

**Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and  
Large Coal Mining Development (IESC)  
Meeting 63, 28 and 29 August 2019**

**MINUTES  
Sydney, NSW**

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**ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES**

IN ATTENDANCE

Dr Chris Pigram (Chair)  
Professor Wendy Timms  
Dr Andrew Boulton  
Professor Jenny Davis  
Associate Professor Rory Nathan  
Professor Joan Esterle

APOLOGIES

Dr Jenny Stauber  
Professor Craig Simmons

OFFICE OF WATER SCIENCE

Peter Baker  
Petah Rhynehart  
Carol Nelson  
Kelly Strike  
Sarah Taylor

OTHER STAFF OF THE DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT AND ENERGY

Emma Campbell

INVITED GUESTS

Titus Murray (FaultSeal Finance Pty Ltd)  
William Power (Power Geoscience)

The meeting commenced at 9.00am on Wednesday 28 August 2019.

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The Chair welcomed members of the Independent Expert Scientific Committee on Coal Seam Gas and Large Coal Mining Development (IESC) to the meeting.

### **1.1 Acknowledgement of Country**

The Chair acknowledged the traditional owners, past and present, on whose land this meeting was held.

### **1.2 Disclosure of interest**

Before the meeting commenced, Committee members completed a Declaration of Interests for the meeting.

No actual, potential or perceived conflicts of interest were recorded.

### **1.3 Confirmation of agenda**

The Committee endorsed the agenda for Meeting 63.

### **1.4 Confirmation of out-of-session decisions**

The Committee noted that:

- advice on the Glendell Continued Operations project was finalised consistent with the Committee's deliberations. The advice was provided to the decision makers and published within statutory timelines; and
- minutes of the Committee's sixty-second meeting on 18 and 20 June were agreed out-of-session and published.

### **1.5 Correspondence**

The Committee noted the status of correspondence to 8 August 2019.

### **1.6 Action Items**

Ongoing items were noted and an update was provided on the timing of completion.

### **1.7 Forward planning agenda**

The Committee noted the forward planning agenda.

It was agreed the next meeting be scheduled for 2-3 October 2019 in Canberra. A scheduled site visit for October 2019 was postponed until the first quarter of 2020.

### **1.8 Environmental scan**

Committee members and secretariat reported back on developments in recent months, including:

- a 12-month review on streamlining regulation in the resources sector will be undertaken by the Productivity Commission; the review would complement the statutory review of the EPBC Act 1999 which is due to commence in October 2019;
- IESC Chair meeting with Minister Ley;
- Water Wally's: Quantifying Storage & Flow Processes in Groundwater and Surface Water workshop; and the
- Groundwater Modelling Uncertainty Workshop on 22 July

## **2. Advice on Projects referred by governments**

There were no projects considered at this meeting.

### **3. Other Business**

#### **3.1 Characterising Geological Fault Zones Explanatory Note**

The draft Explanatory Note is based on an industry workshop and additional meeting held in February and March 2019. Mr Titus Murray and Dr William Power presented on work completed on the draft Explanatory Note to date.

The Committee provided comment and feedback for inclusion in the next draft of the Explanatory Note. Public consultation will be undertaken once the draft is finalised.

#### **3.2 NSW Regulator Workshop Debrief**

The NSW Regulator Workshop was held on 28 August and was attended by stakeholders from different sections of the NSW State Government.

The Committee provided feedback following the Workshop. Key comments included:

- Excellent engagement
- Positive and in-depth discussions held
- Constructive workshop for all concerned

#### **3.3 Future Research Priorities**

The Committee discussed possible research programs with a view to prioritizing forward looking projects.

#### **3.4 IESC Annual Review of Activities 2018-2019**

The Committee reviewed and discussed the first draft of the 2018-2019 Annual Review, and provided feedback to the Office of Water Science.

It was agreed that the Chair would finalise the Annual Review out-of-session.

#### **3.5 OWS Support for IESC Presentations**

Discussion on individual committee members' preferences for presentations and talking points took place with feedback provided to the Office of Water Science in regards to personal preferences and content.

#### **3.6 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2020-2021**

The Committee discussed the draft Stakeholder Engagement Strategy 2020-2021.

It was agreed that the Chair would finalise the strategy out-of-session.

#### **3.7 Groundwater Modelling Workshop**

The Chair, Chris Pigram and members Craig Simmons, Wendy Timms and Rory Nathan attended the Uncertainty in Groundwater Modelling one day workshop at the Australian National University, National Centre for Groundwater Research and Training, on 22 July 2019.

Feedback on the workshop was provided by those in attendance who advised it was a very worthwhile workshop.

#### **3.8 Proposal for Standard Questions of Requests for Advice**

The Committee discussed whether the development of a series of standard questions, following interaction between the Office of Water Science and NSW Government officers, would assist the Committee in preparing its advice.

The Committee determined that, given the range of projects the Committee is asked to provide advice on, a series of standard questions would not assist with preparing their advice.

**Close of Meeting**

The Chair thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting.

Joan Esterle was thanked for her contribution to the Committee during her tenure and wished all the best for the future.

Appreciation was also extended to Emma Campbell for attending the meeting.

The meeting closed at 12.15pm on Thursday 29 August 2019.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for 2-3 October 2019 in Canberra, ACT.

Minutes confirmed as true and correct:

Dr Chris Pigram AM

IESC Chair

9 September 2019