

16th March 2018

Dr Hatton and Panel members,

I have been directly involved in the development of oil and gas projects in Australia for the past 25 years. Over the past eight years I have worked in the Kimberley region of Western Australia initially in the discovery and subsequently the appraisal and development planning for an unconventional gas project. This work includes involvement with the local people in the region and in particular the traditional owners at Noonkanbah.

I would not support the use of Hydraulic Fracturing if I was aware that it causes harm to people or the environment. I, together with many others, have worked continuously to examine all possible risks involved with our operations including hydraulic stimulation and develop and implement plans that mitigate against causing any harm to people or the environment that we operate in. We have already safely undertaken hydraulic stimulation operations in the region without any detectable harm to the environment.

Nothing that I have seen would lead me to conclude anything different from what I have read in the independent analysis of the risks of fracking, that is that hydraulic fracturing is safe and that the current regulatory framework is sufficient. The risks are well understood and it can be safely undertaken with good regulatory oversight.

This gas project at Noonkanbah will bring training and ongoing long term employment opportunities for the residents in Noonkanbah and other the remote communities. Noonkanbah are a united community who are well aware of the need to do things the right way and look after their environment and maintain their culture. We should admire and value their honesty, dignity and the efforts they have made to take control of their own destiny and forge a self-reliant future for their children and the future generations to live and work on their own country. Others would seek to represent their interests but they are very capable of speaking clearly for themselves. I urge you to listen to them, they are the people whose lands and lives will be affected by this project.

I urge the Panel to objectively consider the issues identified in your terms of reference and the necessary scientific evidence. I would also request that you complete the inquiry as planned and to reject deliberate attempts to “delay and disrupt” the conclusion of this inquiry, and make misrepresentations, spread untruths or try to turn this into a political debate.

Yours sincerely