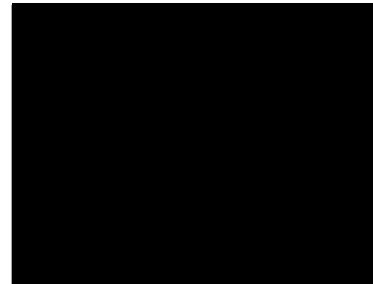


Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry  
Locked Bag 33  
Cloisters Square  
PERTH WA 6850



Dear Panel

**Submission in Support of Hydraulic Fracturing - Independent Scientific Panel Inquiry into Hydraulic Fracture Stimulation in Western Australia 2017**

I am writing as the Chair of the Regional Development Australia – Kimberley (RDAK) board. The RDA's are a national network of committees made up of local leaders who work with all levels of government, business and community groups to support the economic development of their regions.

The RDA committees are tasked with having an active and facilitative role in their communities with a clear focus of growing strong and confident regional economies that harness their competitive advantages, seize on economic opportunity and attract investment.

The RDAK supports hydraulic fracturing activities, especially where these activities lead to economic benefits to the local economy and local employment, and where regulatory requirements have been received and complied with for the proposed activities.

It is quite apparent that most people are misinformed by incorrect statements on the activities of resource type industries, especially around the area of 'fracking'.

Recently there have been many inquiries around Australia about hydraulic fracturing. All inquiries have arrived at similar conclusions; that exploration for and developing gas and oil from unconventional sources is unlikely to pose any significant risk to groundwater or to human health, provided that an appropriate regulatory regime is in place.

The RDAK has been able to see resource companies carry out their activities which has given confidence that the sector is appropriately regulated and safe.

The RDAK believes developing the onshore gas resources in the Canning Basin can deliver much needed new jobs, particularly for the local indigenous and non-indigenous population, and will also bring forward and justify investment in regional infrastructure.



There could be up to one trillion cubic feet of gas in the Canning Basin, but hydraulic fracturing is required to extract the gas from the tight rocks it is contained in. The extraction of this gas has the potential to sustain an onshore industry for up to 40 years. In particular the amount of gas in the Shire of Derby West Kimberley could sustain an industry that would offer long term employment and economic benefits to locals, businesses, and industry located here.

The success of the onshore oil and gas industry in the United States has turned around the fortunes of domestic manufacturing through providing a long term lower cost supply of energy. If gas from the Canning Basin could be made available locally it could be a catalyst to providing cheap energy to residents and local businesses to enable them to be more competitive, in addition to lowering the costs of living in the region.

It is well known that the resource explorers and producers operating in the Kimberley have shown themselves to be positive contributors to the region. While employing locals and using goods and services from local businesses, the industry has also sponsored many events in the region that may not otherwise have been able to occur.

As with many rural economies, long term job opportunities in the Kimberley are limited so when companies are willing to invest and employ in the region they should be supported.

In 2015 Buru Energy Ltd and Mitsubishi fracked wells for gas near Noonkanbah community. The three-month hydraulic fracturing program employed 30 people from Noonkanbah for over 13,500 hours of paid employment. This program occurred as part of the exploration phase of activities. Should the moratorium of fracking be lifted and an onshore gas industry be established, people would be employed full time and local services procured for the long term.

The RDAK supports the opportunities that an onshore gas industry could bring to the region and request the Panel consider the positive impact that this would have here.

Yours sincerely,



Elsia Archer

Chair, RDA Kimberley.

15/3/2018