

Independent Specialist Peer Reviews



Buru Energy is committed to socially and environmentally responsible development of our projects

Background

Hydraulic fracturing (fracking) has been undertaken safely and effectively on many millions of petroleum wells since the 1950's. However, public misconceptions caused by misinformation regarding the effects of fracking on groundwater and the environment makes it difficult for people to make informed decisions about responsible land management and to balance economic prosperity and opportunity with environmental and cultural considerations.



Specialist reviewers presenting to Noonkanbah community

Native Title rights have been determined for much of the Canning Basin, making aboriginal people key stakeholders in our projects. Aboriginal people have deep cultural connections to the land and water so ensuring aboriginal people have access to clear and independent information regarding the impacts of our projects is paramount in helping communities make informed decisions. To assist Traditional Owners make these decisions, Buru Energy has supported three independent specialist reviews of our activities with the Yungngora (Noonkanbah) people, Yawuru people and the Nyikina Mangala people, Karajarri people and Ngurrara people represented by KRED Enterprises Pty Ltd.

Each Traditional Owner group made their own selection of independent specialists to advise them on our hydraulic fracturing activities. The reviews included 11 specialists from four different universities and the CSIRO. Buru Energy provided funding for the independent experts to review our activities and also made available all relevant approvals documentation during the process. The reviews were undertaken independent of Buru Energy and included collaborative risk workshops, community meetings and information sessions.

Outcomes

The outcomes of the specialist reviews are outlined below.

Yungngora (Noonkanbah)

"We have been very thorough in our assessment of this project; we have appointed independent experts to provide us with technical advice; their advice is that this project will have very low risk to country." "We have accepted their advice." Caroline Mulligan from Noonkanbah Community (The

West Australian, June 25, 2014).



Community meeting at Noonkanbah community

Yawuru

The Yawuru specialist reviewers determined the *Environment Plan* used best available techniques and met the requirements of the *PGER Environment Regulations (2012)*. The objective of the regulations is to reduce environmental impacts and risks to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP). This report is available on the Yawuru website at: <http://www.yawuru.com/information-hub/useful-documents/>



KRED Enterprises

The KRED reviewers determined that the potential risks to groundwater and surface water are low due to both geological barriers and engineering controls in place. The KRED review further determined that below ground pathways pose a much lower risk than above ground operations such as transport of materials or surface spills. These surface operations can be effectively managed in the same way as risks associated with other industries in the region such as the pastoral industry.

Summary

The reviews were successful in providing independent and accurate information to Traditional Owners regarding the effects of fracking on the environment and country. The outcomes of all three review processes clearly demonstrate that Buru Energy's activities pose low risk to the environment, are undertaken in compliance with stringent regulatory requirements and use best available techniques. With this independent advice in hand, the Yungngora people of Noonkanbah supported the Company's activities, which have led to significant

economic benefits and job opportunities for their community.



KRED specialist reviewers presenting to KRED's members. Source: KRED Enterprises.

Six Separate Reviews in WA now show Hydraulic Fracturing is Low Risk in accordance with reviews in other jurisdictions

The outcomes of the independent specialist reviews undertaken to support decision making by the Traditional Owners are consistent with three other reviews into hydraulic fracturing in Western Australia in the last two years. These reviews came to the same conclusion as other independent reviews in other jurisdictions. These reviews in WA included the:

- Department of Mines and Petroleum's (DMPs) assessment of *Buru Energy's Laurel Formation Tight Gas Pilot Exploration Program (TGS) Environment Plan* which determined that environmental risks associated with Buru Energy's TGS program could be managed to As Low As Reasonably Practicable (ALARP).
- Environmental Protection Authority's decision of 13 January 2013 to not assess *Buru Energy's Laurel Formation Tight Gas Pilot Exploration Program* as it did not meet their criteria for environmental significance as defined under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*.
- *Report 42 by the Standing Committee on Environment and Public Affairs on the Implications for Western Australia of Hydraulic Fracturing for Unconventional Gas* (Parliamentary Inquiry Report) tabled in the WA Legislative Council in November 2015 which determined that hydraulic fracturing in Western Australia posed negligible risk.



Condor Energy on location at Asgard 1 well site on Noonkanbah station.

The Parliamentary Inquiry report followed a two year Parliamentary Inquiry that carefully considered all of the evidence regarding hydraulic fracturing in Western Australia and called a number of expert witnesses and key stakeholders including conservation groups. In addition to determining that hydraulic fracturing posed negligible

risk, the final report recognised the potential benefits of a shale gas industry *"as an employer, an investment generator and a provider of future energy security."*

The outcomes of the six separate assessments and reviews along with the Australian Council of Learned Academic's (ACOLA) report *Engineering Energy: Unconventional Gas Production – A Study of Shale Gas in Australia* and the outcomes of the Northern Territories *Independent Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracturing* by Dr Allan Hawke further demonstrate that the risks associated with hydraulic fracturing have been grossly exaggerated and that much of the opposition to hydraulic fracturing in shale and tight gas is driven by deliberate scaremongering by conservation groups with anti-fossil fuel agendas. Reflecting this, the Conservation Council of WA (CCWA) was singled out in the Parliamentary Inquiry report for making claims about hydraulic fracturing that were *"greatly over-stated"* and *"not based on evidence"*.

These misinformation campaigns potentially affect opportunities for people in regional areas to benefit from an onshore gas industry. Potential benefits are significant with many of the support services for onshore gas projects provided locally, including mobile camp accommodation, civil works, sand supply and haulage, trucking and transport, cranes, waste disposal, fuel distribution and security.

These opportunities will make a significant difference to the viability of regional and remote communities. This was perhaps best summarised by the Yungngora (Noonkanbah) community media release from 11 September 2015;

We want to keep this place going. We want to keep our young people safe from alcohol and the new drugs coming into the Kimberley. This is what is killing our people. Mining is giving us job opportunities to work our own land. We need training and job opportunities for our kids future.

Alcohol and drugs is killing our people – not mining or oil and gas

Further Information

Further information regarding our Community Engagement programs is available on our website at: www.buruenergy.com