compensation packages needs to fully stipulate; that it includes all infrastructure associated with Coal and CSG, such as power lines, gas and water pipelines, quarries, borrow pits, gas processing and compressing stations, water treatment facilities, roads, accommodation support camps for staff, fuel storage areas, compressor stations, flare pits, ponds, fences etc. All of this infrastructure impact on the visual amenity of the landholder lessening their quality of life along with dust and noise nuisance and the company should do its best to lessen these impacts.

Compensation should also be extended to near neighbours for the same reasons.

Benefit payments should be extended to the community for local projects that benefit all and reduce the environment impacts of the coal/gas developments. Trees planted or even earth works to help minimise impacts.

I read that environmental controls are outside the scope of this submission but the type and monitoring of these controls needs to be taken into account when negotiating compensation packages. Base line studies need to be done so we know when the environment changes and when compensation needs to start and at what level.

Agreements that have been signed in the past will need to be renegotiated to put everyone on an even footing. In the past most communities and land holders did not have all the facts about coal/gas developments, this is changing and people are realising their rights and how development can impact them and the environment.

I dislike the idea that the Government share the royalties they get to pay landowners compensation; this would be like compensating yourself! I agree that government royalties go towards community projects in partnership 50:50 with the gas/mining companies. The companies involved with gaining access should be solely responsible for land owner and near neighbour compensation and partly fund community projects with the government.

#### Compensation of Landowner

Who determines the quality of land for compensation? Different managers also have different expertise, level of development of their farm and infrastructure this is what affects the success of a business not just their soil type. If this is regionally based say on soil types, what consideration is given to landholders who have made quantifiable improvements to their soil types? How do we continue to encourage people to actively improve their farm which a lot of farmers have done in this area through the carbon initiative program with the CMA (now Local Land Services)? The government has invested considerable financial resources and this should not be wasted through bad gas planning or made out to be a waste of the landowner's time and energy. So to compensate landowners fully the market value of the land should be used as a base value and add infrastructure, including soil and pasture improvements and investigate on a case by case approach negotiating with the farmer, his agronomist/adviser and his accountant for the business compensation.

Health impacts on land residents or their animals should not be neglected when it comes to compensation and if their health is impacted on so they cannot do business or live on their land anymore a guarantee to buy out their farm should be in the contract. This is a good reason to have baseline studies done.

It needs to be clear about responsibly for infrastructure now and into the future who's insurance responsibility is it? If decommissioned infrastructure is on your property is there a perpetual compensation agreement for access and what happens to these agreements when properties change hands?

#### Legal & Professional Payments

All legal and professional advice that a land holder has to undertake in dealing with the company should be at the company's expense. The time that the land owner has to allocate to checking on the companies infrastructure should also be part of a package the more wells the more checking is needed. This payment should not be less than the senior station hand award wages.

Compensation agreements should be fully transparent to reduce division in the community and disallow inequality. Confidentially agreements should be relevant if the companies are up front and really want to be a part of communities and not be scared of the whistle blower.

Kind regards

Kim Revell